

The Most Important Current Affairs March 2019

All England Open Badminton Championships 2019: Complete List of Winners

2019 All England Open, officially YONEX All England Open Badminton Championships 2019 was a BWF World Tour 1000 event.

Here is the complete list of Winners

Sl. No.	Event	Winner	Runner Up
1.	Men's Singles	Kento MOMOTA (Japan)	Viktor AXELSEN (Denmark)
2.	Women's Singles	CHEN Yufei (China)	Tai Tzu-ying (Taiwan)
3.	Men's Doubles	Mohammad Ahsan and Hendra Setiawan (Indonesia)	Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik (Malaysia)
4.	Women's Doubles	Chen Qingchen and Jia Yifan (China)	Mayu Matsumoto and Wakana Nagahara (Japan)
5.	Mixed Doubles	Zheng Siwei and Huang Yaqiong (China)	Yuta Watanabe and Arisa Higashino (Japan)

2019 Swiss Open Championship Concludes: Complete List of Winners

The 2019 Swiss Open, officially the YONEX Swiss Open 2019, was a badminton tournament which took place at St. Jakobshalle in Basel, Switzerland. Here is the complete list of Winners:

Sl. No.	Event	Winner	Runner Up
1.	Men's Singles	Shi Yuki (China)	B Sai Praneet (India)
2.	Women's Singles	Chen Yufei (China)	Saena Kawakami (Japan)
3.	Men's Doubles	Fajar ALFIAN and Muhammad Rian ARDIANTO (Indonesia)	LEE Yang and WANG Chi-Lin (Taiwan)

4.	Women's Doubles	CHANG Ye Na and JUNG Kyung Eun (South Korea)	Nami MATSUYAMA and Chiharu SHIDA (Japan)
5.	Mixed Doubles	Mathias BAY-SMIDT and Rikke SOBY (Denmark)	Rinov RIVALDY and Pitha Haningtya MENTARI (Indonesia)

Vice President's Visit To Paraguay And Costa Rica: Complete Highlights

The Vice President of India, **M. Venkaiah Naidu** visited the Republic of Paraguay and the Republic of Costa Rica. This was the **first high-level visit from India to both these countries**. He was accompanied by a high-level delegation including the Minister of State for Tourism (I/C), Alphons Kannanthanam, the Members of Parliament and senior officials from the Government of India.

Visit To Paraguay:

The Vice President met with the President of the Republic of Paraguay, Mr. Mario Abdo Benítez, the Vice President, Mr. Hugo Velázquez, and the President of the National Congress (Senate), Mr. Silvio Ovelar.

Visit To Costa Rica:

The visit of Vice President to the Republic of Costa Rica was the first ever high-level visit from India to the nation. The Vice President met the President of Costa Rica, Mr. Carlos Alvarado Quesada and held Delegation level talks with him which was followed by a joint press statement.

Mathematician Karen Uhlenbeck becomes 1st Woman To Win Abel Prize

University of Texas professor Karen Uhlenbeck become the **first woman to win the Abel Prize, a mathematics honour first given in 2003**. The 76-year-old was awarded for the impact of her work on "analysis, geometry and mathematical physics".

12.	Best Short Film (Non Fiction)	The Soccer City
13.	Best Short Film (Fiction)	Rogan Josh
14.	Critics' Award for Best Actor (Male)	Ranveer Singh for "Padmaavat"
15.	Critics' Award for Best Actor (Female)	Neena Gupta, Badhaai Ho
16.	Critics Best Actor In a Leading Role (Male)	Ayushmann Khurrana

64th Filmfare Awards Announced: Complete List of Winners

Winners of the **64th Filmfare Awards** were announced at Jio Garden, BKC, Mumbai. Here's the complete winner's list:

Sl. No.	Category	Winner
1.	Best Film	Raazi
2.	Critics' Award for Best Film	AndhaDhun
3.	Best Actor in a Leading Role (Female)	Alia Bhatt, Raazi
4.	Best Actor in a Leading Role (Male)	Ranbir Kapoor, Sanju
5.	Best Director	Meghna Gulzar, Raazi
6.	Best Playback Singer (Male)	Arijit Singh for Ae Watan, Raazi
7.	Best Playback Singer (Female)	Shreya Ghoshal for Ghoomar, "Padmaavat"
8.	Best Debut Actor(Female)	Sara Ali Khan, Kedarnath
9.	Best Debut Actor(Male)	Ishaan Khatter, Beyond The Clouds
10.	Best Debut Director	Amar Kaushik, Stree
11.	Best Music Album	"Padmaavat"

Banking/Insurance Current Affairs

- **IFFCO Tokio General Insurance** launched '**bank locker protector policy**', the first stand-alone bank locker cover offered by any insurance company with a plan to protect the contents of a bank locker such as **jewelry, title documents, and other valuables**.
- **SBI and Hitachi Payment Services Pvt Ltd**, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Hitachi Ltd launched their merchant-acquiring joint venture, SBI Payment Services Pvt Ltd (SBIPSPL) in Mumbai for establishing a **digital payments platform for India** and other countries in the region.
- **United Bank of India** signed a bancassurance deal with private life insurer **HDFC Life Insurance Company**. Through this partnership, United Bank's customers will be able to take advantage of HDFC Life's expertise in life insurance products, distribution and customer service.
- **The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)** and the **National Health Authority (NHA)** have formed a working group on the **Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY)**. The joint working group, to be chaired by **Dinesh Arora, Deputy CEO of NHA**, will have 10 members from both the organisations.
- **United Bank of India** signed a bancassurance deal with private life insurer **HDFC Life Insurance**

Company. Through this partnership, United Bank's customers will be able to take advantage of HDFC Life's expertise in life insurance products, distribution and customer service.

- **Korea Exim Bank** comes forward to extend a **Rs 4,100 crore loan for Visakhapatnam Metro Rail project**. The state government had earlier sent a proposal in this regard to the Central government, which in turn forwarded it to Korea Exim Bank.
- SBI become the first domestic bank to link the interest rate it offers on savings account deposits to an external **benchmark — the RBI's repo rate**. By doing so, the bank will effectively link all loan rates to an external benchmark either directly or indirectly.

Following are the changes:

1. Savings accounts with deposits above Rs 1 lakh would be priced at 2.75% below the prevailing repo rate of 6.25%.
 2. Cash credit accounts and overdraft facilities over Rs 1 lakh would be priced at 2.25% over the repo rate. At the prevailing repo rate of 6.25%, this would mean a floor price of 8.5%.
 3. For all other floating rate products, including retail and corporate loans, the impact of SBI's decision to link savings account deposit rates to the repo rate will be felt indirectly.
 4. For savings account holders with balances up to Rs 1 lakh and borrowers with cash credit and overdraft limits up to Rs 1 lakh, interest rates will remain fixed.
- **PNB sanctioned loans worth Rs 689 crore to over 1,600 Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)** through the **psbloansin59minutes.com** portal as part of its effort to promote such industries.
 - **SBI launched doorstep banking service** for senior citizens over 70 years of age and differently-abled customers. Eligible customers can avail this service **at a nominal fee of 100 rupees per transaction** for financial transactions and 60 rupees for non-financial transactions.
 - As per RBI notification, **IDBI Bank categorized as a private sector lender** following the acquisition of majority stake by Life Insurance Corporation. **IDBI Bank** under the prompt corrective action framework of RBI that bans it from corporate lending and branch expansions, salary hikes and other regular activities.
 - The RBI named **SBI, ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank as Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs)**, which in other words mean banks that are too big to fail. As per the norms, these banks will have to set aside more capital for their continued operation.

- The SBI launched a new service called '**YONO Cash**' for its customers using which customers can withdraw money from ATMs without using debit cards. This facility is available over 16,500 of its ATMs through the You Only Need One (YONO), mobile app platform for the first time in the country.
- RBI provided no objection to **Bandhan Bank** for the proposed acquisition of **Gruh Finance**.
- **The country's largest lender** SBI signed a pact with the Bank of China **to boost business opportunities**. SBI signed an MoU to enhance business synergies between both the banks. Through this pact, both SBI and BoC will gain direct access to their respective markets of operation.
- The **RBI** slapped a penalty of Rs 2 crore on **PNB for non-compliance of regulatory directions** with regard to **SWIFT operations**. SWIFT is a global messaging software used for sharing information on inter-bank transactions by financial entities.
- Bank of Baroda signed an MoU with agriculture services companies to develop an agriculture digital platform, **Baroda Kisan**, which will provide solutions for agricultural requirements. BoB signed the agreement **with Skymet Weather Services**, Weather Risk Management Services, BigHaat, Agrostar India, EM3 Agri Services, and Poorti Agri Services.
- **The Finance Ministry decided to infuse Rs 5,042 crore into BoB** ahead of the merger of two other public sector lenders **Dena Bank and Vijaya Bank with BoB**.
- State-owned lender **PNB** had sold stake in its housing finance arm, **PNB Housing Finance (PNBHF)** to General Atlantic Group and VardePartners for Rs 1,851 crore at Rs 850 per share.

Economy Current Affairs

- The OECD cut forecasts again for the global economy in 2019 and 2020. The **Organisation for Economic Co-Operation & Development** forecast in its interim outlook report that the world

economy would grow 3.3% in 2019 and 3.4 % in 2020. Those forecasts represented cuts of 0.2 %age points for 2019 and 0.1 %age points for **2020**, compared to the OECD's last set of forecasts in November.

- Markets regulator **SEBI** withdrew the **20% limit** on investments by **Foreign Portfolio Investors** in corporate bonds of **an entity**. The regulator stated that the restriction is being withdrawn in accordance with a circular issued by the **RBI**.
- The **RBI** decided to use a new tool for the first time to enhance liquidity in the system using which it will buy **\$5 billion** from the banks in a swap deal that is capable of injecting around **Rs. 35,000 crores** into the system. Minimum bid size for the auction fixed at **\$25 million** and **multiple** bids submission by banks will be allowed.
- **GST council** approved a transition plan for **new goods and services tax rates on residential properties** under which developers of under-construction buildings may either opt to shift to the revised lower rates without input tax credit or stick to the previous rates.
- **Fitch Ratings** cut India's economic growth forecast for the next financial year starting April 1, to **6.8% from its previous estimate of 7%**, on weaker than expected momentum in the economy. The rating agency also cut growth forecasts for **FY20 and FY21 to 7% from 7.3% and 7.1% from 7.3%, respectively**.
- The **Finance Ministry** decided to **keep the interest rate unchanged** on small savings schemes for the three-month period beginning April 1. The unchanged interest rate means the **NSC (5 years)** and the **PPF (15 years) will fetch 8% interest**, while money deposited in **KVP** will double in little over nine years. At the same time, if one is parking money in a fixed deposit with a maturity of five years with the **SBI**, he/she will get **6.85%**. **Senior citizens will get half a % more: 7.35%**.

Business Current Affairs

- The **Ahmedabad bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT)** approved the **Rs 42,000-crore resolution plan** submitted by **ArcelorMittal** for the debt-ridden **Essar Steel Ltd.**
- **HDFC Bank Ltd** crossed the **Rs6 trillion market capitalization** mark for the first time, making it **only the third Indian firm—after Tata Consultancy Services Ltd (TCS) and Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL)—to achieve the milestone**. **RIL** is the most valued company in India with a market cap of **Rs8.50 trillion**, followed by **TCS** at **Rs7.48 trillion**.
- **ICICI Lombard and Mobikwik** announced a **strategic partnership** to provide cyber-insurance

cover. The relationship **aims to provide protection against unauthorized and fraudulent transactions online**, across bank accounts, debit and credit cards, and mobile wallets.

- **Hyundai Motor Group (the Group)** and **Ola** announced a **strategic partnership** under which **Hyundai Motor Company and Kia Motors Corporation** will invest a total of **\$ 300 million in Ola**, making it their biggest combined investment to date.
- **ADB** inked an **agreement to invest USD 50 million in solar energy project developer Avaada Energy Pvt Ltd** to help the company scale up rapidly. The investment will come equally from **ADB's Ordinary Capital Resources** and **Leading Asia's Private Infrastructure Fund (LEAP)**.
- **Apple Inc & Goldman Sachs Group Inc** jointly launched the **Apple Card credit card** for iPhones. The card is tied to **Apple Pay**, a service that allows people to load banking information and pay in store or use it for purchases online.
- **Power Finance Corporation (PFC)** completed the **acquisition of majority stake in REC Ltd by transferring Rs 14,500 crore to the government**. The merger of both the entities will be completed in the next fiscal year in consultation with the government. This **acquisition and merger will make PFC second-largest government-owned financial player in the country** based on the current market capital after **SBI (SBI)**.
- **State-owned gas utility GAIL India Ltd** signed an **agreement with Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL)** for cooperation in the development of solar power projects. The MoU aims at building a closer strategic partnership between the two Maharatna PSUs for jointly pursuing commercial solar power projects through participation in **tariff/Viability Gap Funding (VGF)** based competitive bidding process.
- **Ola** signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Government of Telangana** to support the latter's efforts in strengthening **traffic infrastructure** in the city. The partnership would see Ola **'share intelligent insights'** that enable the Government to implement smart solutions to enhance **'mobility experience'** in the city.
- **Infosys**, a global leader in next-generation digital services and consulting, and **Roland-Garros Grand Slam** tennis tournament, also called the **French Open**, announced a three-year strategic technology partnership. The partnership aims to re-imagine the tennis experience for the fans and the players globally.

- **Wipro Limited (Bengaluru Based)**, a leading global information technology, consulting and business process services company and **Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur (IIT Kharagpur)**, signed an MoU to collaborate on high-impact, industry-focused applied research in the areas of 5G and AI.

Schemes/ Portals/ Apps/ Missions Launched by the Union & State Govt.

- Union Minister of Tribal Affairs **Jual Oram** launched the ambitious scheme of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs named **Van Dhan**. The scheme is for **Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Minor Forest Produce (MFP)** and Development of Value Chain of MFPs at a National Workshop organized by **TRIFED**.
- Union Minister of Textiles, **Smriti Zubin Irani** launched a **comprehensive scheme** for the development of **knitting and knitwear sector** under **PowerTex India** in **New Delhi**. Apart from financial incentives, the two key elements are **Yarn Bank** and **financial assistance for the solar energy scheme**.
- The CCEA, chaired by PM Modi approved the '**Pradhan Mantri Jaiw Indhan- Vatavaran Anukool fasal awashesh Nivaran (JI-VAN) Yojana**' for providing **financial support** to the Integrated Bioethanol Projects. The scheme aims to incentivise the **Second Generation (2G) Ethanol sector** and support the industry by creating a suitable ecosystem for setting up commercial projects and increasing R&D in this area.
- **Gram Samridhi Yojana**, a **Rs 3,000 crore** scheme funded by the **World Bank** and the Government of India, is being worked upon by the **Ministry of Food Processing Industries** in order to strengthen the **unorganised food processing sector** concentrated in rural areas. NITI Aayog given its approval to the scheme. World Bank will be giving **Rs 1,500 crore**, **Rs 1,000 crore** will be borne by the **Centre** while state governments will put in **Rs 500 crore**. The scheme will be run in **Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Punjab**.
- '**Mukhyamantri Parivar Samman Nidhi**' scheme was launched by **Haryana** Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar in **Chandigarh**. It is primarily meant for farmers of the state who cultivate on land with areas up to **5 acres** and the families with an income of less than **Rs. 15,000 per month**. The scheme would provide a sum of **Rs. 6,000 yearly**.
- A water conservation scheme '**Jal Amrutha**' was launched by **Karnataka** chief minister **H D Kumaraswamy**, in **Bengaluru**. A function was organized by the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj department at Dr. B R Ambedkar Bhavan in **Bengaluru**. The state government declared **2019** as the **Year of Water**.
- The **government of Tripura** announced '**Notun Disha**' (**New Direction**) for assessing the academic level of students in **classes III-VIII** and then improving their current level. It was launched by state Education Minister **Ratan Lal Nath**.
- The **government** introduced a scheme for providing financial assistance for transport and marketing of agriculture products with a view to boosting export of farm commodities to certain countries in **Europe and North America**. Under the **Transport and Marketing Assistance (TMA) scheme**, the government would reimburse a certain portion of freight charges and provide assistance for marketing of agricultural produce.
- **IRCTC** launched its own digital payment aggregator called '**IRCTC iPay**'. With iPay, passengers will not need any third-party platforms as it will provide payment options like credit card, debit card, unified payment interface and international card.
- **Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL)**, a defence public sector undertaking, presented **SWAGAT** – the Automatic Fare Collection Gating System. PM Narendra Modi launched the system as part of the inaugural of Pe-I of the Ahmedabad Metro.
- **Tech giant Google** unveiled a new app '**Bolo**' that aims to help children in primary school learn to read in Hindi and English. The free app, which is being launched in **India first, uses Google's speech recognition** and text-to-speech technology. The app features an animated character '**Diya**', who encourages children to read stories aloud and helps if the child is unable to pronounce a word.
- **Aviva Life Insurance** announced the launch of '**Wings**', a specially designed mentorship program to empower the female workforce. Wings program is an initiative of the **SHE** division of Aviva Life Insurance for mentoring all the women employees in Aviva.
- The '**i-help**' initiative to promote **digital electoral literacy** in **Assam** launched in view of the forthcoming Lok Sabha polls. It is a joint initiative of the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer (**CEO**) and Common Service Centres (**CSC**) in Assam.
- **Indian Institute of Public Health Gandhinagar, (IIPHG)** in collaboration with **National Mental Health Program**, Department of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Gujarat developed a mobile application called as '**Conquer Exam, Be**

a **Warrior**' for students to reduce the exam pressure.

- The **Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)** launched a new podcast app '**Shiksha Vani**' that will disseminate crucial information to students and parents in a timely manner.

States Current Affairs

- Union Railway Minister **Piyush Goyal** announced a new railway zone for **Andhra Pradesh**, that is the **Southern Coast Railway** and it will be headquartered in **Visakhapatnam**. It will be the **18th zone** in the country.
- **Rice Knowledge Bank-Assam**, is an agriculture **web portal**. It is dedicated to magnifying knowledge on rice production technologies and techniques, best production practices and state agriculture facts. It was launched under the World Bank funded project – **Agri-business and Rural Transformation (APART)**.
- In **Madhya Pradesh**, ancient **tribal language Gond** will be taught in **tribal districts**. **Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath** decided to include Gond in the primary education curriculum of the state's tribal-dominated districts.
- **Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat** laid the foundation stone for the **Dehradun-Mussoorie ropeway project** which is considered to be a tourist novelty. The **Rs 300-crore ropeway project** is expected to be completed in three years.
- The **Madhya Pradesh government** issued an ordinance increasing reservation quota for the **Other Backward Classes (OBC) to 27% from the current 14%**. The announcement was made by the state's **Law and Legal Affairs Minister PC Sharma**.

Appointments/Resignations (National & International)

- Former Finance Secretary **mukh Adhia** was appointed as non-executive chairman of **Bank of Baroda**.
- Former Finance Secretary **Ajay Narayan Jha** joined as a member of the **15th Finance Commission**. Jha posted in place of **Shaktikanta Das** who had resigned as a member of the Commission after being appointed the RBI Governor.
- Ministry of External Affairs appointed **Pranay Kumar Verma** as India's Ambassador to the Socialist Republic of **Vietnam**.
- **Bhagwan Lal Sahni** appointed as the **chairman** of the newly constituted **National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC)**. **Kaushalendra Singh Patel, Sudha Yadav and Achary Talloju** appointed as members of the commission.
- **Dr. Ausaf Sayeed**, presently High Commissioner of India to the Republic of **Seychelles**, appointed as the next ambassador of India to **Saudi Arabia**.
- Indian-American television personality and food expert **Padma Lakshmi** appointed by the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** as its **newest Goodwill Ambassador**.
- **Mizoram Governor Kummanam Rajasekharan** stepped down from his post. **Governor of Assam, Prof. Jagdish Mukhi**, given temporary charge.
- The **Appointments Committee of the Cabinet** approved designating **Shri Subh Chandra Garg, IAS, Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance as Finance Secretary**.
- **Soumya Swaminathan**, a Deputy Director-General of the World Health Organisation named Chief Scientist of the WHO.
- **Distinguished scientist Ajit Kumar Mohanty** was appointed **Director of Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC)**.
- **Mohammad Shtayyeh** named as **Palestinian Prime Minister by President of Palestinian Authority Mahmoud Abbas**.
- **Dr. A.K. Mohanty**, Distinguished Scientist and Director, physics group of the **Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC)** and Director, Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics, Kolkata **took over as Director, BARC** from **Mr. K.N. Vyas**, Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission and Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Atomic Energy.
- **Axis Bank** appointed **Rakesh Makhija** as **Non-Executive Chairman for a period of 3 years**. The 67-year-old, who served as an independent director on the lender's board since October

2015, will take over from Sanjiv Misra when his term ends on July 17.

- The government appointed **MR Kumar** as the Chairman of **Life Insurance Corporation (LIC)** and Vipin Anand and TC Suseel Kumar as the managing directors (MDs).
- **Bajaj Finserv's Chairman and Non-Executive Director Rahul Bajaj** resigned and will take over as the **Chairman Emeritus from May 2019**.
- **Santosh Jha** presently Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of India, Washington, appointed as the next Ambassador of India to the **Republic of Uzbekistan**.
- **Pramod Sawant (45)**, former Speaker of Goa legislative Assembly and MLA from Sankhelim in North Goa was sworn-in as **11th Chief Minister of Goa, succeeding Manohar Parrikar**, who died after a prolonged battle with advanced pancreatic cancer.
- **Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev** announced his resignation after nearly **30 years in power**. The **Chairman of the Kazakh Senate would take over**.
- The Election Commission of India appointed **transgender social activist Gauri Sawant**, as one of the 12 election ambassadors from Maharashtra. She is the first **transgender** election ambassadors.
- President Ram Nath Kovind administered the oath of office to **Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose as the country's first Lokpal**. Justice Ghose, a former Supreme Court judge, was named the country's first Lokpal, the anti-corruption ombudsman.
- **Tata Coffee** announced the appointment of **Chacko Purackal Thomas** as the managing director and chief executive officer. **He will replace Sanjiv Sarin**.
- The Government of India appointed **Vice Admiral Karambir Singh**, presently Flag Officer Commander-in-Chief (FOC-in-C) Eastern Naval Command as **next Chief of the Naval Staff with effect from May 31, 2019**. The **present Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Sunil Lanba** retires on the same day.
- The **Amateur International Boxing Federation (AIBA)** President **Gafur Rahimov** announced his resignation claiming that political based discussions were harming the organizations progress. Rahimov will be replaced by an interim president.
- **Jet Airways Founders Naresh Goyal and wife Anita Goyal** have **stepped down from the board** of the cash-strapped airline. With this, Naresh Goyal ceases to be Chairman.

Another director **Kevin Knight** also resigned. The board accepted their resignations.

- Supreme Court-appointed **BCCI Ombudsman Justice D K Jain (retd)** will now serve as the **Ethics Officer of the Indian cricket board on an ad-hoc basis**.

Sports Current Affairs

- **West Indies opener Chris Gayle** become the **first batsman ever** to smash **500 or more sixes** in international cricket. In the 4th ODI against **England** in **Grenada**, Gayle scored 162 runs.
- National Boxing champion **Deepak Singh (49kg)** was the only Indian boxer to notch up the **gold medal**, while **five** others claimed **silver medals** in the Makran Cup in **Chabahar, Iran**. Deepak defeated Jaafar Naseri in the finals.
- **Roger Federer** claimed the **100th ATP title** of his career after beating 20-year-old Greek Stefanos Tsitsipas in the final of the **Dubai Tennis Championships**. The **20-time grand slam champion** is the second man, after American **Jimmy Connors** to claim 100 titles.
- Kavinder Singh Bisht in the 56kg-category struck gold while Shiva Thapa in the 60kg category and three others claimed silver medals to end a fine Indian campaign at the 38th GeeBee Boxing Tournament in Helsinki, Finland.
- **Young Mumbai sailor Upamanyu Dutta** bagged the **bronze medal in the Laser Standard race for men** in the Laser Asian Sailing Championship which concluded in **Singapore**. The young sailor sailed superbly to gain **India's first ever medal in the competitive single-handed Laser Standard category**.
- **Special Olympics World Games 2019** which is being held from **March 14 to March 21** in the **UAE** made history by welcoming a **record-breaking 200 nations ahead of the Games**. Of the 200 nations, 195 will compete in the Games and five will observe. It is **being held in West Asia for the first time**.

- The Supreme Court appointed senior advocate PS Narasimha as a mediator for resolving various disputes related to cricket administration within the cricket body, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).
- South African all-rounder JP Duminy announced that he would retire from ODIs after the ICC World Cup in England. Duminy will, however, continue to be available for South Africa in T20 Internationals.
- India will host the Under-17 Women's Football World Cup in 2020. This was announced by the President of International Football Federation (FIFA) Gianni Infantino after the council meeting in Miami, USA.
- Mercedes' Valtteri Bottas beat his world champion teammate Lewis Hamilton to clinch the season-opening Australian Formula One Grand Prix.
- Bengaluru FC clinched their maiden Indian Super League title as Rahul Bheke found a championship-winning header in the dying minutes of the final against FC Goa, in Mumbai.
- In Asian Youth Athletics Championships in Hong Kong, boys medley relay team won a gold medal for India on the final day to help Indian youth team finish second in the overall medals tally with a total of 26 medals including 8 gold, 9 silver and 9 bronze medals. China topped the overall medals tally with 31 medals that included 12 gold, 11 silver
- India returned with 368 medals (85 gold, 154 Silver, and 129 Bronze) at the Special Olympics World Summer Games, held at Abu Dhabi, UAE. Indian powerlifters bagged the maximum number of medals 20 gold, 33 silver and 43 bronze.
- India lifted South Asian Football Federation SAFF Women's Championship fifth time in a row. Keeping its winning streak India defeated host Nepal in the final by 3-1 in Biratnagar, Nepal.
- Chennai Super Kings' Suresh Raina become the first ever cricketer to reach 5,000 runs in Indian Premier League.
- The Seamaster 2019 ITTF Challenge Plus commonly called Oman Open table tennis held in Muscat, Oman. Indian players G Sathyan and Archana Kamath excelled in the tournament. G Sathyan won a bronze medal in the tournament.
- In Shooting, Manu Bhaker and Saurabh Chaudhary have won a Gold medal in the 10-meter Air Pistol Mixed team event at the 12th Asian Airgun Championship at Taoyuan in Taipei.
- Veselin Matic, who took Iran to an Asian Games bronze medal in 2010, is set to be appointed as

the new head coach of the Indian men's basketball team.

- 18-year-old Diksha Dagar become the second Indian to win an event on Ladies European Tour after clinching South African Women's Open in Cape Town. Aditi Ashok was the first Indian to win on the Ladies European Tour after clinching Hero Women's Indian Open in Gurugram in 2016.

International Current Affairs

- The United States officially shuttered its consulate in Jerusalem, downgrading the status of its main diplomatic mission to the Palestinians by folding it into the U.S. Embassy to Israel.
- Chinese Premier Li Keqiang expressed concern that the country will face a graver and more complicated environment to development, amid an ongoing trade war with the US and continued economic slowdown. The world's second-largest economy slashed its GDP target to 6.00 to 6.50 % this year.
- Kylie Jenner was named the youngest self-made billionaire of all time by Forbes magazine. Jenner, 21, the half-sister of reality television stars Kim, Khloe and Kourtney Kardashian, made it onto the annual Forbes list of billionaires after debuting her Kylie Cosmetics online in 2015 with \$29 lip kits containing matching lipstick and lip liner.
- The Venezuelan government announced to expel German ambassador Daniel Kriener from the country.
- Malaysia become a member of the International Criminal Court. The ICC is the world's only permanent war crimes court and aims to prosecute the worst abuses when national courts are unable or unwilling. Malaysia becomes the 124th member of the court since its establishment in 2002.
- India and Costa Rica signed two documents during Vice President Venkaiah Naidu's first visit to the Central American nation. The documents were signed and exchanged following talks between Naidu and Costa Rican President Carlos Alvarado Quesada.
- External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj left to the Maldives on a two-day visit. She is accompanied by Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale and other officials.
- Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi have hit by a vicious cyclone 'IDAI' that killed nearly 150 people, left hundreds more missing and stranded tens of thousands who are cut off from roads and telephones in mainly poor, rural areas.

- **Kazakhstan** renamed its capital **Astana** to **Nursultan** to honor outgoing leader **Nursultan Nazarbayev**. Mr. Nazarbayev, 78, served nearly 30 years as president of the nation.
- **New Zealand** imposed an immediate ban on assault weapons following the **Christchurch massacre** that claimed the lives of 50 mosque-goers.
- **Oman** signed an agreement with the **United States of America** that allow American ships and warplanes to take advantage of his ports and airports. The framework agreement is aimed at bolstering Omani-American military relations.
- **President Ram Nath Kovind** embarked on a state visit to **Croatia, Bolivia** and **Chile** to hold talks with the leaders of these countries and strengthen ties in trade, investment and renewable energy.
- **US President Donald Trump** signed a proclamation recognising **Israel's** sovereignty over the **Golan Heights** and told the visiting **Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu**, that Israel an absolute right to self-defence.
- **Oslo**, the capital city of **Norway** will become the world's first city to install **wireless, induction-based charging stations** for its fleet of electric taxis with an aim to have a zero-emission cab system by the year **2023** according to a report by Reuters.
- The world's largest e-waste recycling plant opened in **Dubai Industrial Park, Dubai** by '**Enviroserve**' company with a total cost of **\$5 million**. It will recycle Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (**WEEE**), IT asset disposition (ITAD), refrigerant gas and specialized waste.
- The **UN Security Council** unanimously passed the first-ever resolution ordering members to enforce laws against terror financing. UNSC resolution demands all states "ensure that their domestic laws and regulations establish serious criminal offenses" to collect funds or financial resources to terrorist groups or individual criminals.

Defence Current Affairs

- The United States and South Korea decided to call off their joint exercise "**Foal Eagle**" and "**Key Resolve**" and instead bifurcate them into smaller exercises. This is being done to ease tensions with **North Korea**. "**Key Resolve**" will be replaced by "**Dongmaeng**" which is also known as **alliance** in English, Foal Eagle drills will be replaced by a smaller battalion-sized exercise.
- **Border Security Force (BSF)** and **Border Guards Bangladesh (BGB)** took part in the 3-day '**Mainamati Maitree Exercise 2019**' as a part

of '**Confidence Building Measures**' between **India and Bangladesh** held in Agartala, Tripura.

- The third edition of the bilateral joint exercise between **India and Oman, Al Nagah 2019** will begin from 12th of this month (March) at **Jabel Al Akhdar Mountains** in Oman.
- **Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO)** successfully test fired the **PINAKA guided WEAPON rocket system** from Pokhran range in Rajasthan.
- **Indo Oman Joint Exercise Al Nagah III 2019**, a joint military exercise between **Indian and Royal Army of Oman (RAO)**, commenced this morning at HQ Jabel Regiment, Nizwa, Oman.
- **The United States Special Forces Group stationed in Japan** is involved in a joint exercise with **India's National Security Guard in Hyderabad**, aimed at enhancing the capabilities of the armed forces of the two countries.
- **Exercise Sampriti-VIII**, a joint **Indo-Bangladesh military exercise** which witnessed participation of a company group of **9th Battalion the Rajputana Rifles** from the Indian Army and the Company of **36 East Bengal Battalion, Bangladesh Army** concluded at Tangail, Bangladesh.
- Highlighting the close maritime proximity between India and Indonesia, **Indian Coast Guard Ship 'Vijit'** became the first-ever Coast Guard ship to visit **Sabang, Indonesia**.
- The inaugural **Africa-India Field Training Exercise-2019** for India and African nations called **AFINDEX-19** started with a grand opening ceremony at **Aundh Military Station, Pune**.
- **Exercise MITRA SHAKTI** is conducted annually as part of military diplomacy and interaction between armies of **India & Sri Lanka**. The joint exercise for the year 2018-19 will be conducted in Sri Lanka.
- The joint training exercise **MITRASHAKTI - VI** between **Indian and Sri Lanka Army** kick-started at **Diyatalawa in Sri Lanka**. MITRASHAKTI is one of the largest bilateral armies to army exercises conducted in the region.
- The Indian Air Force formally inducted the **CH 47 F(I)- Chinook heavy-lift helicopters** into its inventory at Air Force Station Chandigarh. IAF had signed a contract with **M/s Boeing Ltd** in September 2015 for 15 Chinook helicopters.
- The Indian Navy's state of the art Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Training Facility (NBCTF) was inaugurated by Chief of Naval Staff Admiral **Sunil Lanba** at INS Shivaji, Lonavala. The training facility named **ABHEDYA**, which means impenetrable in Sanskrit.

- Indian Navy's frontline ASW corvette, **INS Kadmatt** arrived at **Langkawi**, Malaysia on a 7 days official visit. The ship is scheduled to participate in the 15th edition of **Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition, LIMA-19** during the visit. INS Kadmatt was commissioned into the Indian Navy in **January 2016**.
- **First Indian Army Mountaineering Expedition to Mt Makalu (8485m)** comprising five Officers, two JCOs and eleven OR was flagged off by Director General Military Training. In furtherance of the objective of summiting all challenging peaks above 8000M, Indian Army is launching its maiden expedition to Mt Makalu in Mar-May 2019.
- **The third edition of the biennial, bilateral exercise AUSINDEX 19 between India and Australia** will be held in **Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh**. India signed a deal with a Russian firm to manufacture **7.5 lakh AK-203** rifles. These are the latest derivative of the **AK-47** rifles.

Ranks/ Indexes Released

- According to **BCG-IBA Report – EASE Reforms for Public Sector Banks**, released by Union Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs, **PNB** secured the **top spot** among all public sector banks in the implementation of '**Reforms agenda**'. PNB which topped the list with a score of **78.4** out of 100 in the EASE-index was followed by **BoB (77.8)**, **SBI (74.6)**, and **Oriental Bank of Commerce (69)**.
- According to the **Delta ranking report** released by **NITI Aayog**, Assam's **Hailakandi** become the top aspirational district among the **112 aspirational districts** of the country. Hailakandi in Assam made a giant leap from **52nd position** to no. 1 position on the basis of its performance during November-December 2018 and January 2019.
- **India is the second largest importer of weapons** in the world, as per the annual report '**Trends in International Arms Transfers-2018**' released by the think tank **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)**. **Saudi Arabia** is now the **world's largest weapons importer**.
- **India**, which is the **world's largest consumer** of gold, the **11th largest gold reserve**, with the current holding pegged at **607 tonnes**, as per the latest report by the **World Gold Council (WGC)**. The top spot is occupied by the **US** with gold reserves of **8,133.5 tonnes**, followed by **Germany** with **3,369.7 tonnes**.
- A recent study published in **PLOS Biology** found that human impacts on species occur across **84%** of the earth's surface and India ranks **16th** in such impacts, with **35 species** impacted on an average. **Malaysia** ranks **1st** among the countries with the highest number of impacted species (**125**).
- The human resource consulting firm, **Mercer's annual Quality of Living Survey 2019** placed Austria's capital city **Vienna** at the number 1 spot, making it the **10th year** in a row. The only cities outside of Europe to make the top 10 list are **Vancouver, Canada**, and **Auckland, New Zealand**. **Hyderabad** and **Pune**, at a rank of **143**, continue to be the most liveable cities in **India** for expatriates.
- The **United Nation Environment Program (UNEP)** released the sixth edition of the **Global Environment Outlook (2019)** titled '**Healthy Planet, Healthy People**'.
- **Tata, Reliance, and Airtel** emerged as the top three Indian brands of 2019, according to a report published by Interbrand, part of the Omnicom Media Group. **Tata** continued to hold the **top** position in the best Indian Brands ranking as its brand value grew by 6%, mainly due to **Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)**.
- **Reliance Industries CMD Mukesh Ambani** leads **Forbes' list of richest sports team owners with a net worth of around \$50 billion**. Ambani purced the IPL team **Mumbai Indians** through a RIL subsidiary in 2008 for just over \$100 million.
- The **World Happiness Report** was released by the **Sustainable Development Solutions Network for the United Nations** on March 20, the **International Day of Happiness**. India is ranked **140th** out of 156 nations. India shows a 7 spot decline. For the second consecutive year, **Finland** topped the list.
- The "**100 Most Influential People in Climate Policy**" list is comprised of seven Indian names including **Union Ministers Piyush Goyal and Dr Harsh Vardhan**, who took important measures to combat climate change. The list is

prepared by Apolitical, a peer to peer learning platform for governments. The list **topped by Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (Congresswoman, US Congress)**.

- In accordance with the preliminary world airport traffic rankings for **2018** released by **Airports Council International (ACI)**, **Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA)** of **New Delhi** elevated 4 ranks to reach at **12th** spot in terms of the busiest airport as compared to **2017's** 16th spot. The list of world's busiest airports by passenger traffic ranking topped by **Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (US)**.
- India moved up 2 places to rank **76th** on a **global energy transition index**. The annual list, compiled by **Geneva-based** World Economic Forum (WEF), ranked **115** economies on how well they are able to balance energy security and access with environmental sustainability and affordability. **Sweden** remains on the top and is followed by **Switzerland** and **Norway** in the top three.
- **Singapore's Changi Airport crowned the world's best aviation hub** for the seventh time in a row, while **New Delhi's Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport featured at number 59**, according to the **Skytrax World Airport Awards**. New Delhi's Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport is India's best Airport.

Important Days

- **World Wildlife Day** is observed on **3rd March** every year to spread awareness about wildlife. 2019 Theme: **'Life below water: for people and planet'**.
- **Janaushadhi Diwas** is being celebrated across the country on **07th March**.
- **International Women's Day** is celebrated on **March 8 every year**. It is a focal point in the movement for women's rights. 2019 Theme: **"Think equal, build smart, innovate for change"**, campaign theme: **#BalanceforBetter**.
- **World Kidney Day (WKD)** is observed annually on the **second Thursday in March (14th March in 2019)** to create awareness on the importance of the kidneys and reducing the frequency and impact of kidney disease. 2019 Theme: **Kidney Health for Everyone Everywhere**.
- **World Consumer Rights Day** is celebrated every year on **15 March** as part of an initiative by Consumer International, a membership organization for consumer groups around the world. 2019 Theme: **"Trusted Smart Products"**.
- **International Day of Happiness** is celebrated every year on **March 20**. 2019 Theme: **'Happier Together'**.

- **International World Water Day** is held annually on **22 March** as a means of focusing attention on the importance of freshwater and advocating for the sustainable management of freshwater resources. 2019 Theme: **'Leaving no one behind'**.
- The **International Day of Forests** is held annually on **21 March** to raise awareness of the importance of forests to people and their vital role in poverty eradication, environmental sustainability and food security. 2019 Theme: **Forests and Education**.
- **Bihar Diwas or Bihar Day** is celebrated **every year on 22 March** to commemorate the state's separation from Bengal presidency in 1912.
- The nation is observing **Shaheed Diwas or Martyr's Day** on **23rd March**. Each year, **March 23**, homage is paid to the great revolutionary fighters **Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev** who sacrificed their lives for the country.
- Each year, **World Tuberculosis (TB) Day** is commemorated on **March 24** to raise public awareness about the devastating health, social and economic consequences of TB, and to step up efforts to end the global TB epidemic. 2019 Theme: **'It's time'**.
- **World Meteorological Day** is observed annually on **March 23** to commemorate the establishment of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in 1950. 2019 Theme: **"The Sun, the Earth and the Weather"**.

Agreement Signed/ MoU Approved

- **NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)** and **Adobe** signed a Statement of Intent (SOI) to collectively drive the charter of developing creative skills and spreading digital literacy across all **Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL)** in India.
- **India and Brunei** signed a pact for the exchange of **Information and Assistance in Collection** with respect to taxes in order to curb tax evasion and tax avoidance in **New Delhi**.

- The Centre and the **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** have signed a **926 million dollar** loan agreement to operationalize two lines of the **Mumbai Metro Rail System**. It is the single largest infrastructure project loan in ADB history approved by the ADB Board.
- A loan agreement of **USD 455 million** was signed between the **Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)** and the Government of India for financing the **Andhra Pradesh Rural Roads Projects**. These projects will **connect 3,300 habitations** with a population of more than **250**, and benefit around **2 million** people.
- The **Government of India**, the **State Government of Chhattisgarh** and the **World Bank** signed a **\$25.2 Million Loan Agreement** to support the State's Reforms in Expenditure Management. This support will cover Expenditure Planning, Investment Management, Budget Execution, Public Procurement, and Accountability.
- The **World Bank** will provide a **\$250-million loan** for the **National Rural Economic Transformation Project (NRETP)** to help women in rural households develop viable enterprises for farm and non-farm products. An agreement in this regard was signed between the **World Bank and the Government of India**.
- **India and Paraguay** have agreed to identify sectors of mutual interest to **promote bilateral investment** and decided to explore new areas of collaboration, including Information and Communication Technology and space and biotechnology.
- The **Ministry of Women and Child Development** and the **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship** entered into an MoU aimed at improving women livelihood and empowering them through skill development. The MOU was signed in the presence of **Smt. Maneka Sanjay Gandhi, Minister, Women and Child Development** and **Shri. Dharmendra Pradhan, Minister, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship**.
- The **Government of India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB)** signed in New Delhi a **\$26 Million Loan Agreement** to provide additional financing for improving drainage infrastructure in Dibrugarh town of Assam under the ongoing Assam Urban Infrastructure Investment Program.
- The **World Bank, the Government of India and representatives of 5 States of Government of India and Implementing Agencies** signed in New Delhi the Loan Agreement for **Additional Financing of \$137 Million** for the **Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (DRIP)**.
- The **Union Cabinet** approved a pact with **Germany** for cooperation in the field of occupational safety and health. The cabinet approved the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Germany on cooperation in the field of **Occupational Safety and Health (OSH)**.
- The **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI)** signed a **Cooperation Agreement with the International Finance Corporation (IFC)**, a member of the **World Bank Group (WBG)**. The agreement will enable IFC to assist IBBI to further build the capacity of insolvency professionals, and insolvency professional agencies for the purposes of the Code.
- **India and Pakistan** have agreed to work expeditiously on **operationalizing the Kartarpur corridor**. The corridor will facilitate Indian pilgrims to visit the holy shrine of Gurdwara Darbar Sahib at Kartarpur in Pakistan.
- **IIT Roorkee and ISRO** have signed an **MoU to develop Space Technology Cells on the campus of the varsity**. IIT Roorkee issued a statement saying the premier technology school inked an MoU with the **Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO)** to setup Space Technology Cells.
- The **Ministry of Human Resource Development** signed a MoU with the Afghanistan government to work on **digital education initiatives**, which include many prominent programs developed by **Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs)**.
- **Maldives finance ministry** signed an **agreement with India's Export-Import Bank (EXIM)** for line of credit (LOC) of **800 million US dollars** to finance the new government's infrastructure projects. The agreement was signed in presence of External Affairs Sushma Swaraj who was on a 2-day visit to Male.
- The **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI)** signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)**.
- **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** inked an **agreement to invest USD 50 million in solar energy project developer Avaada Energy Pvt Ltd** to help the company scale up rapidly. The investment will come equally from ADB's Ordinary Capital Resources and **Leading Asia's Private Infrastructure Fund (LEAP)**.
- **Oman** signed an **agreement** with the **United States of America** that allow American ships and warplanes to take advantage of his ports and airports. The framework agreement is aimed at bolstering Omani-American military relations.

- An agreement signed between **India and the African Union** to establish an **India-Africa health sciences collaborative platform**. The MoU will pave the way for cooperation in research and development, capacity building, health services, pharmaceutical trade and manufacturing capabilities for drugs and diagnostics.
- **India and the US** signed an agreement for **exchange of country-by-country (CbC) report**. The move will give huge relief to subsidiaries of US-headquartered companies in the taxation-related matter. The agreement was signed by **PC Mody, Chairman, Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT)**, and **Kenneth I Juster, US Ambassador to India**.
- On the second day of Indian President's three-day visit to Bolivia, **India and Bolivia signed eight MoUs** in the fields of culture, Visa waiver arrangement for diplomats, exchange between diplomatic academies, mining, space, traditional medicine, establishment of Centre of Excellence in IT and Bi-Oceanic Railway project.

Awards & Recognition

- PM Modi conferred the **Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prizes for Science and Technology** for the years 2016, 2017 and 2018 in **New Delhi**. There were 34 prize winners.
- **ASSOCHAM (The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India)**, which is one of the apex trade associations of India conferred '**Non-Life Insurer of the Year Award 2019**' to **Bharti AXA General Insurance**.
- **Satheesh Reddy**, the Secretary of India's Department of Defence R&D and Chairman of the **DRDO** chosen by the **American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA)** as the co-winner of the **2019 Missile Systems Award**.
- **Tata Steel** received the award as one of the **2019 World's Most Ethical Companies**. The award given by **Ethisphere Institute, USA**. The company was also recognised 7 times previously and is one of the only two awardees in the '**Metals, Minerals and Mining**' industry.
- **Indian Bank**, a Public Sector Bank (PSB), headquartered at **Chennai**, Tamil Nadu awarded the Best Bank Award by the Tamil Nadu government for successfully meeting the needs of **women's self-help groups (SHGs)**.
- **Two Nobel prizes in literature** will be awarded this year, to make up for the lack of one in 2018 while the scandal-plagued Swedish Academy attempted to get its house in order.
- The '**Green Era Award for Sustainability**' was set up to recognize the true global exemplars who have innovative and creative in pursuing the sustainable imperative. **TVS Motor Company** bagged the award because of its sincere commitment towards being a responsible manufacturer. **The company bagged this award for the second time.**
- President **Ram Nath Kovind** presented **Swachh Survekshan-2019 Awards** in **New Delhi**. **Indore** bagged award for the cleanest city for **third straight year in Swachh Survekshan**. **New Delhi Municipal Council** area gets cleanest small city award while **Uttarakhand's Gauchar** was adjudged Best Ganga Town in the survey.
- **International Women's Day** is being observed on **08th March**. Governments, NGOs and other organisations across the world observe the day on the 8th of March every year to highlight the achievements of women.
- **Indore bagged the cleanest city award for the third straight year** under Swachh Survekshan, 2019. President **Ram Nath Kovind** presented **Swachh Survekshan-2019 Awards** in **New Delhi**. **New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC)** area got the cleanest small city award. **Uttarakhand's Gauchar** was adjudged the Best Ganga Town in the survey.
- **ACKO General Insurance** a new-age digital insurance company was awarded the coveted **Golden Peacock Innovative Product Award – 2019**, for their contextual micro insurance product – "**Ola Ride Insurance**". The award was presented to Mr. **Biresh Giri**, Appointed Actuary & CRO, Acko. The award ceremony was held in **Dubai**.
- **The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India** won the **First Prize in the category of TV Cinema Spot** at the prestigious international **Golden City Gate Tourism Awards 2019**. The awards were received by **Yogendra Tripathi**, Secretary, Tourism at **ITB, Berlin**.
- A social entrepreneur from **Tamil Nadu**, **Padmanaban Gopalan**, founder of **No Food Waste**, was named the winner of the **Commonwealth Youth Award for the Asian**

region worth 3,000 Pounds at a ceremony at the Commonwealth Secretariat in London.

- **Kent RO Systems Pvt. Ltd.** received the **Best Domestic Water Purifier Award 2018-19** for its **RO+UV+UF** technology at the Water Digest Water Awards function that was held in New Delhi.
- An Indian journalist, author and chief of The Wire, '**Raghu Karnad**' received the prestigious Windham-Campbell prize of USD 165,000 for his debut book, '**Farthest Field: An Indian story of Second World War**', published in the year **2015** in the non-fiction category.
- **Brazilian physicist** and astronomer **Marcelo Gleiser** awarded the **2019 Templeton Prize**, worth **\$1.4 million**, for his work blending science and spirituality. Gleiser, 60, is the first Latin American to win the award.
- Hindi writer **Leeladhar Jagudi** honoured with **Vyas Samman 2018** for his collection of poems "**Jitne Log Utne Prem**" published in **2013**.
- **The Lalit Kala Akademi (LKA)** announced **15 winners of the 60th Annual Academy Awards**. All the awardees were honored with a plaque, a shawl and prize money of **Rs 1 lakh at the 60th National Exhibition of Art**.
- A consortium of two Indian oil companies, **Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited**, and **Indian Oil Corporation Limited** awarded the exploration rights for **Abu Dhabi's Onshore Block 1**. The **Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC)** signed agreements awarding the exploration rights.
- **Peter Tabichi**, a member of the Franciscan religious order conferred with the prestigious **Global Teacher Prize for 2019** at a ceremony in **Dubai** hosted by Hollywood actor, **Hugh Jackman**.
- **President Ram Nath Kovind** awarded the **Grand Order of King Tomislav** with **Sash and Grand Star** by the **President of Croatia Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic** for his exceptional contribution to the advancement of overall relations and development of mutual cooperation between India and Croatia and for promoting friendship and partnership between the people of both the countries.
- Three pioneers in AI, University of Toronto faculty member and Google Brain researcher **Geoffrey Hinton**, Facebook chief AI scientist and NYU professor **Yann LeCun**, and Element AI founder and University of Montreal professor **Yoshua Bengio** honored with the Turing Award.
- **Nobel Prize-winning economist Amartya Sen** will be awarded the prestigious **Bodley Medal**, the

highest honor granted by the University of Oxford's world-famous Bodleian Libraries.

- **Swiss-based NRI scientist Dr Rajendra Joshi** conferred with the **Pravasi Bhartiya Samman Award** by the **President of India Ram Nath Kovind**.

Summits/Events Held

- Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare, **Anupriya Patel**, inaugurated the **International Digital Health Symposium** and an exhibition on **Digital Health** as a part of the Symposium, in **New Delhi**, where participant countries along with various Government Ministries, states and other stakeholders showcased key innovations, implementation experiences, and innovative Digital Health Interventions.
- **Abu Dhabi** hosted the 46th session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the **Organisation of Islamic Co-operation (OIC)**. This is the **first time** that India participated in the meeting. **Sushma Swaraj** attended the inaugural session of the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation meeting in Abu Dhabi where she was welcomed as a "**guest of honour**".
- **Ministry of Commerce & Industry** will be organizing the **14th CII-EXIM Bank Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnerships**, in association with Confederation of Indian Industry and EXIM Bank of India in New Delhi.
- **The 4th IoT India Congress**, an event which will see digital technology leaders converge to discuss and explore business opportunities in mainstreaming Internet of Things (IoT), will be held in **Bengaluru in August 2019**.
- The first **BRICS** (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) **Sherpa** meeting held in **Curitiba**, Brazil under the Presidency of **Brazil**. The Indian delegation was led by Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs **T S Tirumurti**.
- The Government of Indonesia hosted the first ever **High-Level Dialogue on Indo-Pacific Cooperation (HLD-IPC)** in its capital city **Jakarta**.

The theme of the HLD was '**Towards a Peaceful, Prosperous, and Inclusive Region**'. It was inaugurated by Indonesia's Vice President **Jusuf Kalla**.

- **NITI Aayog** organized a day-long **FinTech Conclave** at Dr. Ambedkar International Center, **New Delhi**. The Conclave was inaugurated by **RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das**.

Committees

- The Supreme Court ordered a **court-monitored mediation in the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid land dispute case** to arrive at a "**permanent solution**" to the politically and religiously sensitive issue. The **five-judge constitution bench** headed by **CJI Ranjan Gogoi** appointed a panel of **3 mediators** in the title suit with **Retired Justice Kalifullah** chairing the court-appointed and monitored mediation process. The other two members are **spiritual leader Sri Sri Ravi Shankar** and **senior advocate Sriram Panchu**.
- The **Delhi government's Dialogue and Development Commission (DDC)**, a think-tank that advises the government on key issues, **set up a 17-member high-level committee** to "reform higher education" in the capital. **The committee will be chaired by DDC vice-chairperson Jasmine Shah**.
- **Niti Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant** will head the **National Mission on Transformative Mobility and Battery Storage**, which is being set up to promote clean and sustainable mobility initiatives in the country.
- **RBI** appointed **5-member committee** under the chairmanship of **Nandan Nilekani** to strengthen digital payments as well as to boost financial

inclusion through Financial Technology. The committee would submit its recommendations within **3 months**.

Science & Technology Current Affairs

- Bengaluru-based **Signalchip** unveiled semiconductor chips for **4G, LTE and 5G modems**. These are first such chips developed in **India**. All devices and infrastructure in India whether imported or domestically manufactured, currently use imported **silicon chips**.
- **Indian Space Research Organisation** launched '**Yuva Vigyani Karyakram**', a '**Young Scientist Programme**' for the School Children to be studying in the 9th standard.
- Just in time for International Women's Day, **NASA** announced that it will be conducting the **first-ever, all-female spacewalk**. **Astronauts Christina Koch and Anne McClain** will exit the International Space Station on **March 29**, 35 years after the first woman performed a spacewalk.
- **National space agency ISRO** and its **French counterpart CNES** sealed an agreement to set up a joint maritime surveillance system in the country in May. **K.Sivan, Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation**, and **Jean-Yves Le Gall, President of CNES of France**, signed the agreement in Bengaluru.
- **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** launched a special programme for schoolchildren called **Young Scientist Programme or Yuva Vigyani Karyakram (YUVIKA)**, in tune with the government's vision "**Jai Vigyan, Jai Anusandhan**".

Books & Authors

- A book titled, '**Mann Ki Baat- A Social Revolution on Radio**' was released by Finance Minister **Arun Jaitley** in **New Delhi**. The book is a compendium encompassing 50 editions of the '**Mann Ki Baat**' programme by PM Modi on All India Radio.
- **Former Vice-President Hamid Ansari** launched the book titled '**Every Vote Counts-The Story of India's Elections**'. The author of this book is **former Chief Election Commissioner Navin Chawla**.
- The **Chairman of 15th Finance Commission** of India, **N.K. Singh** launched the book "**Indian Fiscal Federalism**". The book written by **Dr. Y. V. Reddy, former Governor of RBI and Chairman of the 14th Finance Commission of India** along with **Dr. G. R. Reddy, Advisor (Finance) to the Government of Telangana**.

Miscellaneous Current Affairs

- The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and

Industry, Government of India recently awarded **Geographical Indication (GI)** to five varieties of Indian coffee. They are:

1. Coorg Arabica coffee,
 2. Wayanaad Robusta coffee,
 3. Chikmagalur Arabica coffee,
 4. Araku Valley Arabica coffee,
 5. Bababudangiris Arabica coffee.
- **Tashigang, a Himachal Pradesh village at an altitude of 15,256 feet** now become the highest polling station in the world. Situated about 29 km from the **India-China border**, the polling station covers two villages, **Tashigang and Gate**.
 - The 3rd edition of **Namaste Thailand** festival, organised by the Royal Thai Embassy with an aim to strengthen bilateral ties and increase cultural exchange between **India and Thailand**, began at Select Citywalk in **New Delhi**.
 - The Registrar of Geographical Indications, Government of India, accorded a GI tag, '**Sirsi Supari**', to arecanut grown in Sirsi, Siddpaur and Yellapur taluks of **Uttara Kannadadistrict in Karnataka**.
 - After an eight-year-long process, **Erode turmeric (of Tamil Nadu)** finally got a **Geographical Indication (GI) tag** from the Geographical Indication Registry.
 - **Indian gymnast Dipa Karmakar** was selected as Barbie role model & was presented with a **one-of-a-kind doll by Barbie as the company celebrates its 60th anniversary**. She was part of the 'Shero' program launched in 2015 by the company.
 - A **116-year-old Japanese woman** who loves playing the board game Othello is being honored as the **world's oldest living person by Guinness World Records**.
 - **Idukki's The Marayoor Jaggery**, the traditional and handmade product from Idukki district of Kerala received the **Geographical Indication (GI) tag** from the Central Government.
 - **The National Green Tribunal** slapped a fine of **Rs 500 crore** on German auto major Volkswagen for damaging the environment through the use of "cheat device" in its diesel cars in India. A bench headed by **NGT chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel** directed the carmaker to deposit the amount within two months.
 - The **Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)** created the **Guinness World Record** for '**longest single line bicycle parade (moving)**' at the Yamuna Expressway, **Noida**. CISF personnel rode **1,327 bicycles** non-stop in a single line, maintaining a uniform distance between the bicycles.

- The RBI constituted an eight-member task force on **offshore rupee** markets, **headed by Usha Thorat** former Deputy Governor, to look into issues related to the markets and recommend appropriate policy measures to ensure the stability of the external value of the rupee.
- A National Conference on "**Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS)**" was inaugurated by the Union Minister of Social Justice & Empowerment **Thaawarchand Gehlot**.

Obituaries

- **Zhores Alferov, a Russian physicist and Nobel Prize laureate**, passed away. He was 88. In 2000, Alferov received the Nobel Prize in Physics for developing semiconductor heterostructures.
 - Legendary **composer** and pianist **Andre Previn** passed away at the age of 89 in Manhattan, New York, **USA**. He was a 10-time Grammy Award winner and had won 4 **Oscars** throughout his lifetime.
 - American actor **Luke Perry** passed away in **California** at the age of 52, less than a week after suffering a massive stroke. The actor rose to fame for his roles in '**Beverly Hills 90210**' and "**Riverdale**".
 - **Manohar Parrikar**, Goa Chief Minister and former **defence minister**, passed away at the age of 63 after a long battle with pancreatic cancer.
 - Senior journalist and environmental activist **Darryl D'Monte** passed away in Mumbai.
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- **Former White House economist and Princeton University professor Alan Krueger** passed away. **He was 58.**
 - Kala Prapoorna awardee, **Vinjamuri Anasuya Devi** passed away at the age of 99 due to illness in the USA. She was an eminent **folk artist**, radio commentator, harmonium player, music composer, and author.
 - **Scott Walker**, one of the most innovative and enduring songwriters of the **20th century**, **died aged 76.**

- **Celebrated Malayalam writer and poet Ashita** passed away at the age of 63 in Thrissur, after fighting a long battle with cancer. She was the recipient of myriad awards, and some include the **Padmarajan Award – Thathagatha (2000)**, Lalithambika Antharjanam Award (1994) and Edaseri Award (1986).
- Russian cosmonaut **Valery Bykovsky**, who made the first of his three flights to space in **1963**, passed away at the age of 84 years. He was a recipient of the **Hero of the Soviet Union** and **Order of Lenin** awards.
- **Veteran journalist and academician Prafulla Rajguru** passed away at the age of 82.

Countries | Capital | Currencies

- Vietnam Capital: Hanoi, Currency: Vietnamese Dong.
- Indonesia Currency: Indonesian rupiah, President: Joko Widodo.
- Afghanistan Capital: Kabul, Currency: Afghan Afghani.
- Capital of Paraguay: Asuncion, Currency: Paraguayan Guarani
- President of Paraguay: Mario Abdo Benitez
- Brunei Capital: Bandar Seri Begawan, Currency: Brunei dollar, Prime Minister: sanal Bolkiah.
- Bangladesh Capital: Dhaka, Currency: Taka, PM: Sheikh ina.
- Israel Capital: Jerusalem, Currency: Israeli new shekel.
- Norway capital: Oslo, Currency: Norwegian krone.
- Croatia Capital: Zagreb, Currency: Croatian kuna.
- Bolivia Capital: Sucre, Currency: Bolivian boliviano.
- Chile Capital: Santiago, Currency: Chilean peso.
- New Zealand Capital: Wellington, Currency: New Zealand dollar.
- Oman Capital: Muscat, Currency: Omani rial, PM and Sultan: Qaboos bin Said al Said.
- Maldives Capital: Male, Currency: Maldivian rufiyaa.
- Costa Rica Capital: San José, Currency: Costa Rican colón.
- Kazakhstan Capital: Astana, Currency: Kazakhstani tenge.
- Finland Capital: Helsinki, Currency: Euro.
- UAE Capital: Abu Dhabi, Currency: United Arab Emirates Dirham.
- Russia Capital: Moscow, Currency: Russian ruble.
- United Arab Emirates (UAE) Capital: Abu Dhabi, Currency: Dirham.

International Organizations / Companies in News

- IFFCO Tokio is a joint venture between the Indian Farmers Fertilizer Co-operative (IFFCO) and its associates and Tokio Marine and Nichido Fire Group which is also the largest listed insurance group in Japan.
- IFFCO Tokio Chairman: Mr. K. Srinivasa Gowda, Headquarters: Gurugram, Haryana.
- Organisation for Economic Co-Operation & Development (OECD) Founded on: 30th September 1961
- Headquarters of OECD: Paris, France
- Korea Exim Bank Headquarters in: Seoul, Founded in: 1976, Chairman and President: Sung-soo Eun.
- Asian Development Bank Headquarters: Manila, Philippines, President: Takehiko Nakao.
- The UN Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.
- It 15 Members, and each Member one vote.
- Vladimir Voronkov is the chief of U.N. counter-terrorism.
- UNEP Headquarters: Nairobi, Kenya, Head: Joyce Msuya.
- The founder and Chairman of WEF– Klaus Schwab.
- WEF Headquarters- Switzerland.
- AIIB President: Jin Lique, Headquarters: Beijing, China.
- Interim World Bank Group President and World Bank CEO: Kristalina Georgieva Headquarters: Washington, D.C., United States.
- The CII-EXIM Bank Annual Conclave was held for the first time in 2005.
- BRICS Headquarters: Shanghai, China; President: K V Kamath.

Financial Organizations in News

- Headquarters of United Bank of India: Kolkata
- CEO of United Bank of India: Ashok Kumar Pradhan
- Headquarters of HDFC Life: Mumbai
- IRDAI Headquarters: Hyderabad, NHB Headquarters: New Delhi
- Chairperson of IRDAI: Subh Chandra Khuntia
- MD and CEO of United Bank Of India: A.K. Pradhan, Headquarters in: Kolkata, West Bengal.
- HDFC Life MD and CEO: Vibha Padalkar, Head Office in: Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- SBI Chairperson: Rajnish Kumar, Headquarters: Mumbai, Founded: 1 July 1955.
- PNB Headquarters in: New Delhi, CEO: Sunil Mehta.
- Bandhan Bank headquarters: Kolkata.
- P. S. Jayakumar is the MD and CEO of Bank of Baroda.
- It headquarters in Vadodara, Gujarat.
- M. S. Sahoo is the Chairperson of Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI).
- Bharti AXA Life Insurance CEO: Vikas Seth.

States | CMs | Governors | Capital | Ministers | Static General Awareness

- Haryana Capital: Chandigarh, Chief Minister: Manohar Lal Khattar, Governor: Satyadev Narayan Arya.
- Karnataka Capital: Bengaluru, CM: H.D Kumaraswamy, Governor: Vajubhai Vala.
- Tripura Capital: Agartala, CM: Biplab Kumar Deb, Governor: Kaptan Singh Solanki.
- Finance Minister of India: Arun Jaitley.

- Tamil Nadu Capital: Chennai, CM: Edappadi K. Palaniswami, Governor: Banwarilal Purohit.
- 15th Finance Commission Chairman: N K Singh.
- Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh: Bhupesh Baghel, Capital of Chhattisgarh– Raipur
- Mizoram Capital: Aizawl, Chief Minister: Zoramthanga.
- General Bipin Rawat is the present Chief of Army Staff of Indian Army.
- Air Chief Marshal BS Dhanoa is the present Chief of the Air Staff of IAF.
- Vice Admiral Karambir Singh appointed as the next Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS).
- Assam Capital: Dispur, CM: Sarbananda Sonowal, Governor: Jagdish Mukhi.
- Governor of Bihar- Lalji Tandon, Chief Minister- Nitish Kumar.

Other Static General Awareness Current Affairs

- ISRO Director: K. Sivan, Headquarters: Bengaluru, Established in: 1969.
- Gruh Finance Limited is an Ahmedabad headquartered Subsidiary of HDFC Limited.
- SWIFT is abbreviated as Society For Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications.
- CBSE Chairperson- Anita Karwal, Headquarters- New Delhi.
- BARC Headquarters in: Mumbai, Founder: Homi J. Bhabha, Founded: 3 January 1954.
- Dr. Homi Jehangir Bhabha established the Atomic Energy Establishment, Trombay (AEET) in January 1954.
- Dr G. Satheesh Reddy is the Secretary, Department of Defence R&D and Chairman, DRDO.
- DRDO Established in: 1958, Headquarters in: New Delhi.
- National Security Guard (NSG) formally came into being in September 1986.
- Sudeep Lakhtakia is the present Director General of NSG.
- Makalu is the fifth highest mountain in the world at 8,485 metres.