

ACE

Engineering Publications

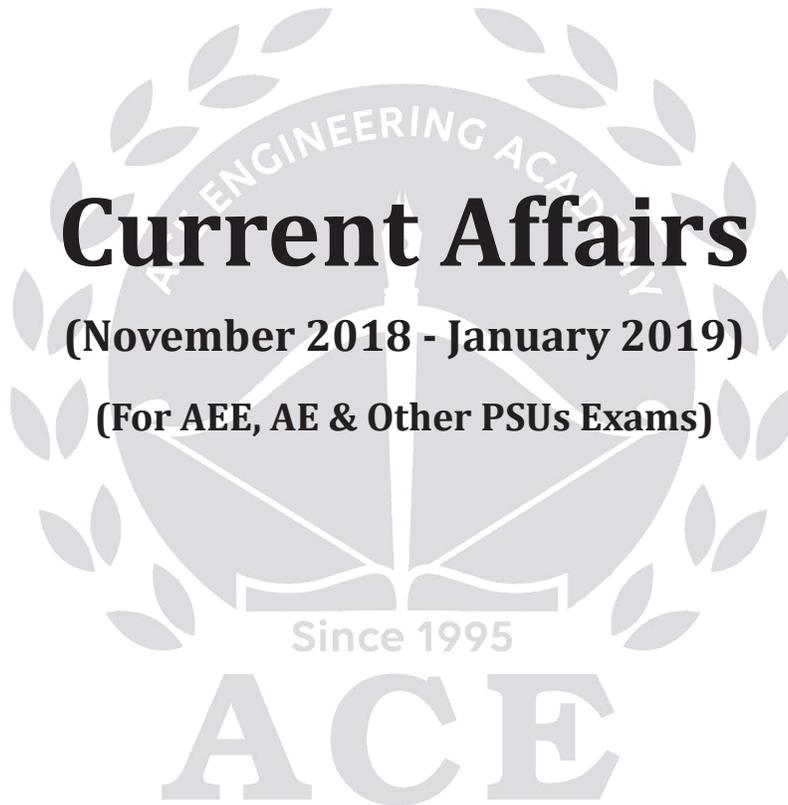
(A Sister Concern of ACE Engineering Academy, Hyderabad)

Hyderabad | Delhi | Bhopal | Pune | Bhubaneswar | Bengaluru | Lucknow | Patna | Chennai | Vijayawada | Visakhapatnam | Tirupati | Kolkata | Ahmedabad

Current Affairs

(November 2018 - January 2019)

(For AEE, AE & Other PSUs Exams)



ACE is the leading institute for coaching in ESE, GATE & PSUs

H O: Sree Sindhi Guru Sangat Sabha Association, # 4-1-1236/1/A, King Koti, Abids, Hyderabad-500001.

Ph: 040-23234418 / 19 / 20 / 21, 040 - 24750437

11 All India 1st Ranks in ESE
43 All India 1st Ranks in GATE

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, digital, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publishers.

Published at :



ACE Engineering Publications

Sree Sindhi Guru Sangat Sabha Association,
4-1-1236/1/A, King Koti, Abids,
Hyderabad – 500001, Telangana, India.
Phones : 040- 23234419 / 20 / 21
www.aceenggacademy.com

Email: info@aceenggpublications.com
hyderabad@aceenggacademy.com

Authors :

Subject experts of ACE Engineering Academy, Hyderabad

While every effort has been made to avoid any mistake or omission, the publishers do not owe any responsibility for any damage or loss to any person on account of error or omission in this publication.

Mistakes if any may be brought to the notice of the publishers, for further corrections in forthcoming editions, to the following Email-id.

Email : aceenggpublications@aceenggacademy.com

Since 1995

ACE

CONTENTS

S. No.	Name of the Topic	Page No.
01	India & The World	01 - 12
02	National News	12 - 57
03	November & December Current Affairs 2018	58 - 64
04	January 2019 Current Affairs	65 - 75
05	Andhra Pradesh Budget Analysis	76 - 84

Current Affairs

INDIA AND THE WORLD

ASIAN PREMIUM

- Modi Government has announced that India would coordinate with China and other Asian countries to raise voice against the “Asian premium” a sum which is being charged by the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).
- Taking the initiative forward, the current Indian Oil Corporation chairman will coordinate with the head of China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) to chalk out the strategy that would result in getting better price from OPEC countries.

About Asian Premium

- Asian Premium is the extra charge being collected by OPEC countries from exclusive Asian countries while selling oil.
- Generally there are 3 important benchmarks in global market, representing the cost of oil produced in respective geographies.
 - I. Brent: Light sweet oil representative of European market
 - II. West Texas Intermediate(WTI): US market
 - III. Dubai/Oman: Middle East and Asian Market.
- Asia and its countries miss an independent or indigenous market/ production location for importers except the export-oriented Gulf markets unlike the US & European markets. Hence, the Dubai/Oman market price was taken as the marker. But it has failed to indicate the cost of production.
- Hence, price charged from Asian countries remained \$1-\$2 dollar higher than that from Europe and the US. This price differential is termed as ‘Asian Premium’.

India’s proposes “Asian Discount”

- India sources about 86 per cent of crude oil, 75 per cent of natural gas and 95 per cent of LPG from OPEC member nations.
- Being a primary consumer, it is voicing its dissent against this discriminatory practice and has called for replacing Asian Premium with Asian Discount (dividend).
- The removal of such premium will make the crude oil cheaper thereby enabling the government to provide energy to the people who have been deprived of energy so far.

India & Nepal Relations in 2018

- Both India & Nepal has witnessed a positive 2018 in cooperating each other. The heads of both the nations has agreed on several areas of mutual interest. Some of them include
- New Partnership in Agriculture - The Partnership will be anchored by the Ministers for Agriculture of the two countries and will focus on:

- I. collaborative projects in agricultural research & development, education, training and scholarships;
 - II. strengthening of supply and value chain; climate resilience; research in seed technology; soil health;
 - III. strengthening infrastructure of plant protection laboratories; research in indigenous genetic resources; animal husbandry; veterinary research and development facilities; agro forestry; bio pesticides, bio fertilizers;
 - IV. Cooperative farming, and promoting exchanges between the Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR) and the Nepal Agricultural Research Council (NARC).
 - V. The Indian side announced a pilot project on organic farming and soil health monitoring for implementation in Nepal.
- Expanding Rail Linkages: Connecting Raxaul in India to Kathmandu in Nepal – the aim is to expand connectivity to enhance people-to-people linkages and promote economic growth and development.
 - New Connectivity between India and Nepal through Inland Waterways - The two Prime Ministers took the landmark decision to develop the inland waterways for the movement of cargo, within the framework of trade and transit arrangements, providing additional access to sea for Nepal. This new initiative would enable cost effective and efficient movement of cargo.

INDIA & UK RELATIONS IN 2018

- Prime Minister of India visited the United Kingdom in April for a bilateral visit and Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2018.
- India was the only country to be offered bilateral meetings ahead of CHOGM.
- This bilateral meeting focused on two things
 - I. “The Living Bridge” meaning all people from all walks of life in both India and in the UK have contributed to the strengthening of this engagement for growth of both the countries.
 - II. Technology Collaboration was taken as the important area where two countries can focus.
- Post Brexit Cooperation- Britain has sought to emphasize the potential for growth in trade with non-EU partners once Britain leaves the EU. India also pledged that there would be no dilution in the importance of the UK to India post Brexit.
- U.K. also seeks to develop a roughly \$700 billion economic zone with such former colonies as India and Australia by 2020, aiming to plug the hole created by its impending divorce from the European Union.
- The two countries also agreed on prioritizing freedom and openness in Indo-Pacific area, boosting defence and security cooperation, combat terrorism, radicalization and online extremism.
- India-UK Tech initiatives such as Technology Summit II, UK – India Tech Alliance, UK-India Tech Hub, UK-India Tech Cluster Partnerships, FinTech Rocketship Awards (first-of-its-kind mentoring programme) were proposed to be continued with more technology innovations.
- Green Growth Equity Fund (GGEF)- An initial investment of £240m from both governments was announced which will invest in renewable energy, clean transportation, water and waste management in India as part of India’s flagship National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF).
- International Solar Alliance- UK signed the Framework Agreement of the International Solar Alliance and became the 62nd signatory member country.

INDIA-NORDIC SUMMIT 2018

- The first ever India-Nordic Summit 2018 took place in Stockholm, Sweden.
- Nordic countries in the world include Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark and Iceland.
- This summit is important for India for many reasons such as-
 - I. Nordic countries support India's NSG membership and demands for UNSC reforms to make India a permanent member in UNO.
 - II. Nordic Sustainable Cities Project supports the Smart Cities Program of the Government of India.
 - III. Nordic solutions in clean technologies, maritime solutions, port modernization, food processing, health, life sciences and agriculture; and Nordic approach to innovation systems, characterized by a strong collaboration between public sector, private sector and academia can be useful for New India.

A CANAL TO RESHAPE INDIAN OCEAN PROPOSED BY CHINA

- China has decided to build a 100-km canal which cuts Thailand into two parts. The canal will link the South China Sea to the Andaman Sea, connecting the Pacific Ocean to the Indian Ocean.
- The first portion is seen as a counter to the "Malacca Dilemma" and the second portion is the establishment of a Special Economic Zone (SEZ). The new zone includes the addition of cities and artificial islands, which will enhance new industries and infrastructure in the region. This would make Thailand into a "logistic hub" and link Thailand to countries from all over the world.

SOUTH ASIAN CLIMATE OUTLOOK FORUM (SASCOF)

- 2018, 12th edition of South Asian Climate Outlook Forum was held at Pune, India.
- This forum was established in 2010 by the South Asian members of the World Meteorological Organization
- This forum consist of members of SAARC along with Myanmar
- This forum discusses common weather and climate related matters in south Asian region.
- It is coordinated by Indian Meteorological Department.
- The major aim of the forum is to initiate capacity building/human resource development activities for the South Asian region, particularly in seasonal prediction.

AFRICAN ASIAN RURAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION (AARDO)

- African Asian Rural Development Organization workshop 2018 was held at Kochi.
- The workshop was organized by the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) to train researchers and officials from 13 member countries of the AARDO.
- The main focus of the workshop was on food security, agriculture, and fisheries.
- AARDO internal organization was established in 1962 as an autonomous inter-governmental organization which consists of 33 member states from Africa and Asia continents.
- The group is devoted to developing understanding among members for better appreciation of each others' problems and to explore, collectively, opportunities for coordination of efforts for promoting welfare and eradication of thirst, hunger, illiteracy, disease and poverty amongst rural people.

WUHAN SUMMIT 2018

- India and China held an informal summit at Chinese city of Wuhan to discuss the matters on India-China relation.
- The major Outcomes of Wuhan Summit was
 - I. Border dispute
 - II. Trade deficit- Both sides addressed measures to better balance the ballooning trade deficit of about \$52 billion.
 - III. Terrorism- Both the countries recognized the common threat posed by terrorism and reiterated their strong condemnation of and resolute opposition to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.
 - IV. Afghanistan- Both leaders discussed a joint economic project in Afghanistan. The proposed joint economic project in Afghanistan could be instrumental in mitigating the trust deficit between the two sides
 - V. On Global Challenges- They agreed to jointly contribute towards sustainable solutions for global challenges including climate change, sustainable development, food security etc. and underline the importance of reform of multilateral financial and political institutions to make them representative and responsive to the needs of developing countries.
 - VI. Unresolved Issues- Finally, they attempted to reduce the heat over unresolved issues and so-called “irritants” in the relationship, such as China’s block on India’s NSG membership bid or the UN’s terror designation for Pakistan-based groups, and India’s opposition to the Belt and Road Initiative or its use of the Tibet issue.

KISHANGANGA AND INDUS WATER TREATY

- Prime Minister of India has inaugurated Kishanganga Hydroelectric Project and laid the Foundation Stone of the Pakal Dul Power Project in Jammu & Kashmir
- Pakal Dul, with 1000 MW capacity, will be the largest Hydro Power Project in Jammu & Kashmir on completion.
- It is also the first storage Project in Jammu & Kashmir
- The project began in 2009 and was stopped in 2010 when Pakistan appealed to Hague’s Permanent Court of Arbitration complaining that the project violated the Indus River Treaty of 1960 and deprived Pakistan the water share to its power project which is under construction at Neelam valley in PoK, as the Kishanganga river flows into Pakistan
- Court of Arbitration ordered India to submit technical data of the project and allowed India to go ahead with the construction of the dam while maintaining minimum 9 cubic metres of flow of water across border.
- 12 per cent of the power generated from Kishanganga project will be given to the J&K as “royalty”, apart from an extra 1 per cent for “local development”, while the rest will go into the national grid.
- Indus Water Treaty was signed in 1960 by India and Pakistan. As per the treaty
 - I. As per the treaty, control over three eastern rivers Ravi, Beas and Sutlej was given to India. While control over three western rivers Indus, Jhelum and Chenab was given to Pakistan.
 - II. It allows India to use only 20% of the water of Indus River, for irrigation, power generation and transport.

INDIA & RUSSIA RELATIONS IN 2018

- The two countries agreed that the Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership is an important factor for global peace and stability.

- Both leaders of the respective nations agreed to institute a Strategic Economic Dialogue between NITI Aayog of India and the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation, to identify greater synergy in trade and investment.

INDIA & CHINA WATER RELATIONS

- China in 2018 has undertaken various projects across the border and India has been insisting on greater water cooperation between the two countries
- The Trans-border River flowing from China to India fall into two main groups i.e.
 - I. The Brahmaputra river system on the Eastern side, which consist of river Siang and its tributaries, namely Subansiri and Lohit and
 - II. The Indus river system on the Western side consists of river Indus and the river Sutlej.
- In 2015, China signed the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation (LMC) framework along with five other countries as an alternative to the Asian Development Bank-led Mekong River Commission, which China never signed.
- The LMC aligns with China's Belt and Road Initiative and focuses on land and water connectivity, besides river management
- Tibet on Chinese side and Himalayan ecosystem on Indian side are one of the world's most biodiversity regions and the reckless exploitation of their mineral and water resources has threatened fragile ecosystems.
- Tibet is called the "Third Pole" due to its largest perennial ice mass on the planet after the Arctic and Antarctica but now Tibet warming is at almost three times the global average. It will have major long-term implications for the triple role Tibet plays as Asia's main freshwater repository, largest water supplier and principal rainmaker.
- Climate models suggest that major rivers running off the Himalayas, after increasing flows as glaciers melt, could lose 10-20% of their flow by 2050. This would not only reduce the rivers' capacity to produce electricity, but would exacerbate regional political tensions.
- Any disaster including flash flood, landside, dam burst etc. can cause widespread loss of life, wildlife, livelihoods and basic infrastructure in not only in India's Northeast but also in Bangladesh.

INDIA & SEYCHELLES RELATIONS IN 2018

- Seychelles President Daniel Faure visited India for bilateral talks in the backdrop of the Seychelles parliament refusal to ratify an Indian naval base plan on the Assumption Island.
- India and Seychelles are working together to bolster the island nation's need for maritime security in Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and making the IOR safe for development and trade activities.
- Besides cooperation in counter piracy and counter terrorism in high seas are also going on which is critical for India's extended maritime security.
- Under Development cooperation several initiatives like Training under Indian technical and economic cooperation (ITEC) Programme, provision of patrol vessels, hydrographic surveys etc. have been taken.
- Indian navy has deployed maritime reconnaissance aircraft to Seychelles for surveillance of the island nation's Exclusive Economic Zone.
- India and Seychelles conduct Joint Military Exercise called Lamitye annually since 2001.
- China has begun making inroads into these island nations with infrastructure projects and other commercial investments and India's relation with the country helps to counter China.

INDIA & MALDIVES RELATIONS IN 2018

- India established formal diplomatic relations with Maldives after the independence of Maldives from the British rule in 1966.
- India has been a friend in need of people of Maldives specially in Medical Tourism
- India has reduced the amount of restriction-free exports of essential commodities permitted to Maldives
- Operation Cactus was India's military aid of 1600 soldiers to Maldives to fight the armed attack of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) supported rebel groups in 1988 for an attempted coup.
- India provided bottled water through its helicopters to Maldives when its only water treatment plant collapsed in December 2014.
- In 2016 Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) meeting India prevented countries from executing punitive sanctions due to failure in creating an 'Inclusive country' and a "Genuine Democracy".
- India has also undertaken projects in Maldives such as:
 - I. Indira Gandhi Memorial Hospital (IGMH): The 200-bed state-of-the-art hospital is considered a premier institute.
 - II. Faculty of Engineering Technology (FET) which has a capacity to train several hundred students a year.
 - III. India-Maldives Friendship Faculty of Hospitality & Tourism Studies
- India has provided liberal economic aid and cooperated with Maldives for improving its Infrastructure.
- India shares very close military ties with Maldives by having two helicopter bases, integration of radars and Indian Coast Guard surveillance along Maldivian coast. India also aims to remain as a net security provider to Maldives.
- Bilateral diplomatic relations between India and Maldives have taken a beating since Maldivian President Abdulla Yameen declared a state of emergency in response to a Supreme Court order quashing the conviction of former President Mohamed Nasheed and eight other opposition politicians on various charges, including terrorism.

INDIA & BANGLADESH JOINT COMMITTEE ON BORDER HAATS

- The first meeting of the India-Bangladesh Joint Committee on Border Haats was held Agartala, Tripura.
- The both sides noted that positive impact of border haats on the livelihoods of the people living in areas adjoining the haats.
- To improve the livelihood of people on the border, India and Bangladesh will set up six more border haats in addition to the existing four.
- Border haats between two countries is a border trade market organised by the two countries one day a week. The purpose is
 - I. The border haats aim at promoting the wellbeing of the people dwelling in remote areas across the borders, by establishing traditional system of marketing the local produce through local markets.
 - II. Two border haats are located in Meghalaya at Kalaichar and Balat and two are located in Tripura at Srinagar and Kamalagar.
 - III. India and Bangladesh opened their first border haat at Kalaichar on the India-Bangladesh border in Meghalaya's West Garo Hills district on July 23, 2011 reviving the traditional border trade after nearly 40 years.

INDIA & SOUTH KOREA RELATIONS IN 2018

- India sees South Korea as an indispensable partner in its Act East policy. Similarly, Korea aims to further strengthen bilateral relations with India, which is a central pillar of its New Southern Policy.
- Korea coined a new acronym 3P Plus for boosting bilateral ties through cooperation for India - people, prosperity and peace.
- Indian Prime Minister and President of the Republic of Korea inaugurated Samsung's mobile manufacturing plant the biggest in the world, at Noida.
- South Korean President also set a trade target of \$50 billion to be achieved by 2030, up from the \$20 billion at present.
- South Korea would be the second country after China with whom India would undertake a joint project in Afghanistan.
- In terms of Commercial relations, Korea open market policies found resonance with India's economic liberalization and 'Look East Policy' as well as "Act East Policy". Trade and economic relations have gathered momentum following the implementation of CEPA in 2010 and the bilateral trade in 2011 crossed USD 20.5 billion registering a 70% growth over a two-year period. Economic engagement constitutes the core of our relations.
- India and South Korea launched an initiative 'Korea Plus', as proposed by Indian Prime Minister in June 2016 to promote and facilitate Korean Investments in India.
- Major Korean conglomerates such as Samsung, Hyundai Motors and LG have made significant investments into India, estimated at over \$4.43 billion.
- The large trade deficit in South Korea's favor has led India to be wary of further opening up. In turn, Korean companies cite problems in doing business in India, despite a special "Korea Plus" desk set up by the Prime Minister's Office in 2015.

10th BRICS SUMMIT: JOHANNESBURG DECLARATION

- The 10th BRICS Summit was held at Johannesburg in 2018. It was held on the occasion of the centenary of the birth of Nelson Mandela.
- BRICS is the acronym coined by British Economist Jim O'Neill in 2001. Officially formed in 2006, it originally included four emerging economies of Brazil, Russia, India and China. Its first summit took place at Russia in 2009. Later in 2010, South Africa became the 5th member of the grouping.
- Theme of the 2018 summit was - "BRICS in Africa: Collaboration for Inclusive Growth and Shared Prosperity in the 4th Industrial Revolution".
- A Johannesburg Declaration was taken in the summit which agrees for
 - I. Multilateral Trading System: It stresses the centrality of rules based, transparent, nondiscriminatory, open and inclusive multilateral trading based on WTO.
 - II. Commitment to United Nations: It commits support for multilateralism and the central role of the United Nations in international affairs and uphold fair, just and equitable international order, respect for international law, promoting democracy and the rule of law.
 - III. Importance of 4th Industrial Revolution: It recognizes the importance and role of culture as one of the drivers of the 4th Industrial Revolution and acknowledges the economic opportunities that it presents. It recommends the establishment of BRICS Partnership on New Industrial Revolution

- IV. On counter-terrorism: It calls upon the international community to establish a genuinely broad international counter-terrorism coalition and support the UN's central coordinating role in this regard. It calls for expeditious finalisation and adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) by the United Nations General Assembly.
- V. Brazil to get a New Development Bank (NDB) regional office: The Declaration mentioned the creation of the Project Preparation Fund and establishment of the NDB Regional Office in Sao Paulo, Brazil, which, alongside the Africa Regional Centre, will help the NDB consolidate its presence in these continents.

DELHI DIALOGUE X

- India hosted the 10th edition of the Delhi Dialogue with a theme “Strengthening India-ASEAN Maritime Cooperation”.
- The main focus areas are politico-security, economic and socio-cultural engagement between India and ASEAN.
- It has been held annually since 2009 in partnership with Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS).
- RIS is a New Delhi-based autonomous policy research institute that specialises in issues related to international economic development, trade, investment and technology.

UN MILITARY OBSERVER GROUP IN INDIA AND PAKISTAN (UNMOGIP)

- UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has appointed a veteran Uruguay Army general, Major General Jose Eladio Alcain, as the chief military observer of the UNMOGIP.
- The UNMOGIP was established in January 1949 with first team of unarmed military observers arriving in Jammu and Kashmir to supervise the ceasefire between India and Pakistan, and to assist the Military Adviser to the UN Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP), established in 1948 by the UN Security Council.
- Following the India-Pakistan war in 1971 and a subsequent ceasefire agreement, the tasks of UNMOGIP have been to observe, to the extent possible, developments pertaining to the strict observance of the ceasefire of December 17, 1971 and to report to the Secretary-General.

BIMSTEC FORUM & 2018 SUMMIT

- The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) established in 1997 is a regional organization comprising of seven member states in South Asia and Southeast Asia lying in littoral and adjacent areas of Bay of Bengal constituting a contiguous regional unity.
- The fourth BIMSTEC Summit 2018 was held in Kathmandu.
- It concluded with the leaders reaffirming their strong commitment to make BIMSTEC a dynamic, effective and result-oriented regional organization.
- The Kathmandu Declaration underlined the importance of multidimensional connectivity as a key enabler for economic integration and shared prosperity of the region. Some important take aways of Katmandu Declaration is
 - I. Proposed to draft a charter for BIMSTEC, which has functioned so far on the basis of the Bangkok Declaration of 1997.
 - II. Setting up of a Permanent Working Committee to provide direction during the period between two summits and also to prepare the Rules of Procedure.

- III. The Secretariat has been promised additional financial and human resources and enhancement of its role to coordinate, monitor and facilitate the grouping's activities.
- IV. Establishing a BIMSTEC Development Fund, with voluntary contributions from the Member States.
- V. Welcomed Thailand proposed new strategy of five pillars (viz. connectivity, trade and investment, people-to-people contacts, security, and science and technology) as a part of rationalisation of focus sectors
- VI. Strongly condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations

SAARC AGRI COOPERATIVE BUSINESS FORUM

- The First South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Agri Cooperative Business Forum was held in Kathmandu, Nepal.
- The theme of three-day Forum was the “Organizing and Strengthening Family Farmers”.
- It is being co-organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and Asian Farmers’ Association with the support from the International Fund for Agricultural Development.
- The forum aims to share and learn from experiences of various organizations (from government, FOs and international development partners) in organizing and strengthening family farmer’s agricultural cooperatives towards promoting sustainable incomes, livelihoods and rural development.

INDIA AND ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

- ADB was founded in 1966 and CONSIST OF 67 MEMBERS. India is a founding member.
- Top 5 shareholders in ADB are: Japan (15.6%), United States (15.6%), People’s Republic of China (6.4%), India (6.3%) and Australia (5.8%)
- It provides direct assistance to private enterprises of developing member countries through equity investments and loans.
- The country partnership strategy (CPS) 2018-2022 will focus on three pillars.
 - I. Pillar 1 will boost economic competitiveness to create more and better jobs by expanding infrastructure networks for transport and energy along economic corridors, enhancing management of corridor development and urban centers, and addressing the skills gap to support industrialization.\
 - II. Pillar 2 will provide inclusive access to infrastructure networks and social services by improving the infrastructure bottlenecks in lagging regions, providing better municipal services for the urban poor, and supporting investments in rural infrastructure to improve agricultural productivity and reduce the growing rural-urban income gap. Efficient public sector management will be supported to create fiscal space for investments in inclusive growth for social and rural development.
 - III. Pillar 3 will address environmental degradation through mitigating the negative impacts of climate change and promoting sustainable natural resource use in the project design.

INDIA USA 2+2 TALKS

- India and USA held the first edition of their 2+2 dialogue involving Indian External Affairs and Defence Ministers and their American counterparts in New Delhi, where they also signed long-pending Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA).
- COMCASA is one of the four foundational agreements that the U.S. signs with allies and close partners to facilitate interoperability between militaries and sale of high end technology.
- COMCASA, an India-specific version of the Communication and Information on Security Memorandum of Agreement (CISMOA), comes into force immediately and is valid for a period 10 years. Both countries will implement this agreement in a manner that is consistent with the national security interests of the other.
- The major outcomes of the talks are
 - I. Signing of COMCASA: India and the USA began a new generation of military and security cooperation by signing Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA)
 - II. Setting up of a hotline between External Affairs Minister and Defence Minister with their American counterparts: this will help maintain regular high-level communication on emerging developments.
 - III. Tri-service exercise: India and U.S. will hold a first-ever tri-service exercise on the east coast of India in 2019 and further increase personnel exchanges between the two militaries and defense organizations.
 - IV. Deepening of maritime cooperation in Western Indian Ocean: the ministers committed to start an exchange between the US Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT) and the Indian Navy, announced deployment of an Indian liaison officer at NAVCENT, which is incharge of naval operations in Afghanistan, Pakistan and the oil rich Gulf Countries.
 - V. Expressed commitment towards working together on regional and global issues, including in bilateral, trilateral and quadrilateral formats: meeting also focused on regional stability in South Asia, South-East Asia and Indo-Pacific and both sides also expressed support for an Afghan-led, Afghan-owned peace and reconciliation process.
 - VI. Promoting defence innovation: a Memorandum of Intent was signed between the U.S. Defense Innovation Unit (DIU) and the Indian Defence Innovation Organization — Innovation for Defence Excellence (DIO-iDEX), which will look into joint projects for co-production and co-development projects through the Defense Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI).
 - VII. Negotiations on Industrial Security Annex (ISA): The two defence ministers also announced readiness to begin negotiations on an Industrial Security Annex (ISA) that would support closer defence industry cooperation and collaboration. An ISA is required to enable private Indian participation in defence production and is particularly important as India opens up defence manufacturing to the private sector in a big way.

SCO PEACE MISSION 2018

- The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation is a permanent intergovernmental international organisation, which came in to force in 2001 at Shanghai by the Republic of Kazakhstan, the People's Republic of China, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan, and the Republic of Uzbekistan.
- SCO presently comprises eight member states, namely the Republic of India, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the People's Republic of China, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan, and the Republic of Uzbekistan;

- SCO counts four observer states, namely the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Republic of Belarus, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Mongolia;
- It has six dialogue partners, namely the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Armenia, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, the Republic of Turkey, and the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
- Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Peace Mission 2018 exercise was started on 24 August 2018 at Chebarkul, Russia.
- All eight members of SCO (China, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, India and Pakistan) participated in this exercise.
- This exercise was aimed at enhancing cooperation between member states to deal with growing threat of terrorism and extremism.

INDIA & MYANMAR RELATIONS 2018

- India and Myanmar recently opened two land border crossings through a Land Border Crossing Agreement.
- The two crossing points are at Moreh in Manipur, opposite Tamu in Myanmar's Sagaing division, and Zokhawthar in Mizoram, opposite Rihkhawdar in Myanmar's Chin state.
- It marked the abolishing of special land entry permission which was previously required for visitors entering the country via land routes.
- Myanmar is an important part of India's Act East Policy and the step is crucial for the policy in following ways-
 - I. Improved Connectivity- Myanmar is crucial for New Delhi's connectivity initiatives in the region, particularly in light of its nonparticipation in the Beijing-led Belt and Road Initiative. The efforts are complimented by various other ongoing connectivity projects in the region.
 - II. It has eased the connectivity between the people having brethren across the long border shared between the two countries.
 - III. Support India's involvement in Myanmar over China's increasing influence- Projects like Kaladan are already facing delays which can be cured to some extent by the agreement.
 - IV. Push to Tourism- It will help in the growth of tourism in Northeast India and Myanmar.
- IMT Trilateral Highway: a regional highway being constructed under India's Act East policy. It will connect Moreh in India with Mae Sot, Thailand via Myanmar. The highway is expected to boost trade and commerce in ASEAN-India Free Trade Area, as well as with rest of Southeast Asia.
- The second land border crossing at ZokhawtharRihkhawdar will be connected to the Trilateral Highway at Kalemmyo, near Kalewa in Myanmar.
- Motor Vehicle Agreement: India, Myanmar and Thailand has been negotiating for finalising and implementing a Motor Vehicle Agreement .This agreement is necessary to utilise physical road infrastructure on IMT Trilateral Highway and other infrastructural linkages.
- Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project is a project that will connect the eastern Indian seaport of Kolkata with Sittwe seaport in Rakhine State, Myanmar by sea. In Myanmar, it will then link Sittwe seaport to Paletwa, Chin State via the Kaladan river boat route, and then from Paletwa by road to Mizoram state in Northeast India.

INDIA BECOMES PRESIDENT OF AIBD

- India has been elected as the President of the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD) for a period of two years.
- President status will help India in leveraging itself as the broadcasting and media hub in Asia Pacific Region.
- India got the presidency of the organisation for the first time by defeating Iran in the election
- AIBD It is a regional inter-governmental organisation servicing countries of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP) in the field of electronic media development.
- It was established in 1977 under the auspices of UNESCO and the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) is a founding organisation of the Institute and is a non-voting member of the General Conference.
- It is hosted by Malaysia and its secretariat is located in Kuala Lumpur.
- The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), are also founding organisations of the Institute.
- Its function is to achieve a vibrant and cohesive electronic media environment in the Asia-Pacific region through policy and mobilizing the intellectual and technological resources available within the national broadcasting organizations.

NATIONAL NEWS

SCHEDULED CASTES AND THE SCHEDULED TRIBES (PREVENTION OF ATROCITIES) ACT 1989 AND SUBHASH MAHAJAN Vs STATE OF MAHARASHTRA

- In a complaint filed under the Atrocities Act, Supreme Court of India felt the need of procedural safeguards and issued the following directions in Subhash Mahajan vs State of Maharashtra.
- Supreme Court said there is no absolute bar against grant of anticipatory bail in cases under the Atrocities Act if no prima facie case is made out or where on judicial scrutiny, the complaint is found to be prima facie mala fide.
- In view of acknowledged abuse of law of arrest in cases under the Atrocities Act, arrest of a public servant can only be after approval of the appointing authority (Prior Sanction) and of a non-public servant after approval by the concerned police.
- To avoid false implication of an innocent, a preliminary enquiry may be conducted by the DSP concerned to find out whether the allegations make out a case under the Atrocities Act and that the allegations are not frivolous or motivated
- Any violation of above directions will be actionable by way of disciplinary action as well as contempt.
- Subsequently, Centre moved to Supreme Court challenging the ruling that prevented automatic arrests on complaints filed under this act but Supreme Court upheld the directions it had issued. ___

15th FINANCE COMMISSION OF INDIA CONSTITUTED

- President has constituted India's 15th Finance commission to determine the revenue sharing between Center and States for the years 2020 to 2025.
- Article 280 of the Indian Constitution says there shall be a Finance Commission for India.
- Nanda Kishore Singh is appointed as the chairman of 15th Finance Commission by President

- For the first time 15th Finance Commission will use 2011 population census for formulating the revenues
- Finance ministers from four southern states have opposed Terms of reference (ToR) of the 15th Finance commission to use the 2011 Census to calculate population for allocation of Union tax revenue in place of 1971 Census.
- This would lead to penalizing those states which have focused on family planning and population control after 1971 census figures showed a dramatic increase in population.
- The TOR have been framed unilaterally without consulting the States
- The Fourteenth Commission also after examining various factors to represent demographic changes, chose population figures of 2011 and assigned 10% weightage in addition to the 17.5% weightage given to the 1971 population data.
- The ToR balances the “needs” represented by the latest Census and “progress towards population control”.
- A relatively more advanced state is supposed to contribute more in taxes so that a relatively more backward state is cross-subsidised for balanced and equitable regional development.

NITI FORUM FOR NORTH EAST

- The first meeting of the newly constituted “NITI Forum for North East” 2018 took place in Agartala, Tripura.
- The forum was constituted in February 2018 with an aim to ensure sustainable economic growth of the North Eastern Region (NER) of the country and periodically review the development status in NER.
- It is co-chaired by the Vice-Chairman of NITI Aayog and Minister of State (I/C), Ministry of Development of Northeastern Region (DoNER)
- The forum will base projects in the NER on the concept of “HIRA” (Highways, Inland Waterways, Railways and Airways)
- In the meeting, following five development missions in different sectors have been outlined:
 - I. Horticulture
 - II. Tourism
 - III. Food processing
 - IV. Bamboo-based handicrafts
 - V. Medium scale industries

E-VIDHAN MISSION MODE PROJECT

- Government has started a new office of Central Project Monitoring Unit for the e-Vidhan project.
- It is a mission mode project to digitize and make the functioning of State Legislatures in India paperless.
- It is a software suite of public website, secure website, house applications and mobile apps that fully automate the functioning of legislative assembly
- The Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs is the Nodal Ministry for the project.
- One of the key component of the strategy devised for implementation of the project is to create Project Monitoring Units both at Central as well as State levels.
- Himachal Pradesh became the first state to use e-vidhan site and launch a mobile app.

COMPETITION COMMISSION OF INDIA (CCI)

- CCI was established under CCI Act of 2002 mainly to Prevent practices having adverse effect on competition ,to Promote and sustain competition in markets, to Protect the interests of consumers, to ensure freedom of trade carried on by other participants in the markets of India.
- It was initially envisioned as a 10-member Commission and supposed to have had benches in different cities. However, later the provision for creation of benches was removed and it was made a 7 member body to be appointed by the central government.
- Central Government has decided to reduce the members appointed by it in the CCI.
- The number of members has been reduced from one chairperson and six members to one chairperson and three members.
- Under the CCI Act, all members in office have to sign on an order. Large numbers make this difficult to implement. The reduced strength makes the CCI a potentially faster decision-making body.
- It would reduce government interference in CCI and would stimulate business process of corporates and generate job opportunities by speeding up hearings and approvals.

ELECTRONICALLY TRANSMITTED POSTAL BALLOT SYSTEM (ETBPS) USED IN INDIA

- The ETPBS was used in Chengannur (Kerala) Assembly bypoll for service voters.
- It was developed by the Election Commission with the help of Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) to provide an alternative method of quick dispatch of Postal Ballot paper electronically (earlier delivered by post) to the entitled Service Voters.
- It uses QR codes for uniqueness of the Service Voters and the secrecy in transmission is ensured by the use of OTP and PIN.
- The postal ballots are delivered in electronic data format to voters on a real time basis.
- The voters can download the postal ballot and votes so cast would be received by the returning officer through post.
- It was first used in Nellithope by-elections in Puducherry in 2016.
- Service voters under Representatives of People's Act are:
 - I. Members of Armed Forces of the Union
 - II. Members of forces to which provisions of Army Act, 1950 applies.
 - III. Members of armed police force of a State and serving outside that state
 - IV. Persons who are employed by GOI in a post outside India

SUPREME COURT PERMITTED RESERVATION IN PROMOTION

- The Supreme Court has permitted Central government for reservation in promotion to SC/ST employees working in the public sector in “accordance with law”
- This direction of apex court came in the response to government’s complaint that promotions were at a “standstill” due to separate orders passed by various high courts.
- The Supreme Court’s decision will permit the government to fill a large number of vacancies in various departments.
- ‘In accordance with law’ points towards the guidelines laid down in M Nagaraj case 2006 presently applicable as

there is no specific law which deals with the reservation in promotions.

- In Nagaraj judgement, apex court while upholding the previous constitutional amendments regarding this issue, put some restrictions on the state that it should:
 - I. Collect quantifiable data showing backwardness of the class and inadequacy of representation of that class in public employment.
 - II. Ensure that efficiency of administration is not reduced while giving promotion.
 - III. Not breach the ceiling-limit of 50% or obliterate the creamy layer or extend the reservation indefinitely.
- Provisions under articles 16(4), 16 (4A) and 16 (4B) of the Constitution are only enabling provisions, and not a fundamental right. In a case the Supreme Court ruled that no reservation in promotions would be given in appointment for faculty posts at the super specialty block in AIIMS.

CAUVERY WATER MANAGEMENT SCHEME 2018

- The Union Water Resources ministry notified the constitution of the Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA) and the Cauvery Water Regulation Committee (CWRC) under Cauvery Water Management Scheme, 2018 following the directions of Supreme Court.
- SC while accepting that the issue of drinking water has to be placed on a “higher pedestal”, raised the share of Cauvery water for Karnataka by 14.75 tmcft and reduced Tamil Nadu’s share, while compensating it by allowing extraction of 10 tmcft groundwater from the river basin.
- The major functions of CWMA includes
 - I. Monitor and determine the total residual storage, apportion shares, supervise operation of reservoirs at the beginning of water year (1 June) with the assistance of the Cauvery Water Regulation Committee.
 - II. Regulate release of water by Karnataka, at the inter-state contact point at Billigundulu gauge.
 - III. Advise suitable measures to improve water use efficiency, by promoting micro-irrigation (drip and sprinkler), change in cropping pattern, improved agronomic practices, system deficiency correction and command area development.
 - IV. Take suitable actions in case of defaults by party states.

Cauvery Water Regulation Committee (CWRC)

- Head Quartered at Bengaluru, Cauvery Water Regulation Committee (CWRC) would consist of a Chairman and one representative each of the party states, Indian Meteorological Department (IMD), Central Water Commission (CWC) and Ministry of Agriculture & Farmer’s Welfare, along with a Member Secretary.
- CWRC would act as a technical arm with following functions:
 - I. Collecting data regarding levels, inflows, storages and release of water periodically.
 - II. Preparing seasonal/annual report of the water account for SW monsoon, NE monsoon, Hot weather and submit it to the CWMA.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF CITIZENS (NRC)

- It is a list of all bona fide Indian citizens of Assam, the only state with such a document. The NRC is being updated as per the provisions of The Citizenship Act, 1955 and The Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of

National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003

- It will include persons whose names appear in any of the electoral rolls upto the midnight of 24th March, 1971 or National Register of Citizens, 1951 and their descendants.
- The process of verification involved house-to-house field verification, determination of authenticity of documents, family tree investigations in order to rule out bogus claims of parenthood, and linkages and separate hearings for married women.
- Assam has published the final draft of the updated National Register of Citizens (NRC).
- Assam's demographic changes date back to the 19th century when British brought in tribal labourers from Chota Nagpur and Bihar to work on the plantations. This also encouraged the migration of Muslim farmers from Bengal which continued after Independence and partition.
- To tackle the illegal immigration issue just after the independence, NRC was first prepared after the Census of 1951. But this process rendered ineffective due to vote bank politics.
- In 1979, agitation was started by All Assam student Union for illegal migrant deportation which culminated in signing of Assam Accord in 1985.
- The Citizenship Act of 1955 was amended after the Assam Accord for all Indian-origin people who came from Bangladesh before January 1, 1966 to be deemed as citizens. Those who came between January 1, 1966 and March 25, 1971 were eligible for citizenship after registering and living in the State for 10 years while those entering after March 25, 1971, were to be deported. However, nothing much happened over the decades.
- In 2014, the Supreme Court asked the state government to update the 1951 NRC in a time-bound manner. Present exercise is being conducted under the supervision of the Supreme Court.

L-G IS BOUND BY AID AND ADVISE OF DELHI GOVERNMENT

- A five-judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court (SC) unanimously held that Delhi Lieutenant Governor is bound by the aid and advice of the Delhi government.
- The judgment came on appeals filed by the NCT government against a 2016 verdict of the Delhi High Court, which had declared that the L-G has complete control of all matters regarding the National Capital Territory of Delhi and nothing will happen without the concurrence of the L-G.
- LG does not possess independent decision-making: The Lieutenant Governor has not been entrusted with any independent decision-making power. He has to either act on the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers or he is bound to implement the decision taken by the President on a reference being made by him.
- People are sovereign: It's the people who are sovereign and the decisions of the elected government in Delhi represent the public will, perception and popular sentiment.
- Executive power co-extensive with the legislative power: The Court made it clear that the executive power of the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (GNCTD) is co-extensive with the legislative power of the Delhi Assembly, which is envisaged in the Constitution and which extends over all but three subjects in state list and all subjects in the concurrent list.
- LG's discretion limited to 3 subjects: SC trimmed the LG's authority saying that he cannot exercise his discretion in each and every matter of daily governance. His discretionary powers are in fact limited to only 3 matters in the State List i.e. public order, police and land over which the legislative power of the Delhi Legislative Assembly

stand excluded under Article 239AA.

- LG bound by aid and advice of CoM: The LG is bound by the aid and advice of his Council of Ministers in matters for which the Delhi legislative assembly has legislative powers. The only exception to this rule is a proviso to Article 239-AA, which allowed the LG to refer to the President any issue on which there was a difference of opinion with the council of ministers. In such a case, the court said the LG would be bound by the President's decision.
- Trivial matters should not be sent to the President: The court urged the LG against sending trivial differences of opinion with the NCT government to the President for a final decision.
- Other issues do not require LG's concurrence: The NCT government need only to inform the LG of its well-deliberated decisions. The government need not obtain his concurrence on every issue of day-to-day governance.

LEGALISING SPORTS BETTING IN INDIA – LAW COMMISSION RECOMMENDS

- The Law Commission of India submitted a report to the government, saying that since it is impossible to stop illegal gambling, the only viable option left is to “regulate” gambling in sports.
- The Constitution of India in its Seventh Schedule, List II (State List) empowers the State Governments to make laws regarding gambling and betting activities.
- Pre-independence there was no such distinction and the Public Gambling Act, 1867, governed gambling and betting activities in the country.
- The Public Gambling Act, 1867, prohibits any games of chance and probability except lotteries.
- The Act prohibits owning, keeping and being found in a common gaming house, however, the Act excludes “games of skill” from its ambit.
- The Information Technology Act 2000 prohibits online gambling and the punishment for such activities is much more serious than for offline gambling operations.
- Regulation would empower the authorised agencies to identify and prevent instances of gambling by minors and ‘problem-gamblers’.
- Regulated betting should be permitted to curb the menace of match-fixing. According to International Cricket Council's Anti-Corruption Unit, it is easier to monitor illegal betting activity in a regulated market.
- Other benefits include generating considerable revenue; generating employment; development of tourism as it may work as a complimentary industry; and preventing any kind of inconvenience at the hands of the law enforcement authorities.
- It will help in controlling of money laundering business. At present betting racket is run by the underworld and huge amount of money is transferred through Hawala transactions which is used for terrorism.

FUGITIVE ECONOMIC OFFENDERS BILL (FEOB) GOT PRESIDENT ASSENT

- There have been several instances of economic offenders fleeing the jurisdiction of Indian courts, anticipating the commencement, or during the pendency of criminal proceedings. The absence of such offenders from Indian courts has several deleterious consequences such as
 - I. It hampers investigation in criminal cases, wastes precious time of courts and undermines the rule of law in India.
 - II. Most such cases of economic offences involve non-repayment of bank loans thereby worsening the financial

health of the banking sector in India.

- The existing civil and criminal provisions in law are not entirely adequate to deal with the severity of the problem. It is, therefore, felt necessary to provide an effective, expeditious and constitutionally permissible deterrent to ensure that such actions are curbed.
- In this view the new Act was proposed in order to address the lacunae in the present laws and lay down measures to deter economic offenders from evading the process of Indian law by remaining outside the jurisdiction of Indian courts.
- The Act is expected to re-establish the rule of law by plugging gaps in the existing laws thus providing a higher deterrent effect on economic offenders.
- This would also help the banks and other financial institutions to achieve higher recovery from financial defaults committed by fugitive economic offenders, improving the financial health of such institutions.
- The Act allows for a person to be declared as a fugitive economic offender (FEO) if:
 - I. An arrest warrant has been issued against him for any specified offences where the value involved is over Rs 100 crore, and
 - II. He has left the country and refuses to return to face prosecution.
- It extends not only to loan defaulters and fraudsters, but also to individuals who violate laws governing taxes, black money, benami properties and financial corruption.
- The Enforcement Directorate (ED) will be the apex agency to implement the law. To declare a person an FEO, an application will be filed in a Special Court (designated under the Prevention of Money-Laundering Act, 2002) containing details of the properties to be confiscated, and any information about the person's whereabouts.
- The Special Court will require the person to appear at a specified place at least six weeks from issue of notice. Proceedings will be terminated if the person appears.
- The Act allows authorities to provisionally attach properties of an accused, while the application is pending before the Special Court.
- Those classified as fugitives will also not be able to pursue any civil cases in India unless they come back to India and face prosecution.

MANIPUR PEOPLE'S PROTECTION BILL 2018 PASSED

- Manipur Assembly has passed People's Protection Bill to regulate the entry and exit of "outsiders" on the lines of British-era regulatory regime.
- The bill seeks to "protect the identity of indigenous people" of the state from the influx of outsiders.
- It defines "Manipuris" and "non-Manipuris" and seeks to regulate the entry and exit of the latter in order to protect the interests and identity of the former.
- According to the Bill, Manipuris include the Meiteis, the Pangal Muslims, Manipuri scheduled tribes listed under the Constitution and Indian nationals who have been living in Manipur before 1951.
- Those who didn't fall under this umbrella were deemed "non-Manipuris" and were given a month to register themselves to the authorities.
- The bill is awaiting a nod from the President of India.
- The Bill sets 1951 as the base year to identify locals and prevent an influx of outsiders. If approved by the Governor and made an Act, people who came to Manipur after 1951 would be viewed as "foreigners" and would

have no voting or land rights.

- A 1951 cut-off was problematic for tribal communities as data of several villages in the National Register of Citizens, 1951, as well as in the Village Directory of 1951 is not available or not accurate – which, in turn, could render many tribals as non-state subjects.
- The state of Manipur was formed on January 21, 1972 and thus a number of stake holders wanted it to be the cutoff date.
- The tribal protestors claimed an Inner Line Permit would serve only the interests of the Meiteis, and enable them to encroach upon the hills and tribal lands.

RBI DECIDES TO USE GDP INSTEAD OF GVA

- Reserve Bank of India has decided to use Gross Domestic Product (GDP), instead of Gross Value Added (GVA) to measure economic activity in the country.
- This move has been taken by RBI as GDP is the measure of economic performance used not only by multilateral institutions, international analysts and investors but it is also in consonance with international practice and thus facilitates easy cross-country comparisons.
- Even CSO has started using GDP as the main measure of economic activity from this year.
- Through revision of National Accounts statistics in 2015 by following changes were made
- GDP of the country is to be estimated in terms of Market Price
- GDP means the total value of a country's annual output of goods and services and GDP at factor cost represents what the producers in the economy make from industrial activity — wages, profits, rents and capital — called “factors of production”.
- Gross value added (GVA) is the value addition done to a product resulting in the production of final product. GVA provides the rupee value of the amount of goods and services that have been produced, less the cost of all inputs and raw materials while producing these goods and services. There can be GVA for a firm, industry, sector or the entire economy.
- GVA at basic prices include production taxes and exclude production subsidies available on the commodity and GDP at market prices include both production and product taxes and excludes both production and product subsidies.
- GVA gives a picture of the state of economic activity from the producers' side or the supply side. GDP gives the picture from the consumer's side or the demand perspective.
- GVA is considered a closer representative of economic activities because it provides sector wise breakdown measure and helps policymakers decide which sectors need incentives or stimulus and accordingly formulate sector specific policies.
- However, RBI has decided to shift to GDP as it is the measure of economic performance used not only by multilateral institutions, international analysts and investors but it is also in consonance with international practice and thus facilitates easy cross-country comparisons.
- Even CSO has started using GDP as the main measure of economic activity from this year.

IMPORTANT SUPREME COURT CASES IN 2018

No.	Case	Year	Subject
1	Bijeo Emmanuel Vs State of Kerala	2018	National Anthem in cinema halls made compulsory
2	Common Cause NGO case (Public Interest Litigation)	2005 & 2018	Right To Die With Dignity A Fundamental Right under Article 21, Passive Euthanasia And Living Will allowed.
3	Justice Puttaswamy Vs Union of India	2018	AADHAR declared not mandatory in certain cases and upheld the concept of Right to Privacy
4	Joseph Shine Vs Union of India	2018	Deleted Section 497 of IPC, which deals with Adultery. Supreme Court said "Husband is not the master of Wife"
5	Shayara Bano v. Union of India	2017	Declared Triple Talaq Unconstitutional as per Article 14,19 & 21 of Indian Constitution
6	Indian young lawyers associations Vs State of Kerala	2018	Devotion Cannot Be Subjected To Gender Discrimination, Women Entry Allowed In Sabarimala By 4:1 Majority
7	Navtej Singh Johar & Others Vs Union of India	2018	Section 377 of IPC declared unconstitutional by 5:0 Majority
8	Jarnail Singh v Lachhmi Narain Gupta & others	2018	No Need to Collect Quantifiable Data Of Backwardness To Give Reservation In Promotions For SC/STs- Nagraj case of 2006 Decision Clarified by supreme court.
9	Shafin Jahan Vs Ashokan K. M. & Others	2018	Supreme Court in this case said "Right To Change Of Faith Is Part Of Fundamental Right Of Choice"
10	Swapnil Tripathi Vs Supreme Court of India	2018	The Court proceedings shall be live-streamed in the larger public interest. Supreme Court has said that appropriate Rules in that regard will be framed soon under Article 145 of the Constitution of India.
11	Tehseen Poonawalla Vs Union of India & Others	2018	Supreme Court said the horrendous acts of mobocracy cannot be allowed to become a new norm in the Country. (Lynching)
12	Arjun Gopal & Others. Vs Union of India	2018	Supreme Court refused Complete Ban On Sale Of Firecrackers, Online Sale Banned; Duration For Bursting Crackers Fixed for 2 hours.

EXPLORATION OF COAL BED METHANE (CBM)

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by the Prime Minister gave its approval for issuing a notification amending Oil Fields (Regulation and Development) Act, 1948 (ORD Act, 1948).
- Government had earlier issued a notification in 2015 granting rights to CIL and its subsidiaries for exploration and exploitation of CBM from all coal bearing areas for which they possess mining lease for coal. However, permission was required for Mining Lease (ML) for CBM by Ministry of Petroleum and Natural gas.
- The new amendment makes requirement of permission has been done away with for CIL and its subsidiaries.
- It is in line with the Government's initiatives of 'Ease of Doing Business'.
- It will expedite the exploration and exploitation of CBM, enhance the availability of natural gas and reduce the gap in demand and supply of natural gas.
- Since most of CBM regions are in backward regions of the country, it can encourage development by providing employment.
- Coal Bed Methane (CBM) is an unconventional form of natural gas found in coal deposits or coal seams. It is formed during the process of coalification, the transformation of plant material into coal.
- It can be recovered from underground coal before, during, or after mining operations.
- In CBM, as opposed to conventional oil and gas, the production increases gradually till it hits its peak, and so it is best suited for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) who require smaller amounts of fuel.

THE LIBERALIZED REMITTANCE SCHEME (LRS)

- It's a facility provided by the RBI for all resident individuals including minors to freely remit upto \$ 250,000 per person per year for current and capital account purposes or a combination of both.
- Regulations for the scheme are provided under the FEMA Act 1999.
- Under LRS, remittances can be made for overseas education, travel, medical treatment, apart from maintenance of relatives living abroad, gifting and donations. The money can be remitted for the purchase of shares and property as well.
- Restriction on Remittance as proposed by RBI are
 - I. To send money to countries identified as 'non-cooperative jurisdictions' by the Financial Action Task Force.
 - II. For trading on the foreign exchange markets, purchase of Foreign Currency Convertible Bonds issued by Indian companies abroad only.
- Reserve Bank of India has recently, tightened reporting norms for the Liberalized Remittance Scheme (LRS) Scheme.
- Banks will be required to upload daily transaction-wise information undertaken by them under LRS.
- Move is aimed at improving the monitoring and ensuring compliance with the LRS ceilings.

UTTAM APP

- The Union Minister for Railways and Coal launched UTTAM App for Coal Quality Monitoring.
- This app is called Unlocking Transparency by Third Party Assessment of Mined Coal (UTTAM)
- The salient features of UTTAM APP are:
 - I. Provides for Third Party
 - II. Holistic coverage of coal quality across subsidiaries

- III. Comparison between Declared and analyzed Gross Calorific Value
- IV. Reflects the trend of complaints pertaining to quality of Coal represents the trend of coal imported over the years.

PRECISION AGRICULTURE USING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

- Precision agriculture means application of precise and correct amount of inputs like water, fertilizer, pesticides etc. It is a farming management concept based on observing, measuring and responding to inter and intra-field variability in crops.
- The goal is to define a decision support system (DSS) for whole farm management for optimizing returns on inputs while preserving resources.
- Advanced technology like big data analytics, artificial intelligence (AI), and the Internet of Things (IoT) can help farmers to make precise decisions from planting, growing, harvesting, to transporting food.
- NITI Aayog and IBM has signed a Statement of Intent to develop Precision Agriculture using Artificial Intelligence(AI) in Aspirational Districts.
- It is first of a kind project leveraging Artificial Intelligence in agriculture across 10 Aspirational Districts in India across the States of Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh in its Phase I. The project will aim at improving yields of small landholders.
- IBM will be using AI to provide all the relevant data and platform for developing technological models for improving agricultural output and productivity for various crops and soil types, for the identified districts.
- The scope of this project is to introduce and make available climate-aware cognitive farming techniques and identifying systems of crop monitoring, early warning on pest/disease outbreak based on advanced AI innovations

CABOTAGE LAW

- Cabotage refers to shipping along coastal routes between foreign sea ports, and also to the restriction on the operation of vessels between sea ports within a particular country. It is governed by the Merchant Shipping Act (MSA) of 1958.
- It aims to protect domestic shipping industry from foreign competition as well as for the purpose of national security. Presently, foreign-flagged ships can transport cargo within the country, in the non-availability of India Ships, after obtaining a licence.
- Recently, Ministry of Shipping relaxed Cabotage restrictions on the movement of foreign ships.
- The recent changes allow movement of foreign ships engaged in transporting containers laden with goods for export or import as well as empty containers between and among Indian ports along the country's coastline.
- Indian trade carried by Indian ships/flagships has come down from around 42% in the 1990s to less than 8% at present. Similarly, Operational expertise available to foreign shipping industry would undermine the position of the domestic shipping industry.

DESIGNATED OFFSHORE SECURITIES MARKET

- Bombay Stock Exchange has become the first Indian exchange to be designated as a “Designated Offshore Securities Market” by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).
- Till now, equity and bond securities traded on the BSE and issued in the US could not generally be resold in non prearranged trades without fulfilling certain requirements.

- Now with DOSM status sale of securities to US investors through the trading venue of BSE without registration of such securities with the US SEC, which eases the trades by US investors in India are allowed.
- It will also enhance the attractiveness of Indian Depository Receipts (IDRs) amongst US investors.
- The BSE's new status will provide additional benefits to companies whose securities are traded both in the US and on the BSE for e.g. certain directors and officers of dual listed companies will be permitted to resell their securities on the BSE, regardless of any restrictions or holding periods that may apply under the US securities laws.
- Only a few exchanges globally enjoy the DOSM recognition, such as London Stock Exchange, Bourse de Luxembourg, Tokyo Stock Exchange and Toronto Stock Exchange.

RAILWAY FREIGHT CORRIDORS TO BE OPERATIONAL SOON

- The dedicated freight corridor (DFC) project is being implemented by Ministry of Railways. The project involves the construction of six freight corridors traversing the entire country.
- Initially the construction of Eastern and Western DFCs is being undertaken. The other four corridors North-South (Delhi-Tamil Nadu), East-West (West Bengal-Maharashtra), East-South (West Bengal-Andhra Pradesh) and South-South (Tamil NaduGoa) are in planning stage.
- Once operational, the western and eastern corridors will increase the railway's freight carrying capacity to around 2,300 million tonnes, up from 1,200 million tonnes at present, and help reduce cost of freight transportation.
- The construction of the western corridor is being fully funded by the Japanese International Cooperation Agency, which has provided around Rs 33,000 crore as soft loan. The eastern corridor is being partially funded by the World Bank.
- The first phase of the dedicated rail freight corridors project is likely to be completed by 2018 end.

NEXTGEN AIRPORTS FOR BHARAT NIRMAN INITIATIVE

- The Government has decided for capacity augmentation of the airports, as a part of NABH Nirman initiative.
- According to government documents, at least 25 of the 50 busiest airports in India are already operating beyond their capacity, while almost all the others will reach optimal capacity in 2018-19 with the aviation industry growing at an unanticipated 18-20% every year.
- This project It was announced in 2018 budget. It seeks expansion of the airport capacity more than 5 times to handle a billion trips a year. The key aspects of NABH Nirman are:
 - I. Fair and equitable land acquisition.
 - II. Long-term master plan for airport and regional development and
 - III. Balanced economics for all stakeholders.
- It aims to establish about 100 airports in 15 years at an estimated investment of Rs 4 lakh crore and a large percentage of the investment is to come from the private sector.

AMALGAMATION OF REGIONAL RURAL BANKS

- Union government, in consultation with the NABARD, had decided to go ahead with phase III of the amalgamation of regional rural banks (RRBs), bringing down the number of such entities to 38 from 56 now.
- The first round of such amalgamation took place in 2005 in which RRBs of the same sponsor bank within a State were consolidated.

- In the second phase of consolidation in 2012, RRBs, which were near each other (even if they belonged to different sponsor banks), were brought together.
- The consolidation process would enable RRBs to minimize their overhead costs, optimize use of technology, enhance capital base and area of operation.
- This will bring about better scale efficiency, higher productivity and robust financial health of RRBs

URBAN COOPERATIVE BANKS TO TRANSITION INTO SMALL FINANCE BANKS

- The Reserve Bank of India allowed voluntary transition of the Urban Co-Operative Banks (UCB) into Small Finance Banks (SFB).
- The move is an outcome of the recommendations made by the High Powered Committee on Urban Cooperative Banks under R Gandhi in 2015 which included:
 - I. Converting UCBs with business size of Rs 20000 Crore or more into regular banks in a bid to propel their growth.
 - II. Licences for setting up UCBs issued only to financially sound and well-managed cooperative credit societies with at least five years of track record.
 - III. Putting in place a Board of management has to be one of the mandatory licensing conditions for licensing new UCBs and expansion of existing ones.
 - IV. To operate as a multi-state UCB, the minimum capital requirement would be Rs 100 crore.
- Small Finance Bank provide basic banking services like accepting deposits and lending to the unbanked sections such as small farmers, micro business enterprises, micro and small industries and unorganised sector entities.
- They were created with an aim to encourage financial inclusion by provision of savings vehicles and supply of credit to small business units. The minimum paid-up equity capital for small finance banks shall be Rs. 100 crore.
- Urban Cooperative Banks refers to primary cooperative banks located in urban and semi-urban areas. These are registered as cooperative societies under the provisions of, either the State Cooperative Societies Act of the concerned State or the Multi State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002.

THREE YEAR ACTION PLAN FOR AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION RELEASED

- The central cabinet has approved the continuation of the Three-Year Action Plan (2017-2020) of the scheme for Agricultural Education Division and ICAR Institutes.
- The scheme aims to reduce academic inbreeding and addressing faculty shortage, promotes green initiatives, international ranking, alumni involvement, promoting innovations, technology enabled learning, post-doctoral fellowships, agriculture education portal, and scientific social responsibility.
- Agricultural Productivity- Effective agricultural education (both for farmers as well as researchers) leads to better economic and technical decision making in agricultural processes, which is further reflected in increase in agricultural productivity.

COAL MINE SURVEILLANCE & MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (CMSMS) AND 'KHAN PRAHARI' APP

- Recently, the Ministry of Coal launched the Coal Mine Surveillance & Management System (CMSMS) and 'Khan Prahari' mobile application.
- Coal Mine Surveillance & Management System objective is reporting, monitoring and taking suitable action on unauthorised coal mining activities.
- It is a web based GIS application through which location of sites for unauthorised mining can be detected.
- It is the basic platform used in the system is of Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology's (MeiTY) map which provides village level information.
- The system will use satellite data to detect changes by which unauthorised mining activity extending beyond the allotted lease area can be detected and suitable action can be taken on it.
- The complaint originating from coal mines allotted to Coal India will go to Coal India Offices and those originating from coal blocks not allotted to Coal India will go straight to the State Government Officers and for each complaint the alert will also go to the District Magistrate and SP of the district.
- Khan Prahari is a tool for reporting any activity taking place related to illegal coal mining like rat hole mining, pilferage etc.

CRISIL DRIP INDEX

- Recently, CRISIL release its rainfall parameter index also known as DRIP (Deficient Rainfall Impact Parameter) Index.
- DRIP Index move away from simply measuring the rainfall volumetric data and captures the interaction between the most critical aspect of vulnerability (irrigation) and weather shocks.
- The higher the CRISIL DRIP score, the more adverse the impact of deficient rains.
- The index showed that four states -- Bihar, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh -- and five crops -- jowar, soyabean, tur, maize and cotton -- are most hurt by deficient rains.
- DRIP results highlight some stress in Madhya Pradesh, where rains are still normal (with deficiency of 9%). But given that irrigation is weak, it is likely to have impacted sowing.
- Stress is also visible in Gujarat, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh, where the DRIP scores are not only higher than in 2017 — which was a good rainfall year — but also above the average of the past five years. Broadly, therefore, these four states are seeing more stress.

CONCESSION FINANCING SCHEME

- The government extended the Concessional Financing Scheme (CFS) for five years till 2023. Under the scheme Ministry of External Affairs selects the project, keeping in view strategic interest of India and sends the same to the Department of Economic affairs.
- The scheme is aim to support Indian entities bidding for strategically important infrastructure projects abroad.
- Under the scheme government provide counter guarantee and interest equalization of 2 % to EXIM Bank to offer concessional finance to any foreign Govt. or controlled entity, if any Indian entity, succeeds in getting contract for the execution of a project.
- It will now cover all Indian entities, compared to the earlier stipulation of minimum 75 per cent Indian shareholding. EXIM Bank extends credit at a rate not exceeding LIBOR (avg. of six months) + 100 bps. The repayment of the loan is guaranteed by the foreign govt.

UPI 2.0 LAUNCHED

- The National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI) has upgraded the Unified Payment Interface (UPI) with enhanced features called UPI 2.0
- This include
 - I. Both Savings and current account, can now link their overdraft account to it and all the facilities and benefits of overdraft account would be made available to the users.
 - II. One-time Mandate (account blocking) – It allows customers or merchants to pre-authorize a transaction and pay at a later date. It would also ensure that the customers do not miss the payments.
 - III. Invoice in the inbox – It allows the users to check the invoice sent by merchant in their own inbox prior to making the payments, thus allowing the customers to check the credentials beforehand.
 - IV. Security Layer in QR – The app allows the users to scan the QR code and check the authenticity of the merchants through notification to the user to ascertain the information.
 - V. Increased Transaction Limit – The pre-existing transaction limit (1 lakh daily) has been raised to 2 lakh daily.

WORLD'S FIRST BLOCKCHAIN BOND

- The World Bank has launched the world's first public bond created and managed using only block chain in order to test how the technology might improve current bond sales practices.
- The project is called 'BONDI' (Blockchain Operated New Debt Instrument), which is also reference to the Bondi Beach in Sydney and It is a Kangaroo bond (foreign bonds issued in Australia in local currency).
- Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CBA) has been mandated by the World Bank to be the sole arranger of the bond.

PROPOSAL FOR CITY-LEVEL GDP

- Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) commissioned The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) to evaluate methodologies for calculating city-level gross domestic product (GDP), and to assess their applicability to India.
- This is the first of its kind in India if made practical. In India generally we have two types of GDPs .- Central GDP & State wise GDP

WATER AERODROME

- The Ministry of Civil Aviation has approved a proposal to set up water aerodromes in the country.
- Water aerodrome is a defined area on water, including any buildings, installations and equipment, intended to be used either wholly or in part for the arrival, departure and movement of aircraft.
- The Airports Authority of India has identified 5 states i.e. Odisha, Gujarat, Assam, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh where water aerodromes would be developed.
- They are proposed to be developed near locations of tourist and religious importance. In its first phase, water aerodrome will be established at Chilika Lake in Odisha, Sardar Sarovar Dam and Sabarmati River Front in Gujarat.
- Such aircraft are expected to take people across water faster and more safely than local boats.
- This would boost tourism and hence economic opportunities in the area.

INDIA POST PAYMENTS BANK (IPPB)

- Prime Minister on 1st September launched the India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) that offers doorstep banking to customers.
- India Post Payments Bank has been incorporated as a public sector company under the department of posts, with 100% government equity and is governed by the Reserve Bank of India. It started operations on 30 January, 2017, by opening two pilot branches one in Jaipur and the other in Ranchi.
- It will focus on providing banking and financial services to people in rural areas, by linking all the 1.55 lakh post office branches with India Post Payments Bank services by the end of 2018. This will create the country's largest banking network with a direct presence at the village level.
- It will offer a range of products—savings and current accounts, money transfer, direct benefit transfer, bill and utility payments, enterprise and merchant payments. These products, and services, will be offered across multiple channels (counter services, micro-ATM, mobile banking app, SMS and IVR).
- It will also provide access to third-party financial services such as insurance, mutual funds, pension, credit products and forex.
- It will not offer any ATM debit card. Instead, it will provide its customers a QR Code-based biometric card. The card will have the customer's account number embedded and the customer does not have to remember his/her account number to access the account. IPPB has also partnered with different financial organisations to provide loans, investments and insurance products.

GOVERNMENT HAS LAUNCHED NATIONAL DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS POLICY- 2018

- Union Cabinet approved the National Digital Communications Policy-2018 (NDCP2018) and re-designated Telecom Commission as the “Digital Communications Commission”.
- NDCP– 2018 has been formulated to cater to the needs of modern technological advancements in the Telecom Sector such as – 5G, IoT, Machine to Machine (M2M) learning, etc. that required a ‘customer focused’ and ‘application driven’ policy for the Indian Telecom Sector.
- It seeks to overcome shortcomings of previous National Telecom Policy, 2012 in areas such as enhancing rural tele-density, optical fibre network to gram Panchayats, minimum broadband speed, etc.
- This policy can form the main pillar of Digital India by addressing emerging opportunities for expanding the availability of Telecom services and also Telecom based services. Government wants to focus on socio-economic growth of the country with the help of the telecom sector instead of seeing it as source of revenue generation. There are three important Mission in this policy –
 - I. Connect India
 - II. Propel India
 - III. Secure India

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX NETWORK (GSTN)

- The Union Cabinet has approved increasing of Government ownership in Goods and Services Tax Network (GSTN). It has decided that the entire 51% equity held by the Non-Government Institutions in GSTN will be acquired equally by the Centre and the State Governments.

- Hence the restructure GSTN will have 100% government ownership equally distributed between the Centre (50%) and the States (50%).
- There will also be a change in the existing composition of the Board of GSTN. It will have total 11 Directors:
 - I. 1 Chairman
 - II. 1 CEO
 - III. 3 directors from the Centre
 - IV. 3 from the States
 - V. 3 other independent directors to be nominated by the Board of Directors
- The decision was taken as the government felt that a vast amount of GST related data should be completely under the its supervision, as it contains sensitive information of over 1 crore taxpayers.
- Goods and Services Tax Network (GSTN) is a not for profit company governed under section 8 of the companies Act.
- The Company has been set up primarily to provide IT infrastructure and services to the Central and State Governments, tax payers and other stakeholders for implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST).

“WATER SCARCE CITIES: THRIVING IN A FINITE WORLD”

- A report of water scarce cities was released by World Bank Group that attempts to compile innovative approaches from the Water Scarce Cities (WSC) Initiative.

TASK FORCE ON BIOMASS MANAGEMENT BY NITI AAYOG

- NITI Aayog released a report of Task Force, constituted under ‘Cleaner Air Better Life’ initiative on Biomass Management. The reasons for the task force is
 - I. The farm burning, specific to the paddy-wheat cultivation cycle in the rural regions of Northern and North Westerns states of India, has been identified as a major source of air pollution. It not only affects the air quality in rural areas but also causes an episodic rise in air-pollution during October and November in Delhi NCR.
 - II. Unlike other crop residues, paddy straw is utilised to a very small extent outside the field. This is mainly due to its low calorific-value compared to other crop-residues and high silica content which limits its use in many applications.
 - III. This situation is further exacerbated by obsolete traditional uses of residue such as roof thatch, proliferation of mechanised farming and a very small window of transition for the farmers between harvesting paddy and sowing wheat.
 - IV. India is said to have an estimated 600 million tonnes of surplus agricultural biomass and roughly 39 million tonnes of paddy straw is burnt in Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

PLASTIC WASTE MANAGEMENT (AMENDMENT) RULES, 2018.

- Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) amended the Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016. The new rules include
- New Central registration system- shall be established by Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) for the registration of the producer/importer/brand owner.

- Automation- It provides that any mechanism for the registration should be automated and should take into account ease of doing business for producers, recyclers and manufacturers
- Pricing Mechanism- The rule for providing the plastic waste management fee, by the vendors/shopkeepers who are willing to provide plastic bags, has been removed.
- Non-recyclable multi-layered plastic- The 2016 Rules state that the manufacture and use of non-recyclable multi-layered plastic should be phased out in two years. In the 2018 Rules, non recyclable multi-layered plastic has been replaced with multi-layered plastic which is non-recyclable or non energy recoverable or with no alternate use.
- Plastic Waste Management Rule 2016 generally mentions about-
 - I. It defines the minimum thickness of plastic carry bags i.e. 50 microns. This would increase the cost and the tendency to provide free carry bags would come down.
 - II. Responsibility of local bodies: Rural areas are brought under the rules.
 - III. Extended Producer Responsibility: Producers and brand owners are responsible for collecting waste generated from their products.
 - IV. Record Keeping: Producers are to keep a record of their vendors to whom they have supplied raw materials.
 - V. Responsibility of waste generator: All institutional generators of plastic waste shall segregate and store their waste as per Waste Management Rules, and handover segregated wastes to authorized waste disposal facilities.
 - VI. Responsibility of street vendors and retailers: they shall not sell commodities to consumer in carry bags or plastic sheet or multi-layered packaging, which are not manufactured and labelled or marked.
 - VII. Road Construction: Local bodies shall encourage the use of plastic waste (preferably the plastic waste which cannot be further recycled) for road construction.

GREENCO RATING

- Ministry of Railways in partnership with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) launched GreenCo Rating System in railways' production units, workshops and other units.
- It is a first-of-its-kind rating in the world to enhance green performance of companies and applicable to both manufacturing facilities and service sector units.
- The rating is implemented at unit or facility level (operation for a minimum period of 3 years). In case of new plants/ facilities minimum 2 years operation is required.

GLOBAL ENERGY TRANSFORMATION: A ROADMAP TO 2050

- International Renewable Energy Agency's (IRENA's) has launched a long-term renewable energy outlook called "Global Energy Transformation: A Roadmap to 2050".
- Paris climate accord 2015 seeks to limit average global temperature rise to below 2°C by 2100, compared to pre-industrial levels.
- Currently, emission trends are not on track to meet that goal as world would exhaust its energy related "carbon budget" (CO₂) in under 20 years to keep the global temperate rise to well below 2°C.
- India is advancing towards its target to achieve 175 GW of renewable power capacity by 2022. In 2015, renewables accounted for 36% of India's final energy use, one of the highest shares in the G20 countries which would increase to 73% by 2050.

- International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) is an intergovernmental organisation that supports countries in their transition to a sustainable energy future.
- It serves as the principal platform for international cooperation, and a repository of policy, technology, resource and financial knowledge on renewable energy. It is Permanent Observer to United Nation.
- India is a founder Member of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA).

ASIA PACIFIC REGIONAL WORKSHOP OF UNCCD

- Asia Pacific Regional Workshop of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) was hosted by Ministry of Environment (MoEFCC).
- The workshop provides a multi-disciplinary knowledge sharing platform to address desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD) issues and brings all key stakeholders from Asia Pacific region together to discuss key aspects of achieving Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) by 2030.
- The participants were trained in the use of a monitoring tool called “Trends Earth” developed by Conservation International, an NGO.
- India also released a report on Study of Economics of Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought (EDLDD) conducted by TERI.
- Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) is a state whereby the amount and quality of land resources which is necessary to support ecosystem functions and enhance food security, remains stable or increases within specified temporal and spatial scales and ecosystems.
- It is a unique approach that counterbalances the expected loss of productive land with the recovery of degraded areas.

SOUTH ASIA WILDLIFE ENFORCEMENT NETWORK (SAWEN)

- The first meeting of SAWEN was held in India to curb wildlife crime in the South Asian region.
- SAWEN is an inter-governmental wildlife law enforcement support body of South Asian countries namely Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. It was officially launched in 2011 at Paro, Bhutan.
- It focuses on policy harmonization, institutional capacity strengthening through knowledge and intelligence sharing; and collaboration with regional and international partners to enhance wildlife law enforcement in the member countries.

INDUS DOLPHINS ALSO CALLED BHULAN

- The Punjab government along with World Wildlife Fund, India conducted the first census on population of Indus Dolphin.
- Indus Dolphin are endangered, freshwater, and functionally blind species of dolphins which rely on echolocation to navigate, communicate and hunt prey including prawns, catfish and carp.
- In 2017, a survey was done by WWF-Pakistan which showed an increase in their population. Similar survey is being conducted in India now with the help of WWF-India.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS REPORT 2018

- UN has released the Sustainable Development Goals Report 2018. The Report highlights progress being made in many areas of the 2030 Agenda.
- The report found that, a fast-changing climate, conflict, inequality, persistent pockets of poverty and hunger and rapid urbanization are challenging countries' efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- For the first time in more than a decade, there are now approximately 38 million more hungry people in the world, rising from 777 million in 2015 to 815 million in 2016.
- According to the report, conflict is now one of the main drivers of food insecurity in 18 countries. At the same time, the Report found that more people are leading better lives than they were just a decade ago. The proportion of the world's workers living with their families on less than 1.90 per person a day declined significantly over the past two decades, falling from 26.9 per cent in 2000 to 9.2 per cent in 2017.
- The under-five mortality rate dropped by almost 50 per cent and in the least developed countries, the proportion of population with access to electricity has more than doubled between 2000 and 2016. However, in 2015, 2.3 billion people still lacked even a basic level of sanitation service and 892 million people continued to practice open defecation. In 2016, there were 216 million cases of malaria compared to 210 million cases in 2013 and close to 4 billion people were left without social protection in 2016.
- Rates of child marriage have continued to decline around the world. In Southern Asia, a girl's risk of marrying in childhood has dropped by over 40 per cent between 2000 and 2017.
- Nine out of 10 people living in cities breathe polluted air.

PLASTIC BAN AND INDIA

- India committed to eliminate all single-use plastic in the country by 2022.
- India was the global host of 2018 World Environment Day (June 5, 2018) with "Beat Plastic Pollution" as the theme, reflecting world commitment to combat single-use plastic pollution.
- According to United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) if current pollution rates continue, there will be more plastic in the sea than fish by 2050, as globally, only 14% of plastics is recycled.
- Only 24 States and Union Territories have complied with the Centre's Plastic Waste Management (PWM) Rules, 2016, to regulate manufacture, sale, distribution and use of plastic carry bags including those of compostable plastic, and plastic sheets for packaging or wrapping applications.
- Single Use Plastic: It account for 50% of the plastic we use, with none states in India have plans in place to tackle single use plastics.

"FISCAL COSTS OF NATURAL DISASTERS" REPORTS RELEASED

- IMF released a report on "How To Manage The Fiscal Costs Of Natural Disasters".
- According to International Disaster Database annual global economic losses on account of disasters are estimated at around \$306 billion.
- The cost of natural disasters in India since 2000 is estimated at Rs 4 lakh crore with over 75,000 deaths.
- According to World Meteorological Organisation, for Indian Subcontinent, 2017 was the most expensive year on record for severe weather and climate events.

- Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction calls for reducing direct disaster economic loss in relation to global gross domestic product (GDP) by 2030.
- The report findings are as follows
 - I. Disproportionate Impact of Disaster on Low-income countries: They tend to suffer large and lasting damage relative to their economic sizes and populations. It's also exacerbated by high levels of poverty, climate change, rapid urbanisation and exposure to the entire spectrum of natural hazards including drought, floods, cyclones, earthquakes and heat waves.
 - II. Fiscal Imbalance: Natural disasters can deplete a government's fiscal position by eroding the revenue base (on average by 10%) and increasing expenditures (on average by 15%).
 - III. Impact on Socio-economic Development: Disasters undermine economic growth and set back development objectives, such as poverty reduction, especially in developing and low-income countries with significant infrastructure gaps and institutional constraints.
 - IV. Crowding out of Fund: Disaster often increases public debt, leading to higher borrowing by government, and dampening of investment climate in country.

PANEL ON ELECTRIC VEHICLES

- The government has constituted a panel on Electric Vehicles headed by Road Transport Secretary Y S Malik, has presented a 15 point plan to aid car manufacturers to switch from Internal Combustion Engines (IECs) to Electric Vehicles (EVs).
- According to panel, the fuel efficiency norms have to be lowered by 20-25 percent over FY 2017-18 data to have approximate induction of 3 to 5% EVs, as against total manufactured vehicles including cars, three-wheeler, and two wheeler.
- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has mandated fuel efficiency norms that require cars to be 30% more fuel efficient by 2022.
- Use of electric vehicles will help in fulfilling our INDC 2030 goals (cutting CO₂ emissions intensity in GDP by 33-35% w.r.t. 2005 levels). It will also help to combat increasing air pollution load (PM_{2.5} & PM₁₀) in Indian Cities as Fossil fuel based transportation is second largest source of carbon dioxide emission.
- Shift towards EVs will help cut oil imports (India has set targets to cut oil imports by 10% by 2022). EVs convert about 59%–62% of the electrical energy to power at the wheels. Conventional gasoline vehicles only convert about 17%–21% of the energy stored in gasoline to power at the wheels.

BLUE FLAG CERTIFICATION

- The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change had started a pilot project under a Unified Coastal Areas Management Programme to develop the Indian beaches according to the Blue Flag standards in December 2017.
- 13 Indian beaches have been shortlisted for the Blue flag certification. This project aims to
 - I. Improve the aquatic habitat by cleaning the growing pollution and garbage in the Indian beaches.
 - II. Develop ecological tourism with constant progress and development of tourist facilities.
 - III. Chandrabhaga beach of Odisha's Konark coast was the first to complete the tag certification process will be the first in Asia to get the Blue Flag certification. Apart from it, 12 other beaches across are also being

developed by the Society for Integrated Coastal Management (SICOM) as blue flag beaches which include Maharashtra's Chiwla and Bhogave beaches and one beach each from Puducherry, Goa, Daman and Diu, Lakshadweep and Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

IV. An integrated coastal management scheme, referred as Beach Management Service (BeaMS) has also been introduced by the ministry to reduce existing pollutants on beaches and achieve such high international standards.

- The Blue Flag beach standards were established by Copenhagen-based Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) in 1985 in France.
- The Blue Flag is an environmental award for beaches, sustainable boating tourism operators, and marinas. Only local authorities or private beach operators can apply for a Blue Flag for beaches.
- The criteria for Blue Flag beaches cover four main area:
 - I. Water quality
 - II. Environmental management,
 - III. Environmental education and
 - IV. Safety.

ACTION PLAN TO DEAL WITH AIR POLLUTION CALLED "BREATH INDIA"

- NITI Aayog has proposed 15-point action plan titled 'Breathe India' for combating air pollution in ten most polluted cities in the country, including Delhi, Kanpur and Varanasi.
- A recent WHO database (2018) has identified several of India's top cities with some of the highest levels of air pollution. Kanpur, Faridabad, Gaya, Varanasi and Patna are the top five most polluted cities in the world.
- According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) global air pollution database, India has 14 out of the 15 most polluted cities in the world in terms of PM 2.5 concentrations.
- According to Health of the Nation's States, household air pollution was responsible for 5% of the total disease burden in India in 2016, and outdoor air pollution was responsible for 6% of the burden.

GANGETIC DOLPHIN

- The population of the Gangetic river dolphin at the Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary has declined to 154 from 207 in 2015.
- The Ganges River dolphin inhabits the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna and Karnaphuli-Sangu river systems of Nepal, India, and Bangladesh.
- The Ganges Dolphin is among the four freshwater dolphins found in the world – the other three are found in the Yangtze River (China), the 'bhulan' of the Indus (Pakistan) and the 'boto' of the Amazon River (Latin America).
- It is National Aquatic animal of India.
- It has been categorised as endangered on the Red List of Threatened Species by the IUCN and protected under the Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act (1972).

RED SANDERS NOT ENDANGERED ANYMORE

- The International Union for Conservation of Nature now reclassified red sanders as ‘near threatened’ from the earlier ‘endangered’.
- It is an endemic tree of South India and are found in Tropical Dry Deciduous forest of the Palakonda and Seshachalam hill ranges of Andhra Pradesh and also found in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.
- It occurs in hot, dry climate with a rainfall of 88-105 cm.
- It prefers lateritic and gravelly soil and cannot tolerate water logging.
- It is used for various purposes such as immunity medicine, furniture, radiation absorbent, musical instrument, food dyes and spices, Ayurveda and Sidha medicine, decorative and ornamental purposes etc
- It is a rare kind of sandalwood, high in demand internationally due to its red colored wood. The major markets for the wood are – China, Japan, Middle East, Sri Lanka, Bhutan and Nepal.
- Its export is banned in India in accordance with the CITES and Wildlife Protection Act 1972. Further, Andhra Pradesh Government formed a Joint Task Force called Red Sanders Anti–Smuggling Task Force (RSASTF). However, its smuggling is rife and is rampant in the southern states of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

NILGIRI TAHR

- As per a study published in Ecological Engineering journal, Nilgiri Tahrs could lose approximately 60% of their habitats from the 2030s on.
- Scientists found that Tahr strongholds such as Chinnar, Eravikulam and Parambikulam in Kerala will still be stable habitats under different climate change scenarios.
- Other regions, including parts of Tamil Nadu’s Kalakkad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve and the wildlife sanctuaries of Peppara, Neyyar, Schenduruny and Srivilliputhur, could experience severe habitat loss in future causing the loss.
- The Nilgiri tahr inhabits the open montane grassland habitats at elevations from 1200 to 2600 m (generally above 2000 m) of the South Western Ghats.
- Their range extends over 400 km from north to south, and Eravikulam National Park is home to the largest population.
- It is Listed in Schedule I of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and as Endangered on IUCN Red List.
- Adult males develop a light grey area or “saddle” on their backs and are hence called “saddlebacks”. It is state animal of Tamil Nadu.

KHANGCHENDZONGA BIOSPHERE RESERVE

- Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve was included in the UNESCO’s World Network of Biosphere Reserve (WNBR) under the Man and Biosphere Programme (MAB)
- UNESCO also announced the registration of 23 other new sites in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.
- Now the total number of Biosphere reserves under MAB programme has reached to 686.
- Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve is one of the highest ecosystems in the world and located at trijunction of India (Sikkim), bordering Nepal to the west and Tibet (China) to the north-west.

- The site is one among the world's 34 biodiversity hotspots.
- Man and Biosphere program has been launched by UNESCO in 1971, it is an Intergovernmental Scientific Programme that aims to establish a scientific basis for the improvement of relationships between people and their environments.
- It combines the natural and social sciences, economics and education to improve human livelihoods and the equitable sharing of benefits, and to safeguard natural and managed ecosystems.
- World Network of Biosphere Reserve covers internationally designated protected areas, each known as biosphere reserves, that are meant to demonstrate a balanced relationship between people and nature.
- India has 18 biospheres reserves, of which 11 have been included in the WNBR. The Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve was the first reserve from the country to be included in the WNBR.
- Others MAB -WNVR site in India
 - I. Gulf of Mannar- Tamilnadu
 - II. Sundarban- West Bangal
 - III. Nanda Devi-Uttrakhand
 - IV. Nokrek- Meghalaya
 - V. Pachmarchi-Madhya Pradesh
 - VI. Simlipal- Orisa
 - VII. Achanakmar-Amarkantak- Madhya Pradesh
 - VIII. Great- Nicobar- Andaman and Nicobar Island
 - IX. Agasthyamala- (Western Ghat) Kerala & Tamilnadu

DEEP OCEAN MISSION

- Started by Central government to draw up a five year, Rs. 8000 Crore plan to explore deep resources of the ocean on lines of ISRO in designing and launching satellite.
- DOM aims to explore the depths of the Ocean for the possibilities of deep-sea mining. Its focus will be on technologies for deep-sea mining, under water vehicles, under water robotics and ocean climate change advisory services, among others. Key deliverables to achieve these goals:
 - I. Ofnoeloping a submersible vehicle to explore depths of at least 6000 Meters with three people on board.
- India's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) spreads over 2.2 Million Km² . EEZ are boundaries prescribed by the UNCLOS which give special rights to a state regarding the exploration and use of marine resources.
- India has been allotted a site of 75,000 Km² in the Central Indian Ocean Basin (CIOB) by the UN International Sea Bed Authority for exploitation of Poly-Metallic nodules (PMN). A First Generation Mine-site (FGM) with an area of 18,000 Km² has been identified. Latest technologies for extraction of metals from the minerals have also been developed.

RECOVERY PROGRAMME FOR WILDLIFE SPECIES BY THE CENTER

- The National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) recently added four species- the Northern River Terrapin, Clouded Leopard, Arabian Sea Humpback Whale, Red Panda- to a Recovery Programme for Critically Endangered Species.

- Recovery Programme is one of the components of centrally sponsored scheme - Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats (IDWH) which provides assistance to the State/UT governments for activities aimed at wildlife conservation. The other two components:
 - I. Support to Protected Areas (National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries, Conservation Reserves and Community Reserves except tiger reserves)
 - II. Protection of Wildlife Outside Protected Areas

NATIONAL REDD+ STRATEGY

- Union Ministry for Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) released National REDD+ Strategy, which will help to fulfill India's NDC commitment under Paris Agreement of climate change.
- Forest is the second-largest land use in India after agriculture. Forestry sector in India can make positive contribution for climate change mitigation like carbon mitigation services of India's forest by improving carbon stocks.
- As estimated, REDD+ programme could provide for capture of around 1 billion tonnes of additional CO₂ over the next 3 decades and significant financial incentives as carbon services under REDD+ including flow of positive incentives to local communities.
- The National REDD+ Strategy seeks to address drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and also developing a roadmap for enhancement of forest carbon stocks and achieving sustainable management of forests through REDD+ actions. Important provisions include –
 - I. REDD+ will cover all trees within forest areas and tree outside forest (TOF)
 - II. Research is being undertaken to assess the potential of carbon sequestration by grasslands, and coastal sea grasses, salt marshes, phytoplankton etc.

PARIVESH PROGRAM

- Government has launched an integrated environmental management system named; PARIVESH (Pro-Active and Responsive facilitation by Interactive, Virtuous and Environmental Single-window Hub).
- It is a web based, role-based workflow application which has been developed for online submission and monitoring of the proposals submitted by the proponents for seeking Environment, Forest, Wildlife and CRZ Clearances from Central, State and district level authorities.
- It automates the entire tracking of proposals which includes online submission of a new proposal, editing/updating the details of proposals and displays status of the proposals at each stage of the work flow.
- The system includes monitoring of compliance reports including geo-tagged images of the site by regulatory body or inspecting officers even through the Mobile App for enhanced compliance monitoring
- It also provides access to previous Environment Impact Assessment Reports, which is a valuable reservoir of information.
- It will improve the entire process of appraisal and environmental clearance because delay in environment clearance can cause a huge monetary loss and negatively impact business prospect of that region.

PESTICIDES BAN & ANUOAM COMMITTEE

- The Government of India has decided to ban the use of 18 pesticides following the recommendations of the Anupam Verma Committee.
- The complete ban of 12 pesticides would come into effect immediately while the rest 6 would be banned from December 31, 2020.
- The decision is based on Anupam Verma committee which was constituted in 2013 to review the use of 66 pesticides (which are either banned or restricted in other countries.) recommended a ban on 13 'extremely hazardous' pesticides, phasing out of six 'moderately hazardous' ones by 2020, and review of 27 pesticides in 2018
- Insecticide Act 1968, was enacted to regulate imports, manufacture, storage, transport, sale, distribution and use of insecticides with a view to prevent risk to human beings and animals.
- The Central Insecticide Board and Registration Committee (CIBRC) approves the use of pesticides in India.

BAN ON PETCOKE

- India recently banned the import of petcoke for use as fuel.
- Environment Protection (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA) in April 2017 had asked for the ban on use of furnace oil and pet-coke in NCR region.
- Supreme Court had banned its use in Delhi and NCR in October, 2017.
- Though the Import of petcoke for fuel purpose is prohibited. It is allowed only for cement, lime kiln, calcium carbide and gasification industries, when used as the feedstock or in the manufacturing process on actual user condition.

3D-PRINTED ARTIFICIAL REEF

- World's largest 3D-printed reef was installed in Maldives, for coral reefs survive due to threat posed by climate change and warming waters.
- 3D-printed reef was developed using computer modelling and a 3D printer, which resemble reef structures typically found in the Maldives.
- The reef structure is cast in ceramic, an inert material similar to the calcium carbonate found in coral reefs.
- Live coral was then transplanted within the artificial reef, where it will grow and colonize the structure.
- Artificial Reef is a human made structure, similar to natural coral reef, built with the specific aim of promoting the marine life of an area.
- Most common forms of artificial reefs are submerged shipwrecks, bridges, lighthouses, etc, which often start functioning as marine habitat after a period of time.
- In 2017, Tamil Nadu govt in collaboration with IIT Madras have been restoring Vaan Island in Gulf of Mannar by deploying artificial reefs.
- 3D-Printing Technology is an additive process wherein an object is created by laying down successive layers of material until the object is created. Each of these layers can be seen as a thinly sliced horizontal cross-section of the eventual object.

NEW ELEPHANT RESERVE

- The Nagaland government declared the Singphan Wildlife Sanctuary as an Elephant Reserve, with the approval of central government.
- Singphan Elephant Reserve is located in Mon district of Nagaland and spreads over an area of 5825 acres. It has huge tracts of forest, strategically located in contiguity with the Abhaypur Reserve Forest of Assam.
- With this, the total Elephant Reserves in India is now 30.

THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE GENETIC RESOURCE BANK

- Union Science and Technology Minister dedicated the National Wildlife Genetic Resource Bank (NWGRB) in Hyderabad.
- It is established at Laboratory for Conservation of Endangered Species (LaCONES) and can store 17,000 vials worth of samples.
- This facility would increase the collection of genetic resources from wildlife by facilitating exchange of genetic material between Indian zoos for maintaining genetic diversity. It would also facilitate research work

CHEETAH REINTRODUCTION PROJECT

- Madhya Pradesh forest department seeks to revive the plan to reintroduce Cheetahs in Nauradehi sanctuary.
- National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), is nodal agency for the Cheetahs reintroduction plan.
- In 2009 Project Cheetah was launched and Kuno Wildlife Sanctuary (MP) and Shahgarh area in Rajasthan were also identified as other two sites for cheetah reintroduction plan.
- Nauradehi was found to be the most suitable area for the cheetahs as its forests are not very dense to restrict the fast movement of Cheetahs.

BIO-JET FUEL FLIGHT

- India's first ever bio-jet fuel flight taken off by using the fuel developed by the CSIR-Indian Institute of Petroleum (IIP).
- Aircraft was powered with a blend of 75% air turbine fuel (ATF) and 25% bio-jet fuel made from jatropha crop.
- The bio-jet fuel developed by CSIR-IIP was recognised by American Standard for Testing and Material and received a patent by 2011.
- International standards permit a blend rate of up-to 50% bio fuel with ATF.

CONSTRUCTION AND DEMOLITION (C&D) WASTE MANAGEMENT IN INDIA

- The Supreme Court has created a flutter by staying construction activity in States that do not have a solid waste management policy.
- Construction and Demolition (C&D) waste is generated during the construction, renovation, and demolition of buildings or structures. These wastes include materials such as concrete, bricks, wood and lumber, roofing, drywall, landscape and other wastes.
- There is a huge demand of aggregates in the housing and road sectors but there is significant gap in demand and supply, which can be reduced by recycling construction and demolition waste to certain specifications.

- While some of the items like bricks, tiles, wood, metal etc. are re-used and recycled, concrete and masonry, constituting about 50% of the C&D waste is not currently recycled in India
- The private contractors remove this waste to privately owned low-lying land for a price or more commonly, dump it in an unauthorized manner along roads or other public land.

CONSERVATION OF MIGRATORY BIRDS AND THEIR HABITATS

- Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has developed a National Action Plan for Conservation of Migratory Birds and their Habitats along Central Asian Flyway (CAF) for the period 2018-23.
- The overall longer-term goal of the National Action Plan is to arrest population decline and secure habitats of migratory bird species.
- In shorter-term the action plan seeks that by 2027, to halt the downward trends in declining metapopulations and maintain stable or increasing trends for healthy populations. The major Objectives of NAP are
 - I. Halt and reverse decline of migratory birds;
 - II. Reduce pressure on critical habitats by management based on landscape approaches;
 - III. Develop capacity at multiple levels to anticipate and avoid threats to habitats and species undergoing long term decline;
 - IV. Improve database and decision-support systems to underpin science-based conservation of species and management of habitats;
 - V. Sensitize stakeholders to take collaborative actions on securing habitats and species; and,
 - VI. Support trans-boundary co-operation to secure migratory bird species and habitats in range countries.

LANDSLIDE WARNING SYSTEM

- The government has installed a real-time landslide warning system has been set up in the Sikkim-Darjeeling belt of north-eastern Himalayas.
- According to Global Fatal Landslide Database (GFLD), Asia was found to be the most-affected continent where 75% (India = 20%) of landslides occurred, with a substantial number reported along the Himalayan Arc.
- As per global database on landslides, the world's top two landslide hotspots exist in India: the southern edge of the Himalayan arc, and the coast along south-west India where the Western Ghats are situated.
- According to Geological Survey of India (GSI), about 12.6 % of the total land mass of India falls under the landslide-prone hazardous zone.
- Vulnerability of Sikkim's: 4,895 square kilometer area is sensitive to landslides, of which 3,638 sq km area is surrounded by human population, roads and other infrastructure.

INDIA COOLING ACTION PLAN

- India became the first country to release a draft India Cooling Action Plan (ICAP) which focuses on Sustainable Cooling through Thermal Comfort for All.
- It was released on the occasion of 24th World Ozone Day (16 September) with theme this year being "Keep Cool and Carry on": The Montreal Protocol.
- Despite India being a sub-tropical country, India's Per Capita Energy Consumption towards space cooling is 69kWh, much lower than the world average of 272kWh.

- Cooling is also intimately associated with human health, well-being and productivity. The need to ensure thermal comfort for all and access to cooling is even more important considering the tropical climate of India.
- Cooling related energy consumption is a major contributor (10%) to global CO₂ emissions.
- Rising per capita income, rapid urbanization along with currently low penetration of air conditioning may cause India's Cooling Needs to increase upto 8 times by 2037-38 as compared to the 2017-18 baseline.
- India Cooling Action Plan aims to:
 - I. Reduction of cooling demand across sectors by 20% to 25 % by year 2037-38.
 - II. Training of 100,000 service sector technicians by 2022-23 under Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana.
 - III. Reduction of refrigerant demand by 25% to 30% by year 2037-38.

DEFENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE

- Government has established a Defense Planning Committee (DPC) under the chairmanship of the National Security Adviser (NSA).
- Defense Planning Committee will be a permanent inter ministerial body. It will consist of the Chairman of the Chiefs of the Staff Committee (COSC), other service chiefs, Defence Secretary, Foreign Secretary and Secretary (expenditure) in the Finance Ministry. NSA is also empowered to co-opt other members as and when required
- The main functions is to Formulate national security strategy, strategic defence review and doctrines; international defence engagement strategy; roadmap to build defence manufacturing eco-system; strategy to boost defence exports; and prioritised capability development plans for the armed forces over different time-frames in consonance with the overall priorities, strategies and likely resource flows

AYUSHMAN BHARAT

- Ayushman Bharat is a centrally sponsored programme anchored in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. It is an umbrella of two major health initiatives, namely Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs) and Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna (PMJAY). Brief details of these components are as following:
- Ayushman Bharat-Health & Wellness Centres: Delivery of comprehensive primary health care services through Health & Wellness Centres is a critical component of the newly announced Ayushman Bharat scheme. It places people and communities at the center of the health care delivery system, making health services responsive, accessible and equitable. Nearly 1.5 lakh Sub-Centres and Primary Health Centres would be transformed as Health & Wellness Centres by 2022 to provide comprehensive and quality primary care close to the community while ensuring the principles of equity, affordability and universality. As on December 2018 4503 HWCs have been operationalized in various states.
- Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) aims to cover over 10 crore poor and vulnerable families (approx. 50 crore beneficiaries) providing coverage up to Rs. 5 lakh per family per year for secondary and tertiary hospitalization.
- PMJAY has been launched on September 23, 2018. After the launch of PMJAY, RSBY and SCHIS got subsumed in it. As on December 2018 , 16,112 Hospitals have Empanelled and this scheme Benefited 6,81,825
- PMJAY provides cashless and paperless access to services for the beneficiary at the point of service in any (both public and private) empanelled hospitals across India. All beneficiary families of RSBY and SCHIS are entitled for benefits under PMJAY.

AUGMENTATION OF ASHA BENEFITS:

- The Cabinet Committee on Economics Affairs had on 19th September, 2018 approved a proposal to introduce an ASHA Benefit Package with two components, namely, coverage of ASHAs and ASHA Facilitators meeting the eligibility criteria under the Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana and an increase in the amount of routine and recurring incentives under National Health Mission for ASHAs from Rs. 1000/- per month to Rs. 2000/-per month. The total estimated cost of the Scheme is Rs 1905.46 Crore of which Central share is Rs 1224.97 Crore for two years i.e 2018-19 and 2019-20.
 - I. Estimated 1063670 ASHAs and ASHA Facilitators to be covered under Pradhan Mantri
 - II. Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY)
 - III. Estimated 9573032 ASHAs and ASHA Facilitators to be covered under Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana
 - IV. Estimated 10,22,265 ASHAs will get at least minimum of Rs`2000 per month from current Rs 1000 per Month for routine and recurring activities.
 - V. 41,405 ASHA facilitators to be benefitted with increased supervisory charges.

NATIONAL HEALTH POLICY 2017

- The National Health Policy of the country was launched after a gap of 15 years. NHP 2017 addresses the current and emerging challenges necessitated by the changing socio-economic, technological and epidemiological landscape.
- The process of formulation of the new Policy entailed wide consultation with multiple stakeholders and regional consultations before its approval by the Central Council of Health and Family Welfare and Group of Ministers.
- The major commitment of the NHP 2017 is raising public health expenditure progressively to 2.5% of the GDP by 2025.
- It envisages providing larger package of assured comprehensive primary healthcare through the Health and Wellness Centres.
- The Policy aims to attain the highest possible level of health and well-being for all at all ages through a preventive and promotive healthcare and universal access to quality health services without anyone having to face financial hardship as a consequence.

NOTIFICATION FOR MEDICAL DEVICES RULES, 2017

- MoHFW has notified Medical Devices Rules, 2017 for comprehensive regulation of Medical devices notified under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, including their import, clinical investigation, manufacture, sale and distribution.
- The new rules are harmonised with the international regulatory practices and provide comprehensive legislation for the regulation of Medical Devices to foster India specific innovation and provide a fillip to 'Make in India'.
- A separate and dedicated wing is set up under Drug Controller General of India for effective implementation of New Medical Devices Rules, 2017 with effect from 1.1.2018. Presently 15 notified categories of medical devices are regulated under the provisions of Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 and Rules 1945.

NATIONAL NUTRITION MISSION (NNM)

- The Cabinet has approved the National Nutrition Mission, a joint effort of MoHFW and the Ministry of Women and Child development (WCD) towards a life cycle approach for interrupting the intergenerational cycle of under nutrition.
- The impact of the mission is envisioned to reduce the level of stunting, under-nutrition, anemia and low birth weight babies. It will create synergy, ensure better monitoring, issue alerts for timely action, and encourage States/UTs to perform, guide and supervise the line Ministries and States/UTs to achieve the targeted goals.
- The mission aims to benefit more than 10 crore people.
- It shall be launched in December 2017 with a three year budget of Rs.9046.17 crore commencing from 2017-18, to cover 315 districts in 2017-18, 235 districts in 2018-19 and remaining districts in 2019-20
- Major components/features of the Mission:
 - I. Mapping of various Schemes contributing towards addressing malnutrition
 - II. Introducing a very robust convergence mechanism
 - III. ICT-based real time monitoring system
 - IV. Incentivizing States/UTs for meeting the targets
 - V. Incentivizing Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) for using IT based tools
 - VI. Eliminating registers used by AWWs
 - VII. Introducing measurement of height of children at the Anganwadi Centres (AWCs)
 - VIII. Social Audits
 - IX. Setting-up Nutrition Resource Centres, involving masses through Jan Andolan for their participation on nutrition through various activities, among others.

MENTAL HEALTHCARE ACT 2017

- The Act adopts a rights-based statutory framework for mental health in India and strengthens equality and equity in provision of mental healthcare services in order to protect the rights of people with mental health problem to ensure that they are able to receive optimum care and are able to live a life of dignity and respect.
- The Act strengthens the institutional mechanisms for improving access quality and appropriate mental healthcare services.
- The Act increases accountability of both government and private sectors in delivery of mental healthcare with representation of persons with mental health problem and their care-givers in statutory authorities such as Central and State Mental Health Authority.
- The most progressive features of the Act are provision of advance directive, nominated representative, special clause for women and children related to admission, treatment, sanitation and personal hygiene; restriction on use of Electro-Convulsive Therapy and Psychosurgery.
- Decriminalization of suicide is another significant facet of the Act, which will ensure proper management of severe stress as a precursor for suicide attempts.

HIV & AIDS (Prevention & Control) Act, 2017

- This Act aims to end the epidemic by 2030 in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals set by the United Nations.

- A person living with AIDS cannot be treated unfairly at employment, educational establishments, renting a property, standing for public or private office or providing healthcare and insurance services
- The Act also aims to enhance access to healthcare services by ensuring informed consent and confidentiality for HIV-related testing, treatment and clinical research.
- Every HIV infected or affected person below the age of 18 years has the right to reside in a shared household and enjoy the facilities of the household.
- The Act prohibits any individual from publishing information or advocating feelings of hatred against HIV positive persons and those living with them.
- No person shall be compelled to disclose his/her HIV status except with their informed consent, and if required by a court order.
- Every person in the care and custody of the State shall have right to HIV prevention, testing, treatment and counselling services.
- The Act suggests that cases relating to HIV positive persons shall be disposed' off by the court on a priority basis and duly ensuring the confidentiality.

UNIVERSAL IMMUNIZATION PROGRAMME (UIP)

- India's UIP is one of the largest public health programmes in the world.
- It targets 3 crore pregnant women and 2.7 crore new borns annually. More than 90 lakh immunization sessions are conducted annually.
- It is the most cost-effective public health intervention and largely responsible for reduction of vaccine preventable under-5 mortality rate. Some of the programs under this mission are
- Mission Indradhanush: Government of India has launched Mission Indradhanush (MI) in December 2014, a targeted programme to immunize children who have either not received vaccines or are partially vaccinated. The activity focuses on districts with maximum number of missed children. Four phases of Mission Indradhanush have been completed wherein 3.38 crores children have been vaccinated, of which 81.67 lakh children have been fully immunized. In addition, 86.88 lakh pregnant women were vaccinated against tetanus. Under Mission Indradhanush, the annual rate of increase of full immunisation coverage has increased from 1% to 6.7 % during the two rounds.
- The sixth phase of MI is ongoing in 75 districts across 17 States/UTs from October – December 2018.
- Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI) has been launched by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India on 8th October 2017 from Vadnagar, Gujarat. The Intensified Mission Indradhanush has been carried out in 121 districts in 16 States, 52 districts in the North Eastern States and 17 urban areas where immunization coverage has been very low in spite of repeated phases of Mission Indradhanush and in UIP, with an aim to rapidly build up full immunization coverage to more than 90% by December 2018.
- Inactivated Polio Vaccine (IPV): India is polio free but to maintain this status, the Inactivated Polio Vaccine (IPV) was introduced. Till August 2018, around 6.4 crore doses of IPV have been administered to children since its introduction.
- Adult Japanese Encephalitis (JE) Vaccine: Japanese Encephalitis is a life-threatening viral disease affecting brain mainly in children aged less than 15 years. However, National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme (NVBDCP) had identified 31 high burden districts from Assam, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal for adult JE

vaccination in the age-group of 15-65 years. The Adult JE vaccination campaign has been completed in all 31 districts of Assam, UP, West Bengal, wherein more than 3.29 crore beneficiaries aged 15-65 years were vaccinated.

- **Rotavirus Vaccine:** Rotavirus is one of the leading causes of severe diarrhoea and death among young children. At present, Rotavirus vaccine has been introduced in 9 States - Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Tripura. Approximately 2.6 crore doses of Rotavirus vaccine have been administered to children since its introduction till September 2018.
- **Measles-Rubella (MR) Vaccine:** Rubella vaccine has been introduced in UIP as Measles-Rubella vaccine to provide protection against congenital birth defects caused by Rubella infection. The campaign has been completed in 20 states/UTs (namely, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu, Goa, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Lakshadweep, Odisha, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttarakhand, Mizoram, Manipur, Punjab) and ongoing in 8 states/UTs (namely, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, J&K, Jharkhand, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Tripura). A total of 13.04 crore children vaccinated till 29th October 2018.
- **Pneumococcal Vaccine (PCV):** PCV was launched in a phased manner in UIP in May'17 for reducing infant mortality and morbidity caused by pneumococcal pneumonia. It has been launched on 13th May, 2017. PCV is given in entire Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, 12 district of Uttar Pradesh and 9 districts of Rajasthan. Till September 2018, around 59.48 lakh children have been covered under it.

NATIONAL VIRAL HEPATITIS CONTROL PROGRAM

- Ministry of Health Family Welfare launched the National Viral Hepatitis Control Program on World Hepatitis Day, 2018 – 28th July.
- Ministry also released the Operational Guidelines for National Viral Hepatitis Control Program, National Laboratory Guidelines for Viral Hepatitis Testing and National Guidelines for Diagnosis and Management of Viral Hepatitis. The program has been launched with the goal of ending viral hepatitis as a public health threat in the country by 2030.
- The aim of the initiative is to reduce morbidity and mortality due to viral hepatitis.

LABOUR ROOM QUALITY IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVE - LaQshya

- Ministry of Health & Family Welfare launched LaQshya to improve the quality of care that is being provided to the pregnant mother in the Labour Room and Maternity Operation Theatres, thereby preventing the undesirable adverse outcomes associated with childbirth.
- The goal is to reduce preventable maternal and new-born mortality, morbidity and stillbirths associated with the care around delivery in Labour room and Maternity OT and ensure respectful maternity care.
- The initiative will be implemented in Government Medical Colleges (MCs) besides District Hospitals (DHs), and high delivery load Sub- District Hospitals (SDHs) and Community Health Centres (CHCs).
- Currently incentives are being given to facilities achieving the targets outlined:
 - I. Rs.6 lakhs for Medical Colleges
 - II. Rs.3 lakhs for District Hospitals
 - III. Rs.2 lakhs for SDH/CHCs

PRADHAN MANTRI SURAKSHIT MATRITVA ABHIYAN (PMSMA)

- The program aims to provide assured, comprehensive and quality antenatal care, free of cost, universally to all pregnant women on the 9th of every month.
- Over 1.7 crore quality antenatal checkups have been conducted at PMSMA sites for comprehensive services under the programme.
- More than 8 lakh high risk pregnancies have been identified under PMSMA.
- PMSMA is conducted at over 13100 government health facilities across all State/UTs.
- Approx 5250 volunteers are enrolled on PMSMA portal across all State/UTs.

RASHTRIYA BAL SWASTHYA KARYAKRAM (RBSK)

- Launched in 2013 for child screening and free treatment for 4 Ds i.e. Defects at birth, Diseases, Deficiencies and Development delays including disability.
- Provisions free management of 30 selected health conditions.
- Nearly 82.5 crore children were screened and 1.96 crore children availed services for treatment since inception.

NATIONAL DEWORMING DAY (NDD)

- To combat STH infections, the Health Ministry has adopted a single day strategy called NDD, wherein single dose of albendazole is administered to children from 1-19 years of age group through the platform of schools and anganwadi centres.
- Till February 2018, 26.68 crore children have been administered albendazole. Further, more than 114 crore doses of Albendazole were administered to children 1-19 years, since 2015.

REVISED NATIONAL TUBERCULOSIS CONTROL PROGRAMME

- The Government of India (GoI) launched the National TB Programme in 1962 to address TB in India.
- The Revised National TB Control Programme (RNTCP), based on the internationally recommended Directly Observed Treatment Short-course (DOTS) strategy, was launched in 1997 expanded across the country by 2006.
- In 2007, GOI introduced the Programmatic Management of Drug Resistant TB (PMDT) to combat drug resistance and achieved full geographical coverage by 2013.
- The Ministry has developed the National Strategic Plan (NSP) for Tuberculosis (2017-25) which builds on the success and learning of the last NSP and encapsulates the bold and innovative steps required to achieve sustainable development goal on TB in India by 2025, five years ahead of the global timelines.
- More than 2 Crore patients on treatment & saved more than 35 lakh lives in India.
- Treatment success rates have tripled from 25% in pre-RNTCP era to 88% presently (TB India 2018) & TB death rates have reduced from 29% to 4%.
- Currently TB incidence is declining by about 3.3% per year
- 18.62 lakh TB patients notified, of which 4.4 lakh were from private sector from January to 30th November 2018.
- Implemented with through more than 16,574 Designated microscopy Centers & treatment available in every village through 4 lakh DOT centers.
- Standards for TB Care in India (STCI) developed.

- In May 2012, TB made a notifiable disease & developed NIKSHAY – a case based web based system of reporting and monitoring TB patients.
- More than 12 lakh TB patients reported from private health care providers.
- Country achieved MDGs related to Tuberculosis in 2016.
- Incidence of TB declined by 28% & mortality declined by 58% since 1990.

NIKSHAY POSHAN YOJANA

- NIKSHAY Poshan Yojana has been launched by GOI for providing financial assistance for nutrition support at rate of Rs. 500/- per month has been initiated since April 2018.
- Since 1st April to November 2018, Rs. 49.37 Crore have been processed for 4.69 lakh beneficiaries through DBT for NPY.
- E-Health advances - programme management and surveillance.
- Programme is enhancing its ICT based surveillance tool NIKSHAY.
- IT enabled adherence monitoring tool 99 DOTS have been used for all HIV-TB patients across the country. It has been expanded for all TB patients
- NIKSHAY Aushadhi – drugs distribution management system has been implemented across the country – 24,846 stores are reporting through NIKSHAY Aushadhi (All State, District and Block level drug stores and 50% of PHC level stores are reporting drug inventory through NIKSHAY Aushadhi)
- 20,000 tablets have been provided for accelerating NIKSHAY uptake and NIKSHAY Aushadhi implementation
- Call Centre with capacity of 90 seats has been established to cater to Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh and expanded to other states gradually.
- Echo – Technical capacity building sessions being conducted with all 148 nodal DR-TB centres

NATIONAL VECTOR BORNE DISEASE CONTROL PROGRAMME (NVBDCP)

Malaria

- India is committed to malaria elimination by 2030 in response to the global call by WHO for eliminating malaria by the end of the year 2030.
- India drafted National Framework for malaria elimination and was launched by HFM in February, 2016 which was followed by drafting of National Strategic Plan (NSP) for malaria elimination (2017-2022). Both the above documents give clear vision as well as time bound strategies for malaria elimination by 2027.
- After the call for malaria elimination, India strengthened its interventions by providing and increasing the outreach of malaria diagnosis by using Rapid Diagnostic Kits (for both Pv&Pf), effective anti-malarials like Artemisinin combinations, provision of Long Lasting Insecticidal Nets (LLINs) – 50 million already distributed in North-eastern states and Orissa (more in pipeline for high endemic areas of Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Jharkhand).
- Decrease in total malaria cases from 805804 in 2017 to 375845 (53.36% decline) in 2018 till November.
- Decrease in Pf cases from 509229 in 2017 to 183889 (63.89% decline) in 2018 till November.

Dengue & Chikungunya

- Disease surveillance is carried out through identified Sentinel Surveillance Hospitals (SSHs) with laboratory facility networked across the country and linked with Apex Referral Laboratories (ARLs) with advanced diagnostic facility for backup support.
- Number of SSHs and ARLs increased to 646 and 16 respectively.
- Case Fatality Rate (deaths per 100 cases) for Dengue is sustained at less than 1.0% (National target) since 2008 due to training of clinicians on case management as per National guidelines.
- May 16 observed as National Dengue Day throughout country.
- Dengue cases declined by 36% and deaths by 33% compared to 2017.
- Chikungunya cases declined by 22% in 2018 compared to 2017.

Japanese Encephalitis (JE)

- Constitution of National Programme for Prevention and Control of JE/AES to reduce morbidity, mortality and disability due to JE/AES.
- A total of 139 Sentinel Surveillance Site Laboratories (SSSHs) and 15 Apex Referral Labs identified in the country for testing of JE in AES cases.
- JE vaccination campaign in children (1-15 yrs) completed in 229 out of 231 JE endemic districts.
- Adult vaccination (15-65 years): Completed in all 31 districts identified in Assam, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

PRADHAN MANTRI SWASTHYA SURAKSHA YOJANA (PMSSY)

- The PMSSY envisages creation of tertiary healthcare capacity in medical education, research and clinical care, in the underserved areas of the country. It aims at correcting regional imbalances in the availability of affordable/reliable tertiary healthcare services and also augmenting facilities for quality medical education in the country. PMSSY has two components- setting up of new AIIMS like institutes in underserved regions of the country: and up-gradation of existing Govt Medical Colleges (GMCs). Under PMSSY, the progress so far is:
- The derailed contractual arrangements for six new AIIMS (AIIMS-Patna, AIIMS- Rishikesh, AIIMS-Jodhpur, AIIMS-Bhopal, AIIMS-Bhubaneswar and AIIMS-Raipur) put back on track and construction expedited. Since July 2014, 3000 hospital beds added in the six functional AIIMS (including about 1000 beds added in the last oneyear). 2 new AIIMS announced for Jharkhand and Gujarat in 2017-18.

GOVERNMENT AMENDED PREVENTION OF MONEY LAUNDERING ACT

- Government has recently amended the Prevention of Money-laundering Act, 2002 through Finance Act, 2018.
- The Amendments in PMLA aims at further enhancing the effectiveness of the Act, widen its scope and take care of certain procedural difficulties faced by the Enforcement Directorate in prosecution of PMLA cases. It will also enable exchange of information among agencies and enhance effectiveness of efforts against black money.
- Amendment in definition of “proceeds of crime” so that ED can attach and confiscate proceed against property equivalent to proceeds to crime held outside the country also.

DEFENCE MINISTRY ISSUES NEW GUIDELINES FOR START-UPS

- Ministry of Defence has specified new rules for Indian start-ups to enable them to take part in military projects.
- It encourages new companies to undertake research projects to develop or upgrade weapon systems and to work towards reducing imports. It leverages cutting-edge research and innovation of startups.
- Under the new rules, start-ups in some certain categories recognised by the Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion (DIPP) will automatically qualify to take part in specified defence projects.
- For projects with estimated cost of prototype development phase not exceeding INR 3 Crore, no separate technical or financial criteria will be defined for both 'startups' and 'other than startups', to encourage their participation

BORDER AREA DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (BADP)

- The Centre has increased its outlay under Border Area Development Programme (to Rs. 1,100 crore in 2017-18 from Rs. 990 crore in 2015-16) for the allround development of villages located along the international border in 17 states.
- India's border areas face poor accessibility, inadequate infrastructure, depressed economic growth, rampant poverty and a sense of insecurity among the people. The development of border areas has therefore been envisaged as an important element in border management. Towards this end, the BADP was initiated as early as 1987 as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.

RIM OF PACIFIC MULTINATIONAL NAVAL EXERCISE (RIMPAC)

- The Indian Navy participated in the Rim of Pacific Multinational Naval Exercise (RIMPAC) in Hawaii which is organized by US.
- The 26th edition of RIMPAC, hosted by the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM), RIMPAC is the world's largest set of international maritime war games.
- The theme of RIMPAC 2018 is "Capable, Adaptive, Partners."
- This is the first time Brazil, Israel, Sri Lanka and Vietnam are participating in RIMPAC.
- China is absent this year as it was dis-invited from participating by the U.S., citing China's military actions in the South China Sea.
- The Indian Navy was an observer for the 2006, 2010 and 2012 editions of the exercise. In 2014, INS Sahyadri was deployed for the 24th edition of the exercise, while INS Satpura took part in 2016.

BRU DEAL

- The Union Home Ministry has agreed to relax conditions laid down in the 'four-corner agreement' signed for repatriation of Bru migrants from Tripura to Mizoram.
- Bru tribe also known as Riang and it is spread across the northeastern states of Tripura, Assam, Manipur, and Mizoram.
- It is categorized as primitive tribal group. They are the second largest tribe of Tripura after the Tripuri tribe.
- The dance performed by Bru tribals after harvesting of shifting cultivation is 'Mainouhma' dance.

EXERCISE SCO PEACE MISSION 2018

- The SCO peace mission for 2018 will be conducted in Chebarkul, Chelyabinsk, Russia this year.
- Exercise Peace Mission 2018, the joint military exercise of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is conducted biennially for SCO member states.
- It provides an opportunity to the armed forces of SCO nations to train in counter terrorism operations in urban scenario in a multinational and joint environment.
- This is the first time India is participating in this peace mission post joining SCO.
- The exercise provided an opportunity for the armies of India and Pakistan to operate together outside the United Nations umbrella, under which they had operated in the past.

SMART BORDER FENCE

- The Union Home Minister inaugurated the smart border fencing pilot projects under the comprehensive integrated border management system (CIBMS) programme.
- Smart fencing at the borders is a technological solution devised to address the security issues in the Border States and the two projects in five kilometers areas each have been installed along the Indo-Pak International Border in Jammu on a pilot basis.
- It has got hi-tech surveillance system that would create an invisible electronic barrier on land, water and even in air and underground.
- A stretch of 60 kms of Assam's border with Bangladesh would also in November be provided CIBMS pilot project to stop illegal migration.
- Ministry has been working towards upgrading border infrastructure, with more than 600km of roads having been built so far.

ONE STOP CENTRES

- Ministry of Women and Child Development has approved 100 additional One Stop Centres which is the sub-scheme under National Mission for Empowerment of women under Ministry of Women & Child Development.
- It is aimed at supporting women affected by violence in private and public spaces, within the family, community and at the workplace.
- Establishment of OSCs was one of the key component of Nirbhaya Fund. Every OSC is integrated with newly operational Women's Helpline (181).
- The first OSC built at Raipur, Chhattisgarh has received the President's award on March 8, 2018 on the International Women's Day.

MILITARY EXERCISES

S.NO.	NAME OF THE EXERCISE	COUNTRY
1	MITRA SHAKTI	SRI LANKA
2	HAND IN HAND	CHINA
3	INDRA	RUSSIA
4	SURYA KIRAN	NEPAL
5	GARUDA SHAKTI	INDONESIA
6	NOMADIC ELEPHANT	MONGOLIA
7	MAITREE	THAILAND
8	YUDH ABHYAS	USA
9	SAMPRIITI	BANGLADESH
10	EKUVERIN	MALDIVES
11	BOLD KURUKSHETRA	SINGAPORE
12	VARUN	FRANCE
13	SLINEX	SRI LANKA
14	MALABAR	USA & JAPAN
15	SIMBEX	SINGAPORE
16	NASEEM AL BAHR	OMAN
17	INDRA DANUSH	U.K
18	RED FLAG	USA
19	AUS INDEX	AUSTRALIA
20	VAJRA PRAHAR	USA
21	PRABAL DOSTYK	KAZAKHSTHAN
22	KHANJAR	KYRGYKISTHAN
23	COBRA GOLD	THAILAND
24	ANGI WARRIOR	SINGAPORE
25	KAKADU	AUSTRALIA
26	DESERT EAGLE	UAE
27	COPE INDIA	USA
28	PITCH BLACK	AUSTRALIA
29	DHARMA GAURDIAN	JAPAN
30	SAHYOG HOPTAC	VIETNAM
31	AVIAINDRA 18	RUSSIA
32	VINBAX I	VIETNAM
33	KAZIND	KAZAKHSTHAN

NUTRITION SECURITY

- United Nation has published its report on “The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World” for 2017.
- This is an annual report jointly prepared by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organization (WHO).
- For the first time, this year’s report provides two measures of food insecurity:
 - I. Prevalence of undernourishment (PoU),
 - II. Prevalence of severe food insecurity based on Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES). This is a new tool based on direct interviews to measure people’s ability to access food.

HAPPY SCHOOLS PROJECT

- UNESCO has launched this program along with the involvement of Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEPS) in India.
- It was launched in 2014 with the aim of promoting learner well-being and holistic development in School.
- The framework of the Project aims to bring happiness and the quality of education together by calling for education systems to shift away from traditional measures and to instead embrace a diversity of talents and intelligences by recognizing values, strengths and competences that contribute to enhancing happiness.

DISHA DASHBOARD

- DISHA stands for District Development and Monitoring committees under Ministry of Rural Development recently which has been developed to facilitate data driven decision making.
- Currently, 18 schemes are covered; the ultimate plan is to integrate all 42 Central schemes which are already monitored by DISHA or District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committees.
- Currently, the tool is available to legislators and government officials, but soon some of its features will be available online to the public.
- It will make it easier to monitor governance by geography in real time and overcome geographic mismatches.

INSTITUTIONS OF EMINENCE

- The Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD) has granted Institution of Eminence (IOE) status to six educational institutions including 3 from Public Sector and 3 from Private Sector.
- None of the Indian universities had found a place in World University Rankings in 2017. Thus, in budget 2016, the government had committed to empower Higher Educational Institutions to help them become world class teaching and research institutions.
- In this context, the government had formed an Empowered Expert Committee (EEC) chaired by N. Gopaldaswami to recommend 6 institutions as Institutions of Eminence.
- IOE is a tag given to institutions which are either among Top 50 in the National institution Ranking Framework (in their category) or among Top 500 in internationally recognised rankings like the Times Higher Education World University Rankings and have a good mix of foreign and domestic students as well as faculty, have international standard infrastructure and are multi-disciplinary in their approach.

CARE ECONOMY

- International Labour Organization (ILO) released report “Care Work and Care Jobs for the Future of Decent Work”.
- The care economy entails the production and consumption of goods and services necessary for the physical, social, mental and emotional well-being of care-dependent groups, such as children, the elderly, the ill and people with disabilities, as well as healthy, prime working-age adults. In 2015, 2.1 billion people children, older persons, people with several disabilities needed care and by 2030 this number will increase by 200 million people.

SWACHH SURVEKSHAN 2018

- The Swachh Survekshan survey has been launched under Swachh Bharat Mission. The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs takes up the Swachh Survekshan in urban areas and the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation in rural areas.
- The Quality Council of India (QCI) is responsible for carrying out the assessment.
- All 4041 cities were part of Swachh Survekshan-2018. 500 cities with populations more than 1 lakh have been ranked on national level while 3,541 cities with less than 1 lakh population will have State and Regional ranking.
- The three cleanest cities as per the Survekshan 2018 are Indore, Bhopal and Chandigarh
- Jharkhand was adjudged the best performing state, followed by Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh.
- The 2018 survey captured the progress in following 6 broad parameters
 - I. Collection and Transportation of Municipal Solid Waste
 - II. Processing and Disposal of Municipal Solid Waste:
 - III. Sanitation related progress
 - IV. IEC (Information, Education and Communication)
 - V. Capacity Building
 - VI. Innovation and Best Practices
- Negative marking was also introduced this year to ensure cities do not make false claims about improvement in sanitation infrastructure.

CAUVERY WATER MANAGEMENT SCHEME, 2018

- The Union Water Resources ministry notified the constitution of the Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA) and the Cauvery Water Regulation Committee (CWRC) under Cauvery Water Management Scheme, 2018 following the directions of Supreme Court
- SC while accepting that the issue of drinking water has to be placed on a “higher pedestal”, raised the share of Cauvery water for Karnataka by 14.75 tmcft and reduced Tamil Nadu’s share, while compensating it by allowing extraction of 10 tmcft groundwater from the river basin.

PROJECT DHOOP

- Food Safety and Standards Authority (FSSAI) has launched Project Dhoop which is a nationwide campaign with NCERT, New Delhi Municipal Council and North MCD Schools to spread awareness about consumption of Vitamin D through natural sun light and consuming fortified food among school going children.

- The project urges the schools to shift their morning assembly timing to noon time so that children are able to absorb optimum levels of Vitamin D through natural sunlight.
- It will ensure that the children are exposed to sun light that will give them the required 90% of Vitamin through sun light.
- The sunshine from 11AM to 1PM is most beneficial for bones of human body because during that time the best UVB radiation is received.

EINSTEIN RING

- The Hubble Telescope discovered a light bending Einstein Ring in space.
- According to the General Relativity theory of Albert Einstein, light can get deflected when passing through gravitational field of a massive body. Therefore, a massive object would warp space and time.
- When light from a distant object/source (e.g. a galaxy), pass by an extremely large mass/lens (e.g. another galaxy or galaxy cluster), it gets diverted and distorted around the massive intervening cluster and is forced to travel along many different light paths toward Earth, making it seem as though the galaxy is in several places at once. This is called Gravitational Lens effect.
- Einstein Ring is a kind of gravitational lens which is formed when the galaxy cluster is so closely aligned that the otherwise divergent light is focussed as a visible ring by them.
- The rings and lenses magnify objects that otherwise would be too distant and dim to see in today's telescopes.

LIST OF SPACECRAFTS LAUNCHED BY ISRO IN 2018

S.No.	Name	Launch Date	Launch Vehicle	Application
1	GSAT-7A	Dec 19, 2018	GSLV-F11 / GSAT-7A Mission	Communication
2	GSAT-11 Mission	Dec 05, 2018	Ariane-5 VA-246	Communication
3	HysIS	Nov 29, 2018	PSLV-C43 / HysIS Mission	Earth Observation
4	GSAT-29	Nov 14, 2018	GSLV Mk III-D2 / GSAT-29 Mission	Communication
5	IRNSS-II	Apr 12, 2018	PSLV-C41/IRNSS-1I	Navigation
6	GSAT-6A	Mar 29, 2018	GSLV-F08/GSAT-6A Mission	Communication
7	INS-1C	Jan 12, 2018	PSLV-C40/Cartosat-2 Series Satellite Mission	Experimental
8	Microsat	Jan 12, 2018	PSLV-C40/Cartosat-2 Series Satellite Mission	Experimental

NATIONAL BIOPHARMA MISSION

- A loan agreement of US\$ 125.00 million was signed between India and World Bank for a National Biopharma Mission's project titled "Innovate in India (i3) for inclusiveness".
- It is an Industry-Academia Collaborative Mission for accelerating discovery research to early development for biopharmaceuticals.
- The World Bank assisted INNOVATE IN INDIA (i3) program under this mission aims to create an enabling ecosystem to promote entrepreneurship and indigenous manufacturing in the sector

NEW NORMS FOR LABELLING PACKAGED GM FOODS

- FSSAI has issued Draft food Safety and Standards (Labelling and Display) Regulations 2018 wherein it has proposed that all packaged food products containing genetically modified (GM) ingredients must clearly state it on their labels.
- According to the new regulations it mandatory to label such food stuffs as “Contains GMO/Ingredients derived from GMO” if such items contain 5% or more GE ingredients.
- It also suggests mandatory declaration by packaged food manufacturers about nutritional information such as calories, total fat, trans fat, sugar and salt per serve on the front of the pack.

ANIMAL-FREE TESTING FOR DRUGS

- Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission has approved modern, animal-free tests for drug manufacturers which has been in effect from July 1st
- In the 2018 edition of Indian Pharmacopoeia, the IPC has replaced the pyrogen test carried out on rabbits and the abnormal toxicity test carried out on guinea pigs and mice.

DIGITAL VILLAGE PROGRAMME

- The government of India launched this program which aims to expand Common Service Centres (CSC) to 2.50 lakh gram panchayats and to establish 700 Digital Villages by the end of this year.
- The CSC model has adopted six villages in the country in the pilot phase to be developed as Digital Villages.
- DigiGaon or Digital Village is conceptualized as a connected place in a rural and remote part of the country where citizens can avail various e-Services of the Central Government, state Governments and private players.

RBI HAS BANNED ALL TYPES OF CRYPTOCURRENCY IN INDIA

- The Reserve Bank of India released a statement directing all regulated entities, including banks, to stop dealing with individuals and businesses involved in virtual currencies within three months.
- Crypto currency is a type of digital currency that uses cryptography for security and anti counterfeiting measures. It is normally not issued by any central authority, making it immune to government interference or manipulation.
- The control of each cryptocurrency works through distributed ledger technology called blockchain. Some of the examples are Bitcoin, Ethereum, Ripple etc.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS & HEADS

S.No.	Name of the Organisation	Head	Headquarters	Remarks
1	Amnesty International	Kumi Naidoo	London, United Kingdom	(E) 1961
2	Asian Development Bank	Takehiko Nakao	Mandaluyong, Philippines	(E) 1966
3	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)	Jin Liqun	Beijing, China	(E) 2016
4	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)	Dr. Alan Bollard	Singapore	2018 Summit - Papua New Guinea
5	Association of South East Nations (ASEAN)	H.E. Lim Jock Hoi	Jakarta, Indonesia	2018 Summit – Singapore
6	Commonwealth of Nations	Queen Elizabeth II	London, United Kingdom	(E) 1949
7	Food & Agricultural Organisation (FAO)	José Graziano da Silva	Rome, Italy	(E) 1945
8	International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)	Yukiya Amano	Vienna, Austria	(E) 1957
9	International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)	Peter Maurer	Geneva, Switzerland	(E) 1863
10	International Court of Justice (ICJ)	Abdulqawi Ahmed Yusuf	The Hague, Netherlands	(E) 1945
11	International Cricket Council (ICC)	Shashank Manohar	Dubai, UAE	(E) 1909
12	International Labour Organisation (ILO/OIT)	Guy Ryder	Geneva, Switzerland	(E) 1919
13	International Maritime Organisation (IMO)	Kitack Lim	London, United Kingdom	(E) 1948
14	International Monetary Fund (IMF)	Christine Lagarde	Washington DC, US	(E) 1945
15	International Olympic Committee (IOC)	Thomas Bach	Lausanne, Switzerland	(E) 1894

S.No.	Name of the Organisation	Head	Headquarters	Remarks
16	New Development Bank (BRICS Development Bank)	K. V. Kamath	Shanghai, China	(E) 2014
17	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)	Jens Stoltenberg	Brussels, Belgium	(E) 1949
18	Organization for Economic Cooperation & Development (OECD)	Jose Angel Gurría	Paris, France	(E) 1961
19	Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)	Mohammed Barkindo	Vienna, Austria	(E) 1960
20	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)	H. E. Amjad Hussain	Kathmandu, Nepal	(E) 1995 2019 Summit – Colombo
21	The Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA)	Gianni Infantino	Zurich, Switzerland	(E) 1904
22	The World Bank	Jim Yong Kim	Washington DC, US	(E) 1945
23	United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	Henrietta H. Fore	New York, USA	(E) 1946
24	United Nations Conference on Trade & Development (UNCTAD)	Mukhisa Kituyi	Geneva, Switzerland	(E) 1964
25	United Nations Education Scientific & Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)	Audrey Azoulay	Paris, France	(E) 1945
26	United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO)	Li Yong	Vienna, Austria	(E) 1966
27	United Nations Organization (UN)	Antonio Guterres	New York, United States	(E) 1946
28	United Nations Populations Fund (UNFPA)	Dr. Natalia Kanem	New York, United States	(E) 1969
29	World Economic Forum (WEF)	Klaus Schwab	Cologne, Switzerland	(E) 1971
30	World Health Organisation (WHO)	Tedros Adhanom	Geneva, Switzerland	(E) 1948
31	World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO)	Francis Gurry	Geneva, Switzerland	(E) 1967

S.No.	Name of the Organisation	Head	Headquarters	Remarks
32	World Meteorological Organisation (WMO)	David Grimes	Geneva, Switzerland	(E) 1950
33	World Trade Organization (WTO)	Roberto Azevedo	Geneva, Switzerland	(E) 1995
34	World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)	Pavan Sukhdev	Vaud, Switzerland	(E) 1961



NOVEMBER & DECEMBER CURRENT AFFAIRS 2018

INDIAN RAILWAYS LAUNCHED “eDrishti” SOFTWARE

- Indian Railways towards development initiatives has launched e-dristi in order to create a one stop management portal
- e-dristi is a web portal which would help Indian railways on keeping a check on progresses related to various on-going projects, freight systems, station cleanliness and more. It would act as one stop interface where every progress would be mapped visually.
- The newly launched e-dristi interface would help railway officials to gauge the progress and identify the lag in any developmental initiative and take necessary actions.

SOUTH ASIA REGIONAL YOUTH PEACE CONFERENCE

- Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti (GSDS), functioning under Ministry of Culture, Government of India organized a 3 day ‘South Asia Regional Youth Peace Conference’ in partnership with UNESCO- MGIEP and Standing Together to Enable Peace.
- The conference will be held at Gandhi Darshan, Rajghat, Delhi, India. The conference is being organized to mark the beginning of celebration of 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.
- This conference focuses on building a network for young leaders from South Asian countries working on various social issues, to identify avenues for partnership and collaboration, support and show solidarity towards each other’s initiatives, nurture relationships and promote global citizenship to work towards achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

INDIA'S FIRST EMERGENCY RESPONSE SUPPORT SYSTEM

- The Union Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh launched Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) for Himachal Pradesh at Mandi.
- Himachal Pradesh is the first state to launch pan-India single emergency number ‘112’ under ERSS.
- This event marks the beginning of commencement of a single number based 112 emergency services which will connect to Police, Fire, Health and other helplines through an Emergency Response Centre in the State. This service obviates the need for citizens to remember multiple helpline numbers.

NATIONAL PROJECTS CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION LIMITED

- National Projects Construction Corporation Limited (NPCC) has been conferred with the status of Miniratna : Category –I by the Government of India.
- The empowerment of Miniratna Status to NPCC will help the company in taking speedy decisions by enhancing the delegation of powers to the Board.
- NPCC, a schedule ‘B’ CPSE under the administrative control of Ministry of Water Resources RD & GR, has also been awarded ISO 9001:2015 Certification.
- The Corporation, incorporated in 1957, is a premier construction company having mandate with creation of infrastructure to provide impetus for economic development of the country.

- The Corporation is making continuous profit since 2009-10, having positive networth for the last six years and has ambitious business plan with enhanced order book position of Rs. 11833 crore.

INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL OF INDIA (IFFI)

- The 49th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) 2018 was held at Goa
- It showcased 212 films from over 68 countries which reflects diversity of taste. International Competition section has 15 films out of which 3 are Indian. Competition section itself represents films produced and co-produced by 22 countries.

CASIO HAS LAUNCHED GST CALCULATOR

- Japan based “Casio” India has announced the launch of the world’s first GST calculator.
- Casio India adopted the mission to provide a single solution for all GST-based calculations. Surveying different Indian markets to understand the nuances of the invoicing process over the past year across the nation, Casio India is introducing two new innovations MJ-120 GST and MJ-12GST dedicated to the Indian market.
- This calculator is equipped to navigate the challenging environment and develop smooth functionality by easing the issues faced by Indian retailers post the introduction of GST.

LOGIX INDIA 2019

- Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation launched the logo and brochure of Logix India 2019 in New Delhi.
- Logix India will enable effective international trade logistics and help provide efficient and cost-effective flow of goods on which other commercial sectors depend.
- The Minister called for diversification of not only India’s export basket but also of products and countries. He further stated that there was urgent need for India to have more robust trade relations with countries in Africa, Latin America, Central Asia, Middle East and ASEAN.

INTERNATIONAL GITA FESTIVAL 2018

- The International GITA Festival 2018 is organized at Kurukshetra in Haryana from December 7 to 23, 2018.
- Mauritius is partner country and Gujarat is the partner state.
- Gita festival will also be organised in Mauritius in Feb 2019.
- The objective behind the festival 2018 is to spread awareness on GITA

MARY KOM

- Mary Kom becomes first female boxer in India to win 6 gold medals at World Championships.
- Mary Kom defeated Ukraine’s Hanna Okhota in the 48kg final to win World Championships
- The championship is being held at the Indira Gandhi Stadium in New Delhi

KARTAPUR CORRIDOR

- Cabinet has approved building and development of Kartarpur Corridor from Dera Baba Nanak in Gurdaspur district of Punjab to international border connecting Pakistan

- Kartapur is the Sikh shrine located in Pakistan
- India and Pakistan has decided to build a road connect which will be used by Indian Sikhs to visit the corridor

SANGAI FESTIVAL

- The Government of Manipur organized the Manipur Sangai Festival.
- The Festival strives to showcase and promote the best of what the state has to offer to the world in terms of art and culture, handloom, handicrafts & fine arts, indigenous sports, cuisines & music, eco & adventure sports as well as the scenic natural beauty of the land.
- The Festival has assumed great significance in recent years and every edition essential celebrates ethnic diversity of Manipur Society. Participation of various Indian States, foreign traders and cultural troupes in the Festival this year will make it grander in scale and style.
- The theme of the festival 2018 is “DESTINATION MANIPUR”

INSTITUTE OF INTER FAITH STUDIES

- Government of India announced that a centre for inter faith studies will be set up at Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar.
- Chairs on Shri Guru Nanak Devji will be set up in one University each in UK and Canada.
- An International seminar on the life and teachings of Shri Guru Nanak Devji will be organised in New Delhi.
- This is a part of the Union Cabinet decision which passes a Resolution to celebrate the 550th Birth Anniversary of Shri Guru Nanak Devji.

NATIONAL NATUROPATHY DAY

- The department of AYUSH has observed India’s first National Naturopathy Day on 18th Nov
- On this day, Central Council for Research in Yoga and Naturopathy has organising health camps, workshops and exhibitions in association with local naturopathy centres and hospitals.
- Naturopathy plays important role as many diseases can be prevented with these practices especially non-communicable diseases which have seen increase, mainly owing to changes in lifestyle.
- It is drug-less system and is very cost effective. It can be easily integrated with any other system of healthcare as lifestyle intervention.
- These practices are being promoted in wellness centres along with allopathic medicine so that we get best of all systems of medicine.

Rs 75 COMMEMORATIVE COIN

- The Union Ministry of Finance has decided to release a Rs 75 commemorative coin on the occasion of 75th anniversary of the hoisting of Tricolour for the first time by Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose at Port Blair.
- Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose visited Andaman in on December 30, 1943, he hoisted the Tricolor for the first time at Cellular Jail of Port Blair, much before India attained Independence declaring the island as the free territory from the British rule.
- On the same occasion, he announced the freedom of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, the first Indian Territory, from the British rule.

- The island at that time was liberated from British rule by Japan which captured it during the World War – II.
- Bose named Andaman Island as Shaheed and Nicobar Island as Swaraj and appointed INA General AD Loganathan as the governor of the Islands.
- Azad Hind Government was not merely a Government in Exile anymore but had its own land, own currency, civil code and stamps.

INDIA INTERNATIONAL CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL

- Shillong's 3rd India International Cherry Blossom Festival 2018 will celebrate the unique autumn flowering of Himalayan Cherry Blossoms with several cultural events at Shillong, Meghalaya.
- Visitors can enjoy fashion shows, rock concerts, a beauty pageant and even compete in an amateur Golf Tournament. Alongside, there will be stalls showcasing the region's food, wine and crafts and there are several Japanese cultural events, a Japanese Food Pavilion and a Higher Education Stall in partnership with the Embassy of Japan in India.

PUBLIC CREDIT REGISTRY

- The Reserve Bank has initiated steps to set up a wide-based digital Public Credit Registry (PCR) to capture details of all borrowers, including wilful defaulters and also the pending legal suits
- The PCR will be an extensive database of credit information for India that is accessible to all
- The PCR will include data from entities like market regulator SEBI, the Corporate Affairs
- Ministry and the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India to enable banks and financial institutions to get a 360-degree profile of existing and prospective borrowers on a real-time

NSE goBID

- It is an app available to all investors registered with NSE's trading members, which allows investors to invest in treasury bills (T-Bills) of 91 days, 182 days and 364 days and various government bonds from one year to almost 40 years.
- The launch assumes significance as government securities are among the safer investment options available to retail investors as such securities are credit risk free instruments while providing portfolio diversification with longer investment durations.

EASE OF DOING BUSINESS GRAND CHALLENGE

- The government has launched Ease of Doing Business Grand Challenge on resolving seven identified Ease of Doing Business problems with use of cutting edge technologies.
- The objective of this challenge is to tap potential of young Indians, startups and other private enterprises to provide solutions to complex problems using current technology.
- It is in pursuance of Government's resolve to make India one of the easiest places to conduct business in the world
- This challenge is aimed at attracting innovative ideas on artificial intelligence (AI), Internet Of Things (IoT), big data analytics, blockchain and other cutting edge technology to reform government processes. The platform for this grand challenge will be on Start Up India portal.
- In World Bank's Doing Business Report (DBR, 2019), India has recorded jump of 23 positions against its rank of 100 in 2017 to be placed at 77th rank among 190 countries.

INDIA- CHINA DTAA AGREEMENT

- Government of India and the Government of the People's Republic of China have amended the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) by signing a Protocol.
- It updates the existing provisions for exchange of information to the latest international BU incorporating changes required to implement treaty related minimum standards under the action reports of Base Erosion & Profit Shifting (BEPS) Project, where India participated on an equal footing.

HIMALAYAN STATE REGIONAL COUNCIL

- NITI Aayog has constituted the 'Himalayan State Regional Council' to ensure sustainable development of the Indian Himalayan region.
- The main objective is Recognizing the uniqueness of the Himalayas and the challenges for sustainable development. 12 states in India share boundary with Himalayas they are
 - I. Jammu & Kashmir
 - II. Uttarakhand
 - III. Himachal Pradesh
 - IV. Arunachal Pradesh
 - V. Manipur
 - VI. Meghalaya
 - VII. Mizoram
 - VIII. Nagaland
 - IX. Sikkim
 - X. Tripura
 - XI. Assam
 - XII. West Bengal.

INTERNATIONAL TOURISM MART

- Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, in association with the Department of Tourism, Government of Tripura and the North Eastern States is organizing the 7th "International Tourism Mart" in Agartala, Tripura.
- ITM will see wide participation of International buyers and media delegates from countries around the world and from different regions of the country.
- They will be engaging in business-to-business meetings with sellers from the North Eastern
- This will enable the tourism product suppliers from the region to reach out to international and domestic buyers, with the objective of promoting tourism to the region.

UNESCO's LIST INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

- UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, has added Reggae to its list of cultural institutions worthy of protection and preservation.
- Each year, UNESCO adds to its Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, and Jamaica submitted Reggae for consideration earlier this year.

- The genre now joins a list of over 300 cultural traditions, including numerous musical ones such as Dominican merengue, Slovakian bagpipe music and Vietnamese xoan singing.
- Reggae is Jamaican music originating from marginalized groups, mainly in Western Kingston.

INDIAN WIND TURBINE CERTIFICATION SCHEME

- Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, in consultation with National Institute of Wind Energy Chennai, has prepared a draft of new Scheme called Indian Wind Turbine Certification Scheme (IWTCS) incorporating various guidelines.
- Consolidation of relevant National and International Standards (IS/IEC/IEEE), Technical Regulations and requirements issued by Central Electricity Authority (CEA), guidelines issued by MNRE and other international guidelines.
- Incorporates various best practices from other countries to ensure the quality of the wind energy projects.

INDIA GETS UN ENVIRONMENT AWARD

- United Nation Environment has awarded Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB), Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India with Asia Environment Enforcement Awards, 2018 for excellent work done by the Bureau in combating trans boundary environmental crime.
- WCCB has been conferred this award in Innovation category. WCCB has adopted innovative enforcement techniques that have dramatically increased enforcement of transboundary environmental crimes in India.

INDIA'S FIRST MULTI MODAL TERMINAL

- India's first multi-modal terminal on the Ganga river in Varanasi was inaugurated, and country's first container cargo containing food and beverage from Kolkata transported on inland waterways was received.
- This is the first of the four multi-modal terminals being constructed on the National
- Waterway-1 (river Ganga) as part of the World Bank-aided Jal Marg Vikas project of the Inland Waterways Authority of India.

AADI MAHOTSAV

- Also called National Tribal Festival was organized in New Delhi by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and TRIFED to celebrate, cherish and promote the spirit of tribal craft, culture, cuisine and commerce.

ONLINE PORTAL "ENSURE"

- Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare launched a portal ENSURE – National Livestock Mission-EDEG developed by NABARD and operated under the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries, which is a simple and transparent portal which makes information related to beneficiary and processing of application readily available Entrepreneurship Development and Employment Generation (EDEG)
- Under the Mission's component EDEG, subsidy payment for activities related to poultry, small ruminants, pigs etc., through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) goes directly to the beneficiary's account.

KRISHI KARMAN AWARD

- Jharkhand has been selected for Krishi Karman award in the rice category from the Union Ministry of Agriculture.
- The award will be given away in February 2019. It carries a cash prize worth Rs 2 crore and a
- The award is being given as a gesture of appreciation to the farmers of the state for achieving the

SAUBHAGYA SCHEME

- Nine States have achieved complete household electrification under the Saubhagya scheme.
- They are Madhya Pradesh, Tripura, Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir, Uttarakhand, Mizoram, Sikkim, Telangana and West Bengal.
- With this, 16 States in the country now have 100 per cent household electrification.
- Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana – ‘Saubhagya’ was launched in September, 2017.
- Under Saubhagya free electricity connections to all households (both APL and poor families) in rural areas and poor families in urban areas will be provided.
- Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) has been designated as nodal agency for the Saubhagya scheme.

@CYBERDOST

- Home Ministry has launched a Twitter account to spread awareness about cybercrimes and normal precautions to be taken.
- The Twitter handle - @CyberDost - is aimed at enhancing people basic knowledge about cybercrimes and precautions to be taken for prevention.
- Home Ministry said in the release that government is committed to creating an ecosystem to prevent and control cyber crimes to mitigate the possibility of disruption in normal business activities or losses due to cybercrimes.

VIJAY DIVAS

- India celebrated Vijay Diwas on Dec 16, to commemorate India’s victory over Pakistan in 1971 war– the war for the Independence of Bangladesh from Pakistan.
- The day marks the end of Bangladesh Liberation War, when the chief of the Pakistani forces, General Amir Abdullah Khan Niazi, along with 93 thousand troops, had surrendered unconditionally to the allied forces consisting of Indian Army and Mukti Bahini, led by Lieutenant General Jagjit Singh Aurora in Dhaka.
- The war which lasted only 13 days led to one of the biggest surrenders and resulted in subsequent secession of East Pakistan into Bangladesh. Over 3,800 Indian soldiers were martyred in the war.

JANUARY 2019 CURRENT AFFAIRS

PHILIP KOTLER PRESIDENTIAL AWARD

- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, received the first-ever Philip Kotler Presidential award in New Delhi.
- The Award focuses on the triple bottom-line of People, Profit and Planet.
- It will be offered annually to the leader of a Nation.
- “Shri Narendra Modi is selected for his outstanding leadership for the nation.
- His selfless service towards India, combined with his tireless energy has resulted in extraordinary economic, social and technological advances in the country.”

PUDUCHERRY BAN ON SINGLE USE PLASTIC

- The cabinet of Puducherry has agreed to ban the production, sale and use of single-use plastic products from March 1 2019
- A massive awareness drive will be planned before the ban commence.
- This came after the Tamil Nadu government decision to ban on plastic from 1st Jan 2019.

WOMEN OF INDIA ORGANIC FESTIVAL

- The 6th edition of Women of India Organic Festival has been organised by the Ministry of Women and Child Development at Leisure Valley Chandigarh
- The festival aims to encourage Indian women entrepreneurs and farmers to connect with more buyers and thus, empower them through financial inclusion, while promoting organic culture in India.
- Through this festival, the Ministry also aims to educate people about its various initiatives and schemes relating to women and children
- Over 200 women have come from all over India together at Leisure Valley, which has become the epicentre of an organic extravaganza.
- The Festival is showcasing over 1,000 varied organic products, including fabric, wellness, grains, seeds, jewellery, bakery items and a lot more.

NEW SERIES OF SOVERIGN GOLD BONDS

- Government of India, in consultation with the Reserve Bank of India, has decided to issue Sovereign Gold Bonds-2018-19.
- The government decided to issue new series of sovereign gold bonds between January 14 and January 18 at Rs 3,214 per gram
- The Bonds will be sold through banks, Stock Holding Corporation of India Limited (SHCIL), designated post offices, and recognised stock exchanges viz., National Stock Exchange of India Limited and Bombay Stock Exchange Limited.

NATIONAL YOUTH DAY 2019

- Government of India has observed National Youth Day on 12th January 2019.
- The day is observed every year to mark the birth anniversary of swami Vivekananda nanda. Swamiji was born on January 12th 1863.
- The National Youth festival for 2019 was started by Union Youth & Sports minister Sri Rajvardhan Rathore at New Delhi
- The theme for 2019 National Youth Day is “Be the voice of New India- Find Solutions & Contribute to policy”
- As a part of Youth Day the minister also launched National Youth Parliament at New Delhi

COIN AND STAMP ON GURU GOBIND SINGH LAUNCHED

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a commemorative coin and stamp on Guru Gobind Singh to mark the 350th birth anniversary.
- The Tenth Guru of Sikhs- Guru Gobind Singh has been a source of inspiration for many through his teachings and ideals.

PRAVASI BHARTIYA DIVAS

- The center observed the annual celebrations of Pravasi Bhartiya Divas on January 9th and 15th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas celebrations will be held from 21-23 January, 2019 at Varanasi.
- Prime Minister of Mauritius, Pravin Jugnauth will be the chief guest.
- This day is observed every year to mark the arrival of Mahatma Gandhi to India from South Africa on January 9th 1915.

DEMOCRACY INDEX 2019

- The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) has released the Democracy Index which ranks 167 countries by 60 indicators across five broad categories.
- India is ranked at 41st place with a score of 7.23/10
- This report classifies countries in to
 - I. Full Democracy
 - II. Flawed Democracy
 - III. Hybrid Regime

GANGAJAL PROJECT

- Giving a major push to develop and enhance Tourism infrastructure in Agra, the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched a series of development projects worth Rs. 2900 Crores for the Agra city and the adjoining areas.
- The Prime Minister dedicated to the nation, Gangajal project, which will provide Agra with better and more assured water supply, at an estimated cost of Rs.2880 crores.
- Gangajal project aims to bring 140 cusecs of Ganga water to Agra. This will help meet the drinking water demands in the city.

WORLD HINDI DAY OBSERVED

- World Hindi Day is celebrated on January 10 every year, marking the anniversary of first World Hindi Conference which was held in 1975 by then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.
- National Hindi Diwas is celebrated every year on September 14. On that day in 1949, the constituent assembly adopted Hindi, written in Devanagari script, as the official language of the Union.
- Eleventh World Hindi Conference was held at Port Louis, Mauritius, 2018

UNIVERSAL BASIC INCOME

- Sikkim's ruling party, the Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF), has decided to implement a Universal Basic Income (UBI) to all residents of the state.
- State Chief Minister Pawan Kumar Chamling has decided to include UBI in its manifesto ahead of the state assembly election in 2019 and aims to implement the scheme by 2022.
- UBI is a scheme that a number of economists have talked about and it works well in developing countries. It has been tested even in India, debated within the Finance Ministry as early as 2017.

KHELO INDIA YOUTH GAMES 2019

- Khelo India Youth Games started at Pune from January 9, 2019 with an aim of Grassroot level hunt for sportspersons
- This is the second edition the games which is an initiative of the Central Government, has expanded in its scope, and will allow participants to compete in two categories, (Under 17) and (Under 21), this year.
- In its new form, the games, which will be known as the Khelo India Youth Games, also allows students from colleges and Universities to compete.
- The other highlight of this year's games is that the national-level competition is moving out of the Capital and will be held in Maharashtra, which bid for the games, along with Assam and Jharkhand. This time, the games will be held in Pune, known as the city of students, from January 9 - January 20, 2019.

WINTER SESSION OF PARLIAMENT

- Winter Session 2018 of Parliament Concludes with a Productivity of Lok Sabha 47% and that of Rajya Sabha 27%; 5 Bills passed by both Houses of Parliament during the Session
- During the Session, 17 Bills (12 in the Lok Sabha and 05 in Rajya Sabha) were introduced.
- The Lok Sabha passed 14 Bills and while the Rajya Sabha passed 04 Bills during the session.
- During the Session, Second Batch of Supplementary Demands for Grants for 2018-19 and the related Appropriation Bill, was introduced, discussed and passed by the Lok Sabha.
- The Lok Sabha also passed two important Bills namely the Aadhar and other Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2019 and the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019. Three Bills replacing the Ordinances, namely, (i) the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Ordinance, 2018 (ii) the Indian Medical Council (Amendment) Ordinance, 2018 and (iii) The Companies (Amendment) Ordinance, 2018 which were promulgated by the President, were considered and passed by Lok Sabha. The Bills are presently in Rajya Sabha.
- Apart from the above, the other major highlight of the Session is the passing of the Constitution (One Hundred Twenty Four) Amendment Bill, 2019 which will provide reservation in services and educational institutions for economically weaker sections in general category.

- The National Trust for Welfare of Persons with Autism, Central Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple (Disabilities) Amendment Bill, 2018; the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Amendment) Bill, 2019 and National Council for Teacher Education (Amendment) Bill, 2019 were passed by both Houses of Parliament.
- In the Lok Sabha, 1 Short Duration Discussion under Rule 193 was held on the Rafale Deal. Another Short Duration Discussion on natural calamities in various parts of the country, particularly in Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Odisha with special reference to cyclones like Gaja, Titli, etc. was initiated in Lok Sabha and remained inconclusive.
- Proclamation issued by the President on the 19th December, 2018 under article 356 of the Constitution of India in relation to the State of Jammu and Kashmir was discussed and adopted in the Lok Sabha on 28.12.2018 and in the Rajya Sabha on 2nd and 3rd January, 2019 respectively.

NANDAN NILEKANI COMMITTEE

- Nilekani Panel to strengthen the Digital Payments Ecosystem and suggest measures to strengthen the safety and security of digital payments in the country was constituted by The Reserve Bank of India (RBI)
- RBI has provided the following terms of reference for the committee:
 - I. To encourage digitisation of payments and enhance financial inclusion through digitization.
 - II. Reviewing the existing status of digitisation of payments in the country, identifying the current gaps in the ecosystem and suggesting ways to bridge them.
 - III. Assessing the current levels of digital payments in financial inclusion.
 - IV. Suggest measures to strengthen the safety and security of digital payments.
 - V. Suggest a medium-term strategy for deepening of digital payments.

GITA GOPINATH

- Gita Gopinath has joined International Monetary Fund as its 11th chief economist.
- She is the first woman to occupy the post of chief economist of IMF.
- The Chief Economist is also the Director of the Fund's Research Department and is responsible for providing independent advice to the Fund on its policy issues, integrating ideas of the research in the design of policies, conveying these ideas to the policymakers inside and outside the fund and managing all research done at IMF.

AIRPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA

- Airports Authority of India (AAI) has imposed a ban on single-use plastic items at its 129 airports across the country these include banning of single-use plastic items like straws, plastic cutlery, plastic plates etc.
- The AAI informed, on the basis of a third-party assessment carried out by Quality Council of India (QCI), 16 of its airports have been declared as Single-Use Plastic Free.
- The QCI will complete its assessment of total 34 airports, which are managed by the AAI, by 31 of this month.

PERSONS IN NEWS 2018

S No.	Name	Subject/Reason
1	Avani Chaturvedi of Indian Air Force	First Indian Women o fly Russian made MiG-21 fighter.
2	Zoramthanga	New Chief Minister of Mizoram
3	Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel	New Chairperson of the National Green Tribunal
4	Jair Bolsonaro	Winner of Brazil's 2018 Presidential Elections
5	Gita Gopinath	First Female Chief Economist of IMF
6	Vedangi Kulkarni	Fastest Asian to Cucle the globe
7	Sonam Kapoor	People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India's Person of the Year for 2018
8	Mamata Benerjee	Skoch CM of the year 2018
9	Harshavardhan S	New Indian Ambassador to US
10	Cyril Ramaphosa	New President of South Africa
11	WV Raman	New coach for Indian Women Cricket Team
12	Shree Saini	Miss India Worldwide 2018
13	Stefan Iofen	New Prime Minister Of Sweden
14	Catriona Gay	Miss Universe 2018
15	BP Singh	President Film & Television Institute of India
16	Sunil Arora	New Chief Election Commissioner
17	SS Deswal	New DG of ITBP
18	Dr Sateesh Reddy	Chairman , DRDO
19	RS Sharma	Chairman TRAI
20	S Ramesh	Chairman , Central Board of Indirect Taxes and customs
21	Subash Chandra K	Chairman of IRDAI
22	Justic Rajan Gagoi	46 th Chief Justice of India
23	Jaini Kanth Misra	New DG of BSF
24	AR Rahaman	Ambassador for Sikkim State
25	Rekha Sharma	Chairman , National commission For Women
26	Anil Kumar Chowdary	New Chairman of SAIL
27	Dr Arif Ul Rahaman Alvi	New President of Pakistan
28	Indu Malhotra	First Women lawyer as Supreme Court Judge
29	KP Sharma Oil	Nepal Prime Minister
30	Rajesh Ranjan	New DG for CISF

Month Wise Important Dates

Month	Date	Day
January	January 4th	World Braille Day
	January 10th	World Hindi Day
	January 12th	National Youth Day
	January 15th	Indian Army Day
	January 24th	National Girl Child Day
	January 25th	National Voters Day
	January 25th	National Tourism Day
	January 26th	Republic Day of India
February	February 2nd	World Wet Land Day
	February 4th	International Cancer Day
	February 13th	World Radio Day
	February 20th	World day of social justice
	February 21st	International Mother Language Day
March	March 3rd	World Wildlife Day
	March 8rd	International Women's Day
	March 15th	World Consumer Rights Day
	March 20th	International Day of Happiness
	March 21st	World Forest Day
	March 22nd	World Water Day
	March 24th	World Tuberculosis Day
April	April 2nd	World Autism Awareness Day
	April 7th	World Health Day
	April 18th	World Heritage Day
	April 22nd	International Mother Earth Day
	April 23rd	English Language Day
	April 25th	World Malaria Day
	April 26th	World Intellectual Property Day
	April 30th	Ayuhman Bharat Diwas

May	May 1st	International Labor Day
	May 3rd	International Press Freedom Day
	May 11th	National Technology Day
	May 15th	International Day of Families
	May 21st	National Anti Terrorism Day
	May 22nd	International Day of Biological Diversity
	May 31st	World No Tobacco Day
June	June 5th	World Environment Day
	June 8th	World Ocean Day
	June 12th	Anti Child Labour Day
	June 14th	World Blood Donors Day
	June 20th	World Refugee Day
	June 21st	International Yoga Day
	June 30th	International Asteroid Day
July	July 1st	National Doctors Day
	July 11th	World Population Day
	July 18th	Nelson Mandela Day
	July 28th	World Hepatitis Day
August	August 6th	Hiroshima Day
	August 9th	Quit India Movement Day
	August 9th	International Day for Indigenous People
	August 12th	International Youth Day
	August 15th	Independence Day of India
	August 29th	National Sports Day
	August 29th	Telugu Language Day
September	September 5th	National Teachers Day
	September 8th	International Literacy Day
	September 14th	National Hindi Diwas
	September 15th	National Engineers Day
	September 16th	International day of preservation of Ozone layer
	September 21st	Alzimers Day
	September 21st	International Day of Peace
	September 27th	International Tourism Day

October	October 2nd	International Day of Non Violence
	October 5th	World Teachers Day
	October 8th	Indian Airforce Day
	October 10th	World Mental Healty Day
	October 10th	National Post Day
	October 16th	World Food Day
	October 20th	World Statistics Day
	October 24th	United Nations Day
	October 31th	Indian Ekta Diwas
November	November 5th	World Tsunami Awareness Day
	November 7th	National Cancer Awareness Day
	November 14th	National Children's Day
	November 14th	World Diabetes Day
	November 16th	International Day of Tolerance
	November 18th	National Naturopathy Day
	November 19th	World Toilet Day
	November 21st	World Television Day
	November 26st	Indian Constitution Day
December	December 1st	World AIDS Day
	December 2nd	National Pollution Day
	December 4th	Indian Navy Day
	December 10th	International Human Rights Day
	December 16th	Vijay Diwas
	December 22nd	National Mathematics Day
	December 23rd	National Kisan Diwas
	December 24th	National Consumer Day
	December 25nd	National Good Governance Day

ANDHRA PRADESH LEGISLATURE-IMPORTANT BILLS

S.No.	Title of the Bill	Legislative Assembly		Passed in Legislative Council	Date of Publication in Official Gazette
		Introduced On	Passed On		
1	The Andhra Pradesh Compulsory Registration of Marriages (Amendment) Bill, 2018	18/09/2018	18/09/2018	19/09/2018	Act No.28 of 2018 Dt.25/10/2018
2	The Andhra Pradesh Appropriation (No.3) Bill, 2018	18/09/2018	18/09/2018	19/09/2018	Act No.32 of 2018 Dt.25/10/2018
3	The Municipal Corporations, the Andhra Pradesh Municipalities, the Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority and the Andhra Pradesh Metropolitan Region and Urban Development Authorities (Amendment) Bill, 2018	18/09/2018	18/09/2018	19/09/2018	Act No.34 of 2018 Dt.12/11/2018
4	The Andhra Pradesh Medical Practitioners Registration (Second Amendment) Bill, 2018	18/09/2018	18/09/2018	19/09/2018	Act No.24 of 2018 Dt.25/10/2018
5	The Andhra Pradesh Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2018	17/09/2018	17/09/2018	19/09/2018	Act No.23 of 2018 Dt.23/10/2018
6	The Andhra Pradesh Maritime Board Bill, 2018	17/09/2018	17/09/2018	19/09/2018	Yet to become ACT
7	The Andhra Pradesh Government Medical and Dental Institutions (Conversion into semi-Autonomous Institutions) (Repeal) Bill, 2018	17/09/2018	17/09/2018	19/09/2018	Act No.29 of 2018 Dt.25/10/2018
8	The Andhra Pradesh Motor Vehicles Taxation (Amendment) Bill, 2018	17/09/2018	17/09/2018	19/09/2018	Act No.27 of 2018 Dt.25/10/2018

9	The Andhra Pradesh Rights in Land and Pattadar Pass Books (Amendment) Bill, 2018	17/09/2018	17/09/2018	19/09/2018	Act No.30 of 2018 Dt.25/10/2018
10	The Andhra Pradesh Housing Board (Amendment) Bill , 2018	17/09/2018	17/09/2018	19/09/2018	Act No.33 of 2018 Dt.12/11/2018
11	The Code of Criminal Procedure(Andhra Pradesh Amendment) Bill, 2018	17/09/2018	17/09/2018	19/09/2018	Yet to become ACT
12	The Moulvi Abdul Haq Urdu University (Amendment) Bill, 2018	10/09/2018	10/09/2018	19/09/2018	Act No.35 of 2018 Dt.12/11/2018
13	The Andhra Pradesh Civil Courts (Amendment) Bill, 2018	07/09/2018	07/09/2018	19/09/2018	Act No.26 of 2018 Dt.25/10/2018
14	The Andhra Pradesh Shops and Establishments (Amendment) Bill, 2018	07/09/2018	07/09/2018	19/09/2018	Act No.36 of 2018 Dt.23/11/2018
15	The Andhra Pradesh Appropriation Acts(Repeal) Bill, 2018	06/09/2018	06/09/2018	19/09/2018	Act No.31 of 2018 Dt.25/10/2018
16	The Andhra Pradesh Acts and Regulations (Repeal) Bill , 2018	06/09/2018	06/09/2018	19/09/2018	Act No.25 of 2018 Dt.25/10/2018
17	The Andhra Pradesh Medical Practitioners Registration (Amendment) Bill, 2018	06/04/2018	06/04/2018	06/04/2018	Act No.16 of 2018 Dt.25/04/2018
18	The Andhra Pradesh Allopathic Private Medical Care Establishments (Registration and Regulation) Repeal Bill, 2018	04/04/2018	04/04/2018	06/04/2018	Yet to become ACT

19	The Andhra Pradesh Domestic Irrigation and Industrial Water Grid Pipelines (Acquisition of Right of User inland) Bill, 2018	04/04/2018	04/04/2018	06/04/2018	Act No.19 of 2018 Dt.30/04/2018
20	The Andhra Pradesh Appropriation Bill, 2018	27/03/2018	28/03/2018	28/03/2018	Act No.14 of 2018 Dt.29/03/2018
21	The Andhra Pradesh Appropriation (No. 2) Bill, 2018	27/03/2018	28/03/2018	28/03/2018	Act No.15 of 2018 Dt.29/03/2018
22	The Andhra Pradesh Economic Development Board Bill, 2018	21/03/2018	04/04/2018	06/04/2018	Act No.21 of 2018 Dt.30/05/2018
23	The Andhra Pradesh Mutually Aided Cooperative Societies, (Amendment) Bill, 2018	20/03/2018	04/04/2018	06/04/2018	Act No.20 of 2018 Dt.15/05/2018
24	The Andhra Pradesh Private Universities (Establishment and Regulation) (Amendment) Bill, 2018	20/03/2018	04/04/2018	06/04/2018	Act No.18 of 2018 Dt.30/04/2018
25	The Andhra Pradesh Police (Reforms) (Amendment) Bill, 2018	08/03/2018	04/04/2018	06/04/2018	Act No.17 of 2018 Dt.25/04/2018

Since 1995



Andhra Pradesh Budget Analysis 2018-19

The Finance Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Mr. Yanamala Ramakrishnudu, presented the Budget for financial year 2018-19 on March 8, 2018.

Budget Highlights

- The Gross State Domestic Product of Andhra Pradesh for 2018-19 (at current prices) is approximately Rs 8,70,326 crore, this is 10% higher than the revised estimate for 2017-18.
- Total expenditure for 2018-19 is estimated to be Rs 1,91,064 crore, a 19.5% increase over the revised estimates of 2017-18. In 2017-18, there was an increase of Rs 2,823 crore (1.8%) in expenditure over the budget estimates.
- Total receipts (excluding borrowings) for 2018-19 are estimated to be Rs 1,57,599 crore, an increase of 25.4% as compared to the revised estimates of 2017-18. In 2017-18, total receipts (excluding borrowings) fell short of the budgeted estimate by Rs 1,328 crore.
- Revenue surplus for the next financial year is targeted at Rs 5,235 crore, or 0.6% of the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP). Fiscal deficit is targeted at Rs 24,205 crore (2.8% of GSDP).
- The departments of education, municipal administration and urban development, health, medical and family welfare are estimated to witness the highest increase in allocations over the previous year.
- A Youth Policy will be formulated for the implementation of youth empowerment and advancement programmes. Rs 1,000 crore is allocated for this purpose.
- A Mega Seed Park project is initiated to ensure availability of quality seeds to farmers at low cost, and to develop Andhra Pradesh as a global seed hub. Rs 100 crore is allocated for this purpose.
- It is proposed to launch a new livestock insurance scheme to insure 10 lakh animals. Rs 50 crore is allocated for this purpose.
- It is proposed to provide pucca housing to every poor person in urban areas by 2022. Rs 1,000 crore has been allocated to the Andhra Pradesh Township and Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd.
- Rs 1,168 crore is allocated to complete two out of four nodes (Visakhapatnam and Srikalahasti-Yerpedu) under the Visakhapatnam-Chennai Industrial Corridor.
- The growth in GSDP of Andhra Pradesh has been increasing from 7% in 2013-14 to 11.2% in 2017-18.
- The services sector, with a share of 44%, in the GSDP grew by 9.1% in 2017-18 over the previous year.
- Agriculture, which contributes to 34% of the GSDP, grew by 17.8% in 2017-18. Industries, with a share of 22%, grew by 8.5% in 2017-18.
- The per capita income of Andhra Pradesh in 2017-18 (at current prices) is Rs 1,42,054. This is more than the average national per capita income of Rs 1,12,764 in 2017-18.

Budget Estimates for 2018-19

- The total expenditure in 2018-19 is targeted at Rs 1,91,064 crore.
- This is 19.5% higher than the revised estimates of 2017-18. This expenditure is proposed to be met through receipts (other than borrowings) of Rs 1,57,599 crore, and borrowings of Rs 33,461 crore.
- Total receipts for 2018-19 (other than borrowings) are expected to be 25.4% higher than the revised estimates of

2017-18.

Expenditure in 2018-19

- Capital expenditure for 2018-19 is proposed to be Rs 40,792 crore, which is an increase of 25.3% over the revised estimates of 2017-18. This includes expenditure which affects the assets and liabilities of the state, and leads to creation of assets (such as bridges and hospitals), and repayment of loans, among others.
- Revenue expenditure for 2018-19 is proposed to be Rs 1,50,272 crore, which is an increase of 18.1% over revised estimates of 2017-18. This expenditure includes payment of salaries, maintenance, etc.
- In 2018-19, Andhra Pradesh is expected to spend Rs 25,928 crore on servicing its debt (i.e., Rs 10,851 crore on repaying loans, and Rs 15,077 crore on interest payments. This is 11.4% higher than the revised estimates of 2017-18.

Sector-wise expenditure for Andhra Pradesh Budget 2018-19 (Rs crore)

Department	2016-17 Actual	2017-18 Revised	2018-19 Budgeted	% change from RE 2017-18 to BE 2018- 19	Budget Provisions for 2018-19
Education	17,461	20,225	24,961	23.4%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Teaching grants for payment of salaries in Mandal Praja Parishads and Zilla Praja Parishads account for 64% of the allocation under school education. ➤ Rs 1,799 crore is allocated for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. This is 30% more than the revised estimate in 2017-18.
Rural Development and Panchayati Raj	18,574	21,687	23,439	8.1%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Rs 14,705 crore has been allocated for rural development. This includes Rs 4,200 crore for NTR Pensions for old age persons and widows. ➤ Rs 8,733 have been allocated for panchayati raj. This includes Rs 1,450 crore for Swachh Bharat Mission Gramin. This is 26% less than the revised estimates of 2017-18.
Water Resources	10,638	15,511	16,978	9.5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Rs 9,994 crore has been allocated for the Polavaram project. This is 55% more than the revised estimates for the project in 2017-18.

Agriculture and Cooperation	6,691	8,057	10,097	25.3%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Rs 4,100 crore is allocated for providing debt waiver to farmers. This is 14% more than the allocation in 2017-18. ➤ Rs 1,102 crore is allocated for Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayi Yojana. This is 20% more than the revised estimate in 2017-18.
Health, Medical and Family Welfare	6,332	6,542	8,464	29.4%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Rs 1,956 crore allocated for National Health Mission. This is 33% more than the revised estimate in 2017-18.
Municipal Administration and Urban Development	5,073	5,049	7,741	53.3%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Rs 800 crore allocated for Smart Cities: Visakhapatnam, Kakinada, and Tirupati.
Home	4,727	5,451	6,227	14.2%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Rs 173 crore allocated for modernization of police forces.
Backward Classes Welfare	4,118	4,783	6,213	29.9%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Rs 1,146 crore is allocated for pre-metric scholarships. This is 10% more than the allocation in the 2017-18.
% of total expenditure	44%	55%	54%		
Total expenditure	1,66,699	1,59,822	1,91,064		

Break up of state government receipts (Rs crore)

Item	2016-2017 Actual	2017-2018 Budgeted	2017-18 Revised	% change from BE 2017-18 to RE 2017-18	2018-2019 Budgeted	% change from RE 2017-18 to BE 2018-19
State's Own Tax	44,181	53,717	52,716	-1.9%	65,535	24.3%
State's Own Non-Tax	5,193	5,092	3,989	-21.7%	5,347	34.0%
Share in Central Taxes	26,264	29,139	29,001	-0.5%	33,930	17.0%
Grants-in-aid from Centre	23,346	37,548	37,548	0.0%	50,696	35.0%
Total Revenue Receipts	98,984	1,25,496	1,23,254	-1.8%	1,55,507	26.2%
Borrowings	59,923	30,020	30,500	1.6%	33,461	9.7%
Other receipts	7,975	1,472	2,386	62.1%	2,091	-12.3%
Total Capital Receipts	67,897	31,492	32,886	4.4%	35,552	8.1%
Total Receipts	1,66,882	1,56,988	1,56,140	-0.5%	1,91,060	22.4%

Fiscal deficit: It is the excess of total expenditure over total receipts. This gap is filled by borrowings by the government and leads to an increase in total liabilities. In 2018-19, fiscal deficit is estimated to be Rs 24,205 crore, which is 2.8% of the GSDP. The estimate, is within the 3% limit prescribed by the 14th Finance Commission. The Finance Commission had recommended that this limit may be relaxed to a maximum of 3.5% if states are able to contain their debt and interest payments to certain specified levels.

ANDHRA PRADESH POLICIES & E GOVERNANCE INITIATIVES

E-PRAGATI PROGRAM

- **e-Pragati** is a framework that provides integrated services to citizens through free flow of information.
- It is used to usher in an era of good governance, characterized by efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, and foresight.
- It is a mission-centric approach and a framework, to galvanize the pan-government ecosystem by transcending boundaries to design and deliver services in a coordinated, integrated, efficient and equitable way that citizens and businesses demand and deserve, aimed to realize the Sunrise Andhra Vision 2022.
- It is envisaged to achieve sunrise AP mission



DESIGNATED TECHNOLOGY PARK POLICY 2017 - 2010

- Andhra Pradesh state government has launched 'Designated Technology Park aka DTP Policy 2017-2020' in Amravati.
- It is a first of its kind initiative in the country, aimed to solve office space crunch for IT companies in the state.
- The main objectives of DTP policy are to roll out incentives on providing office spaces for IT companies and give rental guarantee for real-estate developers for building office spaces for IT.
- Andhra Pradesh state government aims to create one lakh IT jobs by 2019 and one crore sq. ft. of office space to facilitate the same.
- The policy aims to bring down the approval time for office spaces for IT companies from 1 year to 50 days.

ANDHRA PRADESH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY POLICY 2014 – 2020

- Govt of AP is planning establishing Mega IT hubs in Visakhapatnam , Vijayawada , Kakinada and Ananthapuram.
- Information Technology Investment Regions (ITIRs) to be set up in Tirupati and Visakhapatnam.
- Iconic Signature Tower with 1 lakh sq.ft of office space will be developed in vizag along with 5 lakhs sq.ft IT Township.
- Tirupati – Anantapuram IT corridor, Air connectivity with expansion of Vishakhapatnam and Tirupati Airports, 24*7 power supplies for IT Industry are the main infrastructural developments for IT development ahead.
- 10 % subsidy for companies established within two years from 2014.
- Exemption from Labour laws, permissions for 3 shifts working.
- Rs. 60000 incentive for every job in Mega hubs & Rs. 40000 incentive for every job in other projects.
- Every one acre land allotted IT company should provide a minimum of 500 jobs.
- Mega IT projects which have potential to create more than 5,000 jobs will get 10 rupees subsidy for every sq.ft of building rent and 10 % investment subsidy, 5 lakhs Rupees Reimbursement for Patent Filing.
- Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises MSME would get a power subsidy of 25 per cent for 3 years or 30 lakhs rupees.
- SC,ST Women Entrepreneur will get 50 % Power subsidies for 5 years or 50 lakhs rupees.
- 20000 rupees recurring training assistance for every job created in first 2 years of establishment of the firm, 20 % subsidy for band width charges.
- Exclusive and attractive incentives for IT companies setting up in Rural.
- Single window permissions centre, eBiz Portal which will work for 24*7.
- Companies to get approval within 4 weeks. If they do not get the approval in 4 weeks, the companies can consider it as an approval and start the work.
- All IT ITES Parks, Mega hubs, ITIR Zones will be accorded with Industrial Area Local Authority (IALA) status.
- Upgrade in engineering courses and syllabus to develop industry ready human resources.
- Training institute for IT in collaboration with the Fortune Companies. Credits in engineering degree for online certifications and courses.
- Apprenticeship/ Internship mandatory for engineering students in final year.
- IT parks and ITIR Zones will be developed through Public private Partnership (PPP). IT zones to be developed with Walk-to-Work, Cycle-to-Work concept.

ANDHRA PRADESH ELECTRONIC POLICY 2014-2020

- The Policy aims to attract investments to the tune of USD 5 Billion in ESDM sector and create an employment of 0.4 Million by 2020
- Promoting Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (EMCs) across the state by providing single-window clearance and through EMC Scheme.
- To attract investments up to ₹ 30,000 cr and facilitate the units to get the 25% Cap Ex-subsidy under the M-SIPS scheme of GOI..
- All departments procuring electronics in large quantities should prefer AP-based domestic manufacturers.

- Joint Government-Industry committee to market India and attract investments in the country.
- Promoting design, manufacturing, assembling and innovation and packaging business by creating fund.
- Reserving cluster at Vishakhapatnam for Information Technology and Investment Region (ITIR) and converting it as Mega Electronics Hub for the state.
- Setting Electronic Hardware Park in Kakinada with basic amenities like internal roads, water, power and other common facilities necessary for the Electronics Units.
- Enhancing the logistics on the Visakhapatnam-Chennai Corridor.
- Units using renewable source of energy to fulfil at least 40% of their power requirements will be eligible for additional incentives such as Electricity Duty exemption for 5 years.
- State in partnership with industries will take care of promoting Electronic Products manufactured in AP with initiatives like Mega Electronic Event, Road Show, establishing Electronic Bazars, Enhancing Web-presence, creating point of contact and supporting Associations.

ANDHRA PRADESH INNOVATION & STARTUP POLICY 2014-2020

- This policy aims to create a world class 'technology start-up ecosystem' by fostering 'entrepreneurship and a culture of innovation' which contributes to increased knowledge, wealth and employment in our society
- Through the Innovation and Start-up Policy, the government intends to create an ecosystem that produces an entrepreneur in every family. The targets laid out for the Andhra Pradesh through this Policy by June 30 2019 are:
 - I. 100 Incubators / Accelerators to be established
 - II. 5,000 Companies & Start Ups to be incubated
 - III. 1 million sq ft of Incubation Space to be developed
 - IV. Venture Capital of Rs 1000 Cr to be mobilized for Innovation
 - V. Foster Innovation Culture
 - VI. Create at least one home grown billion dollar technology start-up.
- The Policy would have following Niche Themes as focus in the initial period:
 - I. Internet of Things (IoT)
 - II. 'IT for X' in the areas of Pharma, oil & gas, urban management.
 - III. Social Media, Mobility, Analytics and Cloud Computing (SMAC)
 - IV. Fables Semiconductors
 - V. Animation & Gaming
 - VI. Entertainment
 - VII. Visual Effects
 - VIII. Health and Fitness
 - IX. Automotive
- The new policy for innovation would base itself on the Five pillars, namely, Shared Infrastructure, Accelerators / Incubators, Human Capital, Funding and above all, a system of Good Governance (State Support)

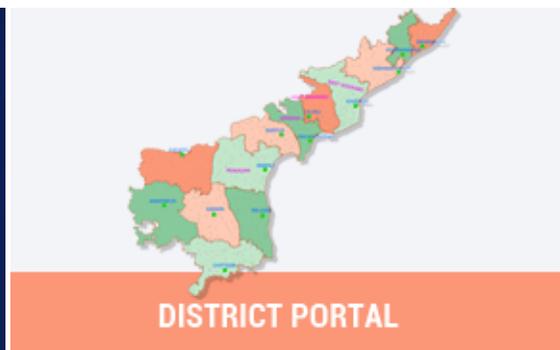
WWW.SANDBYSHG.AP.GOV.IN

- Consumers in Andhra Pradesh can get sand at their doorsteps using the state government’s online booking system.
- As per the system, consumers could either go to the nearest ‘Meeseva’ citizen services centre or order sand online through www.sandbyshg.ap.gov.in website.
- An SMS would be sent to the consumers about delivery of sand and a receipt would also be issued to them.
- Consumers would be able to find out the status of sand delivery online by using a transaction ID.
- Consumers could register complaints, if any, to a toll-free number ‘18001212020’.

PRAJAVANI

- Prajavani is an e-Governance initiative that provides practical shape to the Right to Information Act.
- It is a unique public private partnership program, which gives citizens an opportunity to interact with the government without coming to any government office.
- The information related to various departments was made available to the kiosks through a website.
- The Prajavani system not only gives citizens an avenue to track the progress on their grievance, but also provides the Collector an effective tool to monitor the performance of various departments.

LIST OF E-GOVERNANCE INITIATIVES IN ANDHRA PRADESH





HUDHUD PORTAL



MEESEVA PORTAL



**ANDHRA PRADESH STATE
RESIDENT DATA HUB**



CITIZEN SERVICE WITH A DIFFERENCE



ANDHRA PRADESH STATE PORTAL



AP ONLINE PORTAL



ePROCUREMENT



CFST- Transport Department Services



CARD- Computer-aided Administration of Registration Department



APSWAN- AP State Wide Area Network



AP State Wide Video Conference



SAPNET



KM-ATOM - Complete Office Tool for Paperless Office



e-Return - VAT eReturn



CDSC - Online issue of statutory Forms of CT (Commercial Taxes) Department



e-Suvidha - Complete Application for Municipalities