

May 1st

- **MoEFCC constituted a committee to implement National Clean Air Program**

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has constituted a committee to implement the National Clean Air Program (NCAP). The objective is to reduce the PM (particulate matter) 2.5 and PM 10 concentration by 20% to 30% in at least 102 cities by 2024. The committee will be headed by the Secretary, Union Environment Ministry. The headquarters of the committee will be in New Delhi.

- **Indo-French navies will hold their joint exercise off the Goa-coast from 1st May to 10th May, 2019**

India and France will be holding their bilateral naval exercise, Varuna 19.1 Arabian Sea off the Goa coast from 1st May to 10th May, 2019.

- **Pak named its retaliatory action against India on February 27 as ‘Operation Swift Retort’**

The Pakistan Air Force announced that they will observe its retaliatory action against India on February 27 against the Balakot strike of Indian Air Force as ‘Operation Swift Retort’.

i. The Indian air strikes at Balakot terror camp on February 26 was response of Pakistan based Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) attack by a suicide bomber in Pulwama that killed 40 CRPF jawans.

ii. In response to Indian attack, Pakistan Air Force (PAF) retaliated and captured IAF Wing Commander Abhinandan Varthaman who was released by Pakistan on March 1.

- **In 2019, Goldman Environmental Prize honoured 6 grassroots environmental activists for their exemplary work in protecting the nature**

The Goldman Environmental Foundation honoured 6 recipients of the 2019 with the world's eminent award for grassroots environmental activists, the Goldman Environmental Prize.

The Goldman Environmental Prize is also known as Green Nobel Prize and awards a cash prize of \$200,000.

- **Emperor Akihito becomes the first Japanese monarch to abdicate in 200 years**



On 30th April 2019, The 125th Emperor of Japan, 85-year-old, Emperor Emeritus Akihito abdicated after 30 years of ruling because of his declining health and age-related problems. His rule was known as Heisei. While his son Emperor Naruhito, 59 -year-old succeeded the Chrysanthemum Throne on 1 May 2019, ushering in the Reiwa era. This is the first time Japan's modern History that the country has both an Emperor and Emeritus.

- **'Yeti' footprints sighted claims Indian Army tweet**

On 30th April 2019, The official Twitter account of the Indian Army's Additional Directorate General of Public Information tweeted that an Indian Army mountaineering expedition team has sighted mysterious footprints of mythical himalayan beast "Yeti" measuring 32×15 inches (81 centimeters by 38 centimeters) close to Makalu Base Camp, located in North-Eastern Himalayas on 09 April 2019.

i. The yeti also known as Abominable Snowman or Asian Bigfoot is a giant ape-like creature often figures in South Asian folklore. Yetis are believed to weigh anywhere between 91 to 181 kilograms with a height of above 6 feet.

ii. According to a report in the National Geographic, British explorer Eric Shipton captured the footprints of the Yeti in 1951 for the first time. It was found on the Menlyung Glacier which is located on the Nepal-Tibet border near the Makalu Barun national park.

- **US Judge and Civil Rights Icon Damon J. Keith died aged 96**

Icon Damon J. Keith On 28th April 2019, United States Sixth Circuit Judge, Damon Jerome Keith, a grandson of slaves passed away at the age of 96 in Detroit, the city where the prominent lawyer was appointed in 1967 to the US District Court. He served on the Sixth Circuit for over 40 years.

- **International Labour Day is observed on May 1**

International Labour Day or Workers day is observed annually on 1 May, It is also known as May Day. The day was promoted by the international labour movement, socialists and communists. The theme of International Labour Day 2019 is "Sustainable Pension for all: The Role of Social Partners".

- **Maharashtra Day is celebrated every year on 1st May to mark the Maratha speaking region that attained statehood on 1st May 1960**



Maharashtra Day is celebrated every year on 1st May to mark the Maratha speaking region that was founded on 1st May 1960.

- **Gujarat celebrates its foundation day on 1st May**



May 2nd

- **Geological Survey of India (GSI) North Eastern Region (NER) installed 2 Geological Display Boards at Mawmluh cave, Therriaghat**

The Geological Survey of India (GSI) North Eastern Region (NER) installed 2 geological display boards at 2 important geological sites with geo-scientific information. The sites are Mawmluh cave and Therriaghat cave in Meghalaya.

The geological display boards are unveiled at Mawmluh cave and Therriaghat at Sobhar in East Khasi Hill District.

UNSC Designated Jaish-E-Mohammed Leader Masood Azhar As A Global Terrorist

The 1267 Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) designated Pakistan based militant group Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) leader Masood Azhar as a 'global terrorist' on May 1, 2019. This could be possible because China has lifted its technical hold on the proposal to blacklist Masood Azhar. In earlier four instances, China had blocked the proposal to designate Masood Azhar as a global terrorist. This is a huge diplomatic win for India and also a symbolic victory towards the fight against terrorism.

This time the proposal was moved by P3 countries (USA, France and United Kingdom), a permanent member to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), on February 27, 2019 to designate Azhar as a global terrorist. This move was the response of deadly terror attack in Pulwama by Pakistan based militant group Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) which killed 40 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) jawans.

What is 1267 Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee?

The Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee established on 15th October, 1999 by United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1267. Earlier this committee deals with both Al-Qaida and Taliban hence previously known as Al-Qaida and Taliban Sanctions Committee, but on 2011 the UNSC created separately new Taliban Sanctions Committee to deal with Taliban.

There are three UNSC committees which deals with counter-terrorism and one of the three committees is Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee. The other two committees are Counter Terrorism Committee and Security Council Committee.



Currently, this Al-Qaida sanctions committee contains the name of 262 individuals and 83 entities.

About Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) leader Masood Azhar

Masood Azhar is the founder of the Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) terror outfit. He is also a former leader of the terrorist group Harakat al-Mujahadin.

He was the mastermind of many terror attacks in India which includes Pathankot air base attack in 2016, Pulwama attack in 2019.

- **The UK Parliament becomes the first national government to pass an Environment and Climate Emergency**

The UK Parliament becomes the first national government to pass an exemplary measure, that is, a national declaration of an Environment and Climate Emergency. This move marks a serious emergency in dealing with climate change.

- **Sri Lankan cricketer Kumar Sangakkara named as first non-British President of MCC**

Kumar Sangakkara, former Sri Lanka captain has been named as the first non-British president of Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC). He succeeds Anthony Wreford. It was announced at the MCC annual general meeting at Lord's on 1 May 2019. He will take up his one-year post in October.

- **M Jayshree Vyas appointed as first Independent Woman Director to BSE board**

Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) has appointed chartered accountant M Jayshree Vyas as its first independent woman director to the board.

- **Country's biggest stucco figurine unearthed in Telangana's Phanigiri**

Indian archaeologists recently unearthed a life-sized stucco sculpture from a Buddhist site at Phanigiri in Suryapet, Telangana. As per heritage department officials, it represents one of Bhodhisattva in Jathaka Chakra. This is the largest stucco sculpture found from India till date.

- **BSNL launches 'Bharat fibre' for high-speed broadband Internet service with local channel partner in Pulwama**



With the launch of 'Bharat Fibre', the state-owned telecom firm, BSNL (Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited) became the 1st operator to start optical fiber-based high-speed broadband service in Pulwama. The Bharat Fibre services with reliable and high-speed internet are provided on the optical fibre by FTTH (fibre-to-the-home) service up to the customer premises.



May 3rd

- **Indian Postal Department released Postage Stamp to commemorate 750th Birth Anniversary of Sri Vedanta Desika**

In order to commemorate the 750th birth anniversary of Sri Vedanta Desikan, Vice President, M. Venkaiah Naidu unveiled a postage stamp in New Delhi on May 2, 2019. The stamp has been released by Indian postal department.

About Sri Vedanta Desika:

- i. Born in 1268 CE, he was Sri Vaishnava philosopher and one of the most brilliant stalwarts of Sri Vaishnavism in the post-Ramanuja period.
- ii. He was an awardee of Vedanta Desika (supreme teacher of the conclusion of all knowledge).

- **Govt has mandated Green Number plates on all electric vehicles in India**

The Central government has instructed all state transport departments to mandate green number plates on all types of electric vehicles, whether brand new or used. The reason behind this move is to distinguish green vehicles for preferential treatment in parking, free entry in congested zones, and concessional toll.

- **Cyclone Fani hits Odisha and West Bengal**

Cyclone Fani with a maximum wind speed of 240-250 kmph, is one of the most biggest and fiercest cyclonic storm over the east coast in nearly two decades. Several villages nearby Puri in Odisha have submerged due to heavy rains and till now at least 3 people have lost their life. **The word Fani (pronounced as Foni) means snake** was suggested by Bangladesh.

- **SEBI has banned NSE from securities market for 6 months owing to the Co-Location Case**

Market regulator, Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has banned NSE, National Stock Exchange from gaining access to the securities market for a period of 6 months.

- **Netherlands emerges as the 3rd largest source of FDI in India**

The Netherlands, a country in north-western Europe, became the third largest source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in India during 2017-18, with an investment of United States Dollar



(USD) 2.67 billion across all sectors. Mauritius and Singapore are the top two countries for FDI in India during 2017-18 with an investment of USD 13.41 billion and USD 9.27 billion respectively.

- **Former ISRO chief A.S. Kiran Kumar conferred ‘Knight of the Legion of Honour’ Award**

Former ISRO chief Former Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) chief has been conferred France’s highest civilian award “Knight of the Legion of Honour”. This award is for his invaluable contribution to the development of the India-France space cooperation.

- **US Air Force General Tod D. Wolters declared as the top military officer of the 29-nation NATO military alliance**

Tod D. Wolters, the former pilot, who has served in Afghanistan and Iraq, has been declared as the Supreme Allied Commander Europe during the ceremony at NATO’s (The North Atlantic Treaty Organization) military headquarters in Mons, southern Belgium. This is one of the most challenging and extremely important military positions in the world.

- **Giant asteroid ‘99942 Apophis’ will fly past Earth in a decade**

The 340m wide asteroid named 99942 Apophis will fly past Earth like a ‘moving star- like point of light’ on April 13, 2029.

- **Bajrang Punia won gold at Ali Aliev Tournament 2019**

A 25-year old, Bajrang Punia won a gold medal at Ali Aliev Tournament, held at Kaspiysk in Dagestan, Russia. He defeated Russian wrestler Viktor Rassadin in 65-kg category by 13-8. This was his second gold medal in the last 10 days. Last week, Punia won a gold medal in the 65-kg category at the Asian Championship in Xi’an, China. Bajrang Punia currently holds the world No. 1 rank in the 65kg freestyle category.

- **Barcelona and Spain legend footballer Xavi Hernandez announced retirement**

39 years old, Barcelona Midfielder, Xavi Hernandez, has announced his retirement from football by the end of the season 2018-19.

- **Peter Mayhew, who played Chewbacca in Star Wars passed away at 74 in North Texas**



Peter Mayhew Actor Peter Mayhew, well known for portraying Chewbacca the Wookiee in the Star Wars films, has died at the age of 74 at his home in North Texas, U.S.

- **World Press Freedom Day observed on May 3**

World Press Freedom Day is observed annually on May 3 to raise awareness among the international community that freedom of the press and freedom of expression are fundamental human rights.

- **May 3 observed as a National Space Day 2019**

National Space Day is observed on the first Friday of May every year.



May 4th

- **Vodafone Idea collaborates with IBM and signs a multi-million dollar IT deal**

Vodafone Idea Ltd, India's largest telecom operator notified a 5-year multi-million-dollar IT outsourcing deal with IBM (International Business Machines Corporation).

- **According to ADB's report, Asia-Pacific is estimated to grow 5.7% in 2019**

According to Takehiko Nakao, President and Chairperson of Asian Development Bank, the Asia-Pacific region is supposed to grow at 5.7% in 2019 but the rising trade tensions might hinder its growth.

- **London tops cities like Dubai, Singapore for Indian investments with an all-time high record of 52 investment projects in 2018**

London & Partners (L&P), the Mayor of London's promotional agency, in the new report analysis, based on FDI (Foreign Direct Investments) Markets and FDI Intelligence data stated that in 2018, the UK became the top-most nation to attract Indian FDI with 52 projects. US attracted Indian FDI with 51 projects while the UAE with 32 projects.

- **Article on Coalgate won Asian College of Journalism's Award for Investigative Journalism, 2018**

The article titled 'Coalgate 2.0' written by Nileena M S has won the Asian College of Journalism's Award for Investigative Journalism, 2018. The article was published in "The Caravan Magazine" in March 2018.

- **Ministry of Defence approved Indian Navy's Rs 3,600 crore deal for 10 'Kamov Ka-31' Helicopters**

3,600 crore deal for 10 'Kamov Ka-31' Helicopters Ministry of Defence gave approval to Indian Navy to acquire 10 'Kamov Ka-31' Airborne Early Warning and Control Helicopter for a deal worth of Rs 3,600 crore from Russia. These 10 helicopters would be deployed on the aircraft carriers and warships of the Indian Navy including the INS Vikrant and Grigorovich-class frigates.

- **Justice Subhashan Reddy Dies At The Age of 76**



On 1 May 2019, Former Chief Justice of Madras and Kerala High Courts, Justice Subhashan Reddy died at the age of 76 in Gachibowli due to age-related ailments.



May 5th

- **Japan's first privately developed rocket "Momo-3" reached outer space**

A Japanese aerospace start-up Interstellar Technology Inc. has successfully launched a first privately developed rocket 'Momo-3' into space. The unmanned rocket launched from its test site in Taiki on the northern Japanese island of Hokkaido and it reached about 110 km in altitude before falling into the Pacific Ocean after 10 minutes of flight time.

- **Space X launched Falcon-9 rocket for space station resupply mission with Dragon Spacecraft**

Space Exploration Technologies Corp. (Space X) launched its 17th commercial resupply mission to the International Space Station (ISS) by using Falcon 9 rocket with Dragon Spacecraft.

- **Shahid Afridi co-authored his autobiography titled, 'Game Changer' with journalist Wajahat S Khan**

Shahid Afridi, former captain of the 'Pakistan national cricket team' has written his autobiography titled, 'Game Changer' which will unveil answers to the much-contemplated questions about him.

- **May 5, 2019, observed as a World Laughter Day**

World Laughter Day is observed on the first Sunday of May every year and this year first Sunday of May coincide with May 5.

- **XXXVI Feliks Stamm International Boxing Tournament 2019**

The XXXVI Feliks Stamm International Boxing Tournament 2019 was held at Centre of Sport and Recreation in Warsaw, Poland from April 28 to May 5, 2019. The event was organised by the Polish Boxing Association. In this tournament, India won a total 6 medals which includes 2 gold, 1 silver and 3 bronze medal.

Medals won by Indian Boxers

S.No.	Weight Category	Name	Medal
1.	Fly (52-kg)	Gaurav Solanki	Gold



2.	Light (60-kg)	Manish Kaushik	Gold
----	---------------	----------------	------



May 6th

- **FAME-II plan stands to reduce 64% energy needs and 37% carbon needs by 2030: CII**

The Confederation of Indian Industry(CII) has notified certain observations regarding the second phase of the Faster Adoption and Manufacture of (Hybrid and) Electric Vehicles in India (FAME India). It has observed that India can save 64% of anticipated road-based mobility-related energy demand and 37% of carbon emissions by 2030.

- **Nepal's 18 year old girl, Bandana sets Guinness World Records for Longest Dancing**

Nepali teenager, Bandana danced continuously for 126 hours to set a Guinness World Records on "Longest Dancing Marathon by an Individual".

Key Points:

i. Bandana surpassed the record set by Kalamandalam Hemalatha, an Indian, who danced for 123 hours and 15 minutes in 2011.

- **Israel honoured 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War hero Lt. Gen JFR Jacob**

A Jewish, Lieutenant General (retired) Jack Farj Rafael (JFR) Jacob honoured with a plaque on the Wall of Honour at the Ammunition Hill. He fought World War II and India Pakistan war of 1965 and also negotiated the historic surrender of Pakistani troops in Dhaka after the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation war.

After retirement, he became the Governor of two states- Goa and Punjab. He died in 2016 at the age of 92.

- **55-year-old Stevo Pendarovski won North Macedonia's presidential elections**

Backed by North Macedonia's ruling party, Stevo Pendarovski, the 55-year-old former political-science professor won the presidential runoff vote amid promises to push the Balkan state towards NATO (The North Atlantic Treaty Organization) and European Union membership. He will succeed Gjorge Ivanov.

- **Laurentino "Nito" Cortizo emerged as the President of the Republic of Panama**



The Panama Electoral Tribunal announced Laurentino “Nito” Cortizo (with 95% of votes counted) as the winner of Panama’s presidential election. He will succeed Juan Carlos Varela Rodríguez.

- **After 36 years of service, Indian Navy’s frontline missile destroyer, INS Ranjit has been decommissioned**

After 36 years of service, Indian Navy’s frontline missile destroyer, INS Ranjit has been decommissioned at the naval dockyard in Visakhapatnam.

- **INS Vela: Indian Navy’s 4th Scorpene-class made in India submarine launched**

INS Vela, Indian Navy’s 4th Scorpene-class submarine was launched at Mazagon Dockyard in Mumbai. This is the fourth submarine in the series of six submarines under Project 75 built by Mazagon Dock Ltd, Mumbai. The Scorpene-class submarine has been termed as the Kalavari Class.

- **Bajirao, the last captive white tiger at Mumbai’s national park, dies at 18**

The last captive white tiger at the Sanjay Gandhi National Park (SGNP) in Borivali, Mumbai named Bajirao died due to old age related problems at the age of 18. He was born at the SGNP in 2001 to tigress Renuka and tiger Sidharth.

- **Order of St George Award 2019 presented to Sri Sri Ravi Shankar**

On 5th May 2019, Indian spiritual leader, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, was presented with the ‘Order of St. George’ Award for the year 2019 as part of the Commemorative Feast at the Puthuppally St. George Orthodox Church (462-year-old) in Kottayam, Kerala.



May 7th

- **India and Bangladesh agreed to jointly produce film on the life of Mujibur Rahman**

India and Bangladesh in a meeting agreed to jointly produce the film based on the life and works of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and documentary of Bangladesh Liberation War 1971.

- **KVIC distributed 1 lakh bee-boxes under the ‘Honey Mission’ initiative that produced 246 metric tonnes of honey so far**

For the first time in India, under the ‘Honey Mission’ initiative, (KVIC) Khadi and Village Industries Commission (in less than 2 years) distributed more than 1 lakh bee-boxes among farmers and jobless youths across India.

- **Senegal’s lawmakers gives the approval of the removal of the prime minister’s position**

In the very first initiative of President Macky Sall’s 2nd term in office, Senegalese parliament has approved a constitutional reform to remove the post of prime minister.

Key Points:

- The motion was passed with 124 MPs (member of parliament) voting in favour of the motion, while 7 MPs voting against the motion.
- The parliament also supported the legislative alterations, whose prime objective was to prevent the president from dissolving the National Assembly. In doing so, it could no longer raise a motion of no confidence against the government.
- The Opposition parties have rejected the constitutional alterations.
- Macky Sall, in early April, announced the decision for the Prime Minister (Mahammed Boun Abdallah Dionne) to abolish his own job.

- **Mali’s President, Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta named a new government after the Ogossagou Massacre**

Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta, Mali’s president named a new government comprising of 37 members to oversee the formation of a “broad-based” government, under Prime Minister Boubou Cisse, after his predecessor Soumeylou Boubeye Maiga resigned in April.



- **West Indies record ODI cricket's first-ever 350+ score opening stand**

West Indies player John Campbell and Shai Hope created the history by making first-ever 350 plus run opening stand against Ireland. Both players have add 365 runs for the first wicket and also become the only opening pair to score 150 runs each in one innings of a 50-over match. The venue of the match was Clontarf Cricket Club Ground, Dublin, Ireland.

May 8th

- **Finland held the 11th Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting in Rovaniemi and India was re-elected as an Observer to Arctic Council**

On May 7, 2019, Finland held the 11th Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting in Lappi Arena, Rovaniemi, Finland. The dignitaries from the 8 Arctic States had approved the work completed under the 2-year Finnish Chairmanship to enhance sustainable development and environmental conservation in the Arctic region.

India was re-elected as an Observer to Arctic Council and India committed to contributing more to Arctic Council. India had received the Observer status in 2013 during the Kiruna Ministerial meeting in Sweden.

Since the year 2008, India has its Arctic research station, termed as '**Himadri**' in Svalbard, Norway.

The Members of the Arctic Council are: the United States, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, and Sweden.

- **2 Indians among 115 UN personnel staff honoured for laying down their lives in UN peace-service**

The Secretary of United Nations, General Antonio Guterres, accompanied with top UN officials and Peacekeeping personnel paid homage to 115 peacekeepers from 43 different countries who laid down their lives in the service of peace. Among the 115 peacekeepers, 2 Indians were also paid tribute. They were honoured for their sacrifice in the line of duty.

- **Sujatha V Kumar appointed as Head of Marketing for India and South Asia for Visa**

Visa, the global leader in digital payments technology, announced the appointment of Sujatha V Kumar as Head of Marketing for India and South Asia.



- **India's Jagjit Pavadia re-elected to the International Narcotics Control Board(INCB)**

Jagjit Pavadia, an Indian, has been re-elected by the UN Economic and Social Council to a five year term on International Narcotics Control Board with the highest number of votes of 44 in the 54 member council.

- **NR Madhava Menon, father of modern legal education in India, passes away**

On 7th May 2019, Renowned academician and father of modern Indian Legal Education, Dr. Neelakanta Ramakrishna Madhava Menon (NR Madhava Menon) died at a private hospital in Thiruvananthapuram at the age of 84. He was born on 4th May 1935 in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.

Madhava Menon founded the National Law School of India University (NLSIU) in Bengaluru, National Judicial Academy (NJA) in Bhopal and the National University of Judicial Sciences (NUJS) in Kolkata.

May 9th

- **Australian flight carrier, Qantas operated world's first zero-waste flight**

Recently, the Australian flight carrier, Qantas has operated world's first zero waste commercial flight named QF739 from Sydney to Adelaide which disposed all waste through compost, reuse or recycle.

- **P.M. Narendra Modi second most followed politician globally on social media, overtakes Trump**

On 7th May 2019, Digital marketing platform SEMrush reported that Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the most-followed politician in the world on social media with a total audience of 110.9 million on platforms including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Former US President Barack Obama was ranked first with 182.7 million followers.

- **Former SC Judge KS Radhakrishnan appointed as member of Commonwealth Secretariat Arbitral Tribunal**



Former Supreme Court judge, KS Radhakrishnan has been appointed as a member of Commonwealth Secretariat Arbitral Tribunal (CSAT) for a term of 4 year, from 1st of June, 2019 to 31st of May, 2023.

- **WHO partnered with IFBA to eliminate industrially produced trans fat (iTFA) from food supply worldwide by 2023**

WHO (World Health organization) collaborated with the International Food and Beverage Alliance (IFBA) to eliminate industrially produced trans fat (iTFA) from food supply worldwide by 2023.

- **FDA approved first Dengue vaccine named Dengvaxia**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA), United States has approved first vaccine named Dengvaxia for the prevention of dengue disease but with certain conditions that use dengue vaccine only in people who have a previous history of the disease.

- **“ElectionGuard”, an open source software unveiled by Microsoft for secure voting**

Microsoft CEO, Satya Nadella has announced the launch of “ElectionGuard”, a free open-source Software Development Kit(SDK) to help nations to carry out secure and verifiable voting.

- **Amul to sponsor Afghanistan in Cricket World Cup 2019**

Amul has announced to sponsor Afghanistan team in upcoming World Cup 2019 which will be held in England and Wales from May 30, 2019.

- **Renowned Sikh historian and first chronicler of partition Kirpal Singh passes away at 95 in Chandigarh**

The first chronicler of India’s partition and a Sikh historian, Kirpal Singh passed away at his home in Chandigarh after a brief illness.



May 10th

- **Chhattisgarh's first Anti-Naxal Women's Commando unit deployed**

The Chhattisgarh police has deployed first ever Anti-Naxal women's commando unit named 'Danteshwari Ladake' or 'Fighters of Goddess Danteshwari'. These women commandos have inducted in the District Reserve Guard (DRG) which is Chhattisgarh's frontline anti-naxal force.

- **Hyderabad's Rajiv Gandhi International Airport ranked among top 10 in the World-Survey by Air Help**

In a survey conducted by Air Help, Rajiv Gandhi International Airport of Hyderabad has been ranked as the world's 8th Best Airport.

- **Indian Navy undertake group sail exercise with Japan, Philippines and US in South China Sea**

Guided Missile Destroyer, INS Kolkata and Fleet Support Ship, INS Shakti participated in 'Group Sail' exercise with naval ships of Philippines, Japan and United States of America in the disputed South China Sea.

- **TCS becomes India's most valued firm again; surpasses RIL in market-cap**

On May 9th, Indian IT firm, Tata Consultancy Services(TCS) surpassed the Reliance Industries Limited (RIL), led by Mukesh Ambani, in terms of Market capitalisation and became the India's most valued firm by market capitalisation.

- **India gets its first ever ice cafe in Gaya Village at 14,000 feet**

Border Road Organisation officials have created India's first ever ice cafe in the mountain village of Gaya in Ladakh region of Jammu and Kashmir, at 14,000 feet height above sea level, on the famous ManaliLeh Highway. The ice sculpture, resembles a Buddhist meditation place, was created by natural process.

- **Professor, Tijjani Bande, appointed as the President of UN General Assembly**

Nigerian Professor, Tijjani Mohammad Bande, has been appointed as the new President of the United Nations General Assembly(UNGA). He is the second Nigerian to be appointed to this post, prior being Mr. Joseph Nanven Garba(1989-1990). Prof. Tijjani Bande will succeed María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés.



- **A microprocessor named 'AJIT' developed by IIT Bombay**

A group of researchers and professor Manav Desai from Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bombay have developed a microprocessor named 'AJIT' which was indigenously conceptualised, designed, developed and manufactured.

- **Bengal Tigers May Not Survive Impact of Climate Change : UN Report**

A team of researchers from Bangladesh and Australia have claimed that the majestic Royal Bengal Tiger, which dominates the marshy mangrove ecosystem in the Sunderbans forest reserves, is under threat due to climate change and the unprecedented rise in sea levels. It was published in the journal named Science of the Total Environment.



May 11th

- **India and United Kingdom agreed to strengthen ties on Indo-Pacific Cooperation**

India and United Kingdom (UK) hold Foreign Office consultations in which both countries have agreed to strengthen their ties in the field of Indo-Pacific cooperation, climate change, disaster resilience, development in third world countries and others. Foreign Secretary, Vijay Gokhale led the Indian delegation and Sir Simon McDonald, Permanent Under-Secretary Foreign and Commonwealth Office of British government led the UK delegation.

- **United Nations to hold Ocean Conference 2020 in Portugal**

United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) has decided to hold Ocean Conference 2020 in Lisbon, Portugal from June 2 to 6, 2020 with a theme of “Scaling up ocean action based on science and innovation for the implementation of Goal 14: stocktaking, partnerships and solutions.” It will be co-hosted by the Governments of Portugal and Kenya.

- **US government released Global Health Security Strategy**

The US government has released first of its kind “Global Health Security Strategy”. The objective is to prevent, detect and respond to threats from infectious diseases occurring naturally or accidentally and make efforts to help improve the world’s ability to stop and contain deadly outbreaks before they spread to other countries.

- **Japan has begun testing the ALFA-X version of its fastest-ever Shinkansen bullet train that could reach 400 km per hour (249 mph)**

Japan has begun testing the ALFA-X version of its fastest-ever Shinkansen bullet train that could reach 400 km per hour (249 mph).

- **Reliance acquired Hamleys in a cash deal of worth USD 88.6 million**

Reliance Brands, a subsidiary of Mukesh Ambani led Reliance Industries (RIL) has acquired 100% stake in British toy major Hamleys Global Holdings Limited from Hong Kong based C Banner International in a cash deal of worth USD 88.6 million (Rs 620 crore).

- **India receives its first Apache Guardian attack helicopter in Boeing’s production facility in Mesa, Arizona US**



The Indian Air Force legally received its 1st Apache Guardian attack helicopter AH-64E (I) during a ceremony at the Boeing production facility in Mesa, Arizona, US (United States). This first attack helicopter in India's defence arsenal was received by Air Marshal AS Butola, IAF.

- **UNEP Report states that India & China tops a list of nations for illegal sand mining**

According to the recent report released by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) titled 'Sand and Sustainability: finding new solutions for environmental governance of global sand resources', India and China top a list of nations where illegal sand mining has become a key environmental issue.

- **World Migratory Bird Day 2019 celebrated on May 11**

The World Migratory Bird Day for 2019 is observed on May 11. It is celebrated twice in the year, which falls on the second Saturday in May and October. In 2019, it will be celebrated on May 11 and October 10. The theme for this year is "Protect Birds: Be the Solution to Plastic Pollution!"



May 12th

- **According to WHO's report, India faces severe shortage of healthcare providers, especially in Bihar, Jharkhand, U.P. & Rajasthan**

The WHO (World Health Organization) has published a research paper titled 'Forecasting the future need and gaps in requirements for public health professionals in India upto 2026' in the 'WHO South-East Asia Journal of Public Health', in which it states that India faces critical shortage of healthcare professionals, especially in Bihar, Jharkhand, U.P. (Uttar Pradesh) & Rajasthan which have the worst hit ratio as compared to Delhi, Kerala, Punjab and Gujarat which are in a relatively better position.

- **2019 Meetings of the COPs to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions held in Switzerland**

In Geneva International Conference Centre (CICG) Geneva, Switzerland, the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention (BC COP-14), the 9th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention (RC COP-9) and the 9th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention (SC COP-9) held from April 29 to May 10, 2019.

The theme of the meeting was "Clean Planet, Healthy People: Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste".

- **The 58th Venice Biennale is held from 11th May to 24th November 2019 at Venice, Italy**

After a long gap of 8 years, India has again marked its presence at the 58th Venice Biennale, Italy which will be held from 11th May till 24th November 2019 (6 month's period). The title of the exhibition is "May You Live In Interesting Times". It is curated by Ralph Rugoff.

- **Chhaya Sharma, who oversaw Nirbhaya rape case receives McCain Institute Award 2019**

On 10th May 2019, IPS officer Chhaya Sharma, who headed the investigation team of the infamous Nirbhaya gang-rape and murder case, has been conferred with the 2019 McCain Institute Award for Courage and Leadership.



- **Indian actress Dia Mirza and Alibaba Chief Jack Ma are among the new 17 UN advocates for SDGs**

The United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has appointed 17 new advocates to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These include the Indian actress Dia Mirza and the Chief of Alibaba Group, Jack Ma.

- **World's first women's cricket magazine "CRICZONE" launched**

Recently, the world's first exclusive women's cricket magazine "CRICZONE" released with Indian women's cricket team vice-captain Smriti Mandhana featured as the cover story. The publisher of the magazine is Yash Lahoti.

- **India to attend G-7 meet in France**

The G-7 groups together the US, Britain, France, Italy, Canada, Japan and Germany

India will be attending the Group of 7 industrialised nations meet organised by France in Biarritz in August along with Australia, Chile and South Africa, in a sign of the recognition of India's growing economic heft in the international arena.



May 13th

- **NABARD launched Nabventures- its maiden fund to give support to agriculture, food, rural start-ups**

A subsidiary of NABARD (The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development), Nabventures notified its first time funding termed 'NABVENTURES Fund I' which is a Rs 700-crore venture capital fund for equity investments to provide support for agriculture, food and rural start-ups (which would help improve rural livelihoods).

- **HDFC ERGO General Insurance Company launched 'Mosquito Disease Protection Policy' which will cover people against common mosquito-borne diseases**

India's 3rd-largest non-life insurance provider in the private sector, HDFC ERGO General Insurance Company launched a scheme termed 'Mosquito Disease Protection Policy' which will cover a person against common mosquito-borne diseases, namely, Dengue Fever, Malaria, Chikungunya, Japanese Encephalitis, Kala-azar, Lymphatic Filariasis and Zika Virus.

- **U.S. Department of Energy creates a new 100% recyclable plastic named Polydiketoenamine(PDK)**

U.S. Department of Energy's Lawrence Berkeley National Lab in California created a new 100% recyclable plastic named Polydiketoenamine(PDK). This can be broken down and used without the loss of quality. It can be formed into a different shape and colour. Plastics are made of polymers, chains of hydrogen and carbons.

- **Indian Premier League 2019**

The 12th edition of Indian Premier League (IPL) was played from March 23 to May 12, 2019. Total 8 teams have participated in the event. The event last for 48 days and total 60 matches played in the whole tournament.

Mumbai Indians won the 4th IPL title after defeating Chennai Super Kings by 1 run at Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium, Hyderabad

- **Lewis Hamilton grabs Spanish Grand Prix**

On May 12, 2019, Lewis Hamilton won the Spanish Grand Prix in Barcelona. He celebrated the 76th win of his Formula 1 career, third victory of 2019 and fourth in Spain following victories in 2014, 2017 and 2018.





May 14th

- **India hosted a 2-day ministerial meeting of WTO in New Delhi to discuss issues facing the multi-lateral trading system**

India hosted a 2-day (May 13-14, 2019) ministerial meeting of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in New Delhi in which ministers from 16 developing nations and 6 least developed nations had participated to discuss major problems and challenges facing the multi-lateral trading system.

- **For the first time ISRO launched a 2-week long summer vacation residential programme termed 'India Young Scientist Programme' (Yuvika-2019)**

ISRO launched a maiden 2-week long (13th May 2019 to 26th May 2019) summer vacation residential programme termed 'India Young Scientist Programme' (Yuvika-2019) or 'Yuva Vaigyanic Karyakram' in line with the central government's vision of 'Jai Vigyan, Jai Anusandhan'. This two-week-long programme is regarded as "Catch them young". The selected students from 29 states and 7 Union Territories across India would be able to avail this novel programme.

- **The Central Government has extended the ban on LTTE for an additional 5 years with immediate effect**

Under sub-sections (1) and (3) of section 3 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (37 of 1967), the Central Government has extended the ban on the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) for an additional 5 years with immediate effect.

About LTTE:

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (founded in May 1976 by Velupillai Prabhakaran) was a Tamil militant and political organization that was based in north-eastern Sri Lanka.

i. LTTE's main objective was to secure an independent state of Tamil Eelam in the north and east in response to policies of the state of the Sri Lankan governments towards Tamils, for which they waged a Civil War.

- **Paytm collaborated with Citibank to launch its 1st credit card called 'Paytm First Card'**



The digital payments company Paytm has collaborated with Citibank and launched its 1st credit card called 'Paytm First Card'.

- **CEAT International Cricket Awards 2019: Virat Kohli and Smriti Mandhana won International Cricketers of Year Award**

On May 13, 2019, During the CEAT Cricket Rating (CCR) Awards 2019, Indian skipper Virat Kohli has bagged the International Cricketer of the Year Award and Smriti Mandhana has won International Woman Cricketer of Year Award. Virat Kohli has also won the Best Batsman Award.

- **India's GS Lakshmi became the first woman female ICC match referee**

A 51-year old former Indian cricketer GS Lakshmi became the first ever, female match referee, to be included into the International Cricket Council (ICC)'s International Panel of Match Referees. Earlier, Claire Polosak had become the first ever woman umpire to stand in a men's ODI.

- **Former SC Justice MB Lokur appointed to Supreme Court of Fiji for three years**

Former Supreme Court judge, Justice Madan Bhimrao Lokur has been appointed to Supreme Court of Fiji's non-resident panel for 3 years.

Every year, the Supreme Court of Fiji conducts three sessions and Justice MB Lokur will be a part of August session which will begin on August 15 and conclude on August 30, 2019.

- **Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) successfully conducted the flight test of ABHYAS in Odisha**

On May 13, 2019, the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) has successfully conducted the flight test of ABHYAS, a High-speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) drone which is to be used for autonomous flying with the help of an autopilot.

- **NASA dubbed its 2024 Mission to Moon as 'Artemis'**

On May 13, 2019, the US Space Agency announced that the National Aeronautics and Space Organization (NASA) is set for its Mission to Moon "Artemis" which is to be achieved by 2024. Earlier, its goal to achieve this feat was by 2028. The Mission is named 'Artemis' after the Greek mythological goddess of the Moon and twin sister to Apollo.



- **Sana Mir became highest wicket-taking women spinner in ODI**

A 33-year old, Pakistan's off-spinner Sana Mir became the highest wicket-taking women spinner in One Day International (ODI) cricket.



May 15th

- **Infosys Foundation's registration cancelled over FCRA Violation**

The Home Ministry has cancelled the registration of NGO Infosys Foundation under the Foreign Contribution (Regulations) Act (FCRA) for violating the norms of receiving foreign grants. Under the FCRA Act, all non-government organisations (NGOs) have to mandatorily register under the act.

- **Nepali Sherpa Kami Rita climbs Mt. Everest for the 23rd time; Broke his own record**

On May 15, 2019, 49 year old Sherpa climber from Nepal, Kami Rita climbed Mt. Everest for the 23rd time and broke his own record for most summits on Mt. Everest. He successfully climbed the mountain from the Nepal side.

- **Captain AaroHi Pandit from Mumbai became 1st woman in the world to cross the Atlantic Ocean solo in a LSA**

A 23-year-old pilot from Mumbai, Captain AaroHi Pandit, became first woman in the world to cross the Atlantic Ocean solo in a Light Sports Aircraft (LSA).

- **Sanjiv Puri appointed as New Chairman of ITC**

A 56-year old Sanjiv Puri, Managing Director of ITC Limited has been appointed as the chairman of ITC.

- **A K Sikri, former Supreme Court judge appointed as the chairperson of the News Broadcasting Standards Authority**

The News Broadcasters Association (NBA) notified that Arjan Kumar Sikri, former Supreme Court judge has been appointed as the chairperson of the News Broadcasting Standards Authority.

- **White-throated rail, extinct bird of 136,000 Years Ago is "Back From the Dead"**

The white-throated rail (*Dryolimnas cuvieri*) which was extinct for more than 136,000 years reappeared on Indian Ocean Island. This new finding was published in the Zoological Journal of the Linnean Society. It is now the last species of flightless bird left in the Indian Ocean.



- **Manchester City defeated Brighton to retain Premier League title**

Recently, Manchester City defeated Brighton by 4-1 at the Amex Stadium, UK in Premier League title match. Manchester City became the first team to retain the title in last 10 years since Manchester United had done the same in 2009.

- **India to co-chair Consultative Group of GFDRR**

India was unanimously chosen by member countries as next co-chair of Consultative Group (CG) of Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) for fiscal year 2020.

- **Indian Rhino will soon have DNA database**

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has undertaken a project to create DNA Profiles of all rhinos present in India.



May 16th

- **India to host Army Scouts Masters Contest for First Time**

Key Highlights

About: The Army Scouts Masters Competition is a part of International Army Games steered by Russia. This is the 5th edition of International Army games. India will be a co-host of Army International Scout Masters Competition 2019, which marks first such edition in international competition in which a country is a host as well as a participant.

- **Arunachal has 35% of India's Graphite Deposits: GSI Report**

The Geological Survey of India (GSI) in its report revealed that about 35 % of India's total Graphite reserves is found in Arunachal Pradesh. This is the highest found in country.

- **Women referees for AFC Cup clash**

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) recently announced that for the first time in history an all-female referee team will take charge of a Men's Continental Club Cup clash.

- **ICC World Cup 2019: First Time an Anticorruption officer for each team**

For the first time in world cup history, each participating team at upcoming ICC World Cup 2019 will have a dedicated anti-corruption officer attached with it. The move is to deliver a corruption-free tournament.

- **RBI releases Vision Document (2019-2021) for e-Payment System**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has released a vision document to ensure a more convenient, affordable, quick, safer and secure e-payment system. The RBI's vision document is titled 'Payment And Settlement Systems In India: Vision 2019 – 2021'

- **US's Berkeley Lab creates PDK, a Fully Recyclable Plastic**

A team of researchers at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory of United States' (US) Department of Energy's (DOE) has designed a fully recyclable plastic which can be disassembled into its constituent parts at molecular level. The name of newly created recyclable plastic is **Poly (Diketoenamine), or PDK.**



- **A Lancet study evaluated that India had the highest mortality rate among children under five years of age in 2015**

Researchers at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, US (United States) evaluated India's state-level information on the causes of casualty among children under 5 years of age for the years 2000-2015, to find that India had progressed from reducing the annual mortality among children under 5 years from 2.5 million in 2000 to 1.2 million in 2015 which, still was the highest in the world.

- **Council of European Chambers of Commerce(CEUCC) to honour Anil Kapoor for promoting Children's Rights**

As a part of Europe Day celebrations, the Council of European Chambers of Commerce(CEUCC) in India and European Union(EU) delegation will felicitate Indian actor Anil Kapoor for promoting Children's Rights and his effort to protect the rights of girls in collaboration with Plan India and the European Union.

- **Cyril Ramaphosa re-elected as President of South Africa**

Cyril Ramaphosa's party, African National Congress (ANC) won South African elections with majority and secured 57.51 percent votes and Cyril Ramaphosa elected as South African President. Last year in February 2018, Cyril Ramaphosa elected as South African President after President Jacob Zuma resigned from the post due to charges of corruption.

- **Doordarshan launched online Souvenir Store on Amazon India**

Public service broadcaster, Doordarshan has partnered with online retail giant Amazon India to launch a Souvenir Store. The store will offer a whole range of merchandise which includes T-shirts, coffee mugs and sippers with the tagline "I am in your DNA, I am your Doordarshan".

- **Scientists of Germany found a new bird like Dinosaur "Alcmonavis Poeschli"**

Researchers in Germany have unearthed a new bird-like Dinosaur in Bavaria, Germany and named it as "Alcmonavis Poeschli". The lead author of the study is Oliver Rauhut from Ludwig-Maximilians University's (LMU) Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences.

- **China set to host the Asian Cup 2023 after withdrawal from South Korea**

Recently, the Korea Football Association (KFA) had withdrawn their bid to host Asian Cup 2023 which leave the sole other bidders China with a free run to become hosts.



- **Former 23rd Prime Minister of Australia, Bob Hawke passed away aged 89 at Sydney**

On May 16, 2019, the former 23rd Prime Minister of Australia, Bob Hawke passed away aged 89 at his home in Sydney, Australia. He was unwell for months. He led the Labor Party from 1983 to 1991.



May 17th

- **Retd. Justice Madan Lokur Appointed Judge of Supreme Court of Fiji**

The Retired judge of Indian Supreme Court Justice Madan B Lokur has been appointed to the Supreme Court of Fiji.

About The Appointment

Justice Lokur is appointed as a judge of Supreme Court of Fiji's non-resident panel. He will assume charge of his new role on 15 August 2019.

Tenure: He has been appointed in new role for a period of three years.

- **Nepal's Kami Rita scales Mount Everest for Record 23rd time**

A 49-year-old veteran Nepali Sherpa named Kami Rita scaled Mount Everest for 23rd time, breaking his own world record. He reached atop the world's highest peak which is 8,850-metres high.

- **India Signs 'Christchurch Call to Action' Initiative**

India has recently joined a major global initiative called 'Christchurch call to action' to combat extremism and terrorism online and make internet a safe and secure place. It was signed by a group of governments and major tech companies at a summit in Paris.

- **UN Sasakawa Award 2019: Awarded to Pramod Kumar Mishra**

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) conferred 'Sasakawa Award 2019' for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) to Pramod Kumar Mishra, Additional Principal Secretary to Prime Minister of India. The Sasakawa Awardee was announced at recent Award Ceremony during 6th Session of Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (GPDRR) 2019 held at Geneva, Switzerland.



May 18th

- **M. Pei, a pillar of modern architecture, dies at 102 in US**

Ieoh Ming Pei, the globe-trotting, versatile, preeminent Chinese-US architect who created a distinct brand of modern building design with his sharp lines and exquisite structures, has died at age of 102 years.

- **Taiwan: First Asian country to Legalise Same-Sex Marriage**

On May 17, 2019 in a landmark decision, Taiwan became the first country in Asia to legalise same-sex marriage thus giving gay couples the 'Right to Marry'.

Geographical Facts: Taiwan

It is officially called as Republic of China (ROC) and is a self-governing island nation in East Asia.

- **US President unveils Merit-Based Immigration System**

The United States President Donald Trump has proposed rolling out of a new immigration plan named 'merit-based immigration system'.

- **CTBTO has offered India an 'Observer' status and access to IMS data**

CTBTO (The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organisation) has offered India an 'Observer' status and access to the International Monitoring System (IMS) data. CTBT is a global treaty that runs IMS which constantly monitors the Earth for nuclear explosions and shares evaluative findings with its member states. CTBTO's headquarters is in Vienna, Austria.

- **The 26th edition of Singapore India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX) held in Singapore**

INS Kolkata (being designed and built in India, it is an advanced stealth destroyer capable of engaging multiple threats from the air, sea and underwater) and INS Shakti (is a fleet support ship that provides fuel, provisions and munitions to warships at sea), the 2 warships of the Indian Navy participated in a 3-day Asia Pacific naval and maritime event titled the International



Maritime Defence Exhibition Asia (IMDEX Asia-2019) (it commenced on May 14, 2019) held in Changi Exhibition Centre, Singapore.

- **Saudi Arabia approves permanent residency for first time**

On May 15, 2019, for the first time, the Cabinet of Saudi Arabia approved to give permanent residency to certain expatriates by allowing them to own real estates. They are eligible to reside with their families without a Saudi sponsor(Kafeel). This new system is named as the “Privileged Iqama”.

- **Rs 70,000 crore NPA recovered via IBC in FY19**

According to Crisil Ratings (formerly Credit Rating Information Services of India Limited) report, in the year 2018-19, Rs 70,000 crore bad loans were recovered through the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) with a recovery rate of 43 percent in 94 cases.

- **Indian Coast Guard Ship ‘Vigraha’ decommissioned at Vishakhapatnam**

Indian Coast Guard Ship (ICGS) ‘Vigraha’ decommissioned at Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. It is a frontline offshore patrol served for 29 years from 1990 to 2019.

- **India’s Organic State, Sikkim celebrated its Statehood Day on May 16**

India’s Organic State, Sikkim celebrated its 44th Statehood Day on May 16. On May 16, 1975, Sikkim was officially merged into the union of India. It was the 22nd state of India. The first Chief Minister of the state was Kazi Lhendup Dorjee.

- **‘Golden Card’ PR Scheme: launched by UAE**

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) launched ‘Golden Card’ Permanent Residency Scheme in an attempt to woo wealthy individuals and exceptional talents from all over the world. Golden Card is open to investors and ‘exceptional talents’ like scientists, engineers, doctors, students and artists.



May 19th

- **Nilekani Panel on Digital Payments submits report to RBI**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) appointed committee on 'suggestions on promoting digital payment' has submitted its report to RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das. The committee was headed by Nandan Nilekani, also known as Aadhaar Architect.

Background: In January 2019 RBI had set up a five-member panel headed by Nilekani, on deepening digital payments with a view of encouraging digitisation of payments and enhancing financial inclusion via digitisation.

- **India delivers First Pair of Mi-24 helicopters to Afghanistan**

India recently handed over two Mi-24 attack helicopters to Afghanistan. The helicopters were formally handed over by Indian Ambassador to the acting Minister of National Defence of Afghanistan at Kabul Air Force base.

- **Nancy Pelosi: receives JFK Profile in Courage Award 2019**

The USA's House of Representatives (lower house of US) Speaker Nancy Pelosi was honoured with 2019 John F Kennedy Profile in Courage Award.

- **NPPA reduces Prices of 9 Non-Scheduled Cancer Drugs by 87%**

The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has reduced the prices of 9 non-scheduled cancer drugs by up to 87%. This decision is in continuation of nodal agency's efforts to bring down drugs prices.

About NPPA

It was established by a Government of India Resolution in 1997. It is an office attached to Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP), Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers.

It is headquartered in New Delhi.

- **ISRO announces Seven Mega Missions**

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), recently announced its planned seven mega missions, including Chandrayaan-2 (India's second lunar exploration mission) which will be



conducted over a period of next 10 years. The ISRO has also prepared a roadmap for next 30 years.

Key Highlights

Out of seven missions Chandrayaan-2, will be flight ready by May 2019 and its spacecraft will be launched in July 2019. The rest six are classified as:

Defined Missions – which include XPoSat (to study cosmic radiation in 2020) and Aditya-L1(to the Sun in 2021).

Undefined Missions – which include missions which are still in planning stage namely Mangalyaan-2 (or Mars Orbiter Mission-2 in 2022), Lunar Polar Exploration (or Chandrayaan-3 in 2024), Venus mission (in 2023), Exoworlds (exploration outside the solar system in 2028).

- **Centre issued Drought Advisory to Six States**

The Union Government has issued a drought advisory to six southern and western states and has asked them to use water judiciously. This was issued amid rising concern of water storage in dams of states which dropped to a critical level.

About: The 'Water' subject falls under the state list mentioned in Indian Constitution and recent drought advisory recommends states to use water for drinking purpose only till dams are replenished.

- **SIMBEX-2019: scheduled from 16 May to 22 May 2019**

SIMBEX (Singapore India Maritime Bilateral Exercise) is an annual bilateral naval exercise between India and Singapore. It is being held from 16 May to 22 May 2019.

SC Verdict: Foreigners Tribunal decision will prevail over NRC

The Supreme Court of India has held that a Foreigner Tribunal's order declaring a person as an illegal foreigner will be binding and will prevail over government decision to include or exclude name from National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam.



- **e-Vidhan: Kerala Assembly to Digitize all its Records**

The Kerala Legislative Assembly recently announced an initiative to digitize all its records and proceedings under its ambitious project called E-Vidhan which enables state legislature to go fully digital and completely paperless.



May 20th

- **NASA: finds Evidence of Water on Ultima Thule**

NASA has found evidence of a unique mixture of water ice, methanol, and organic molecules on Ultima Thule's surface. This mixture is very different from most icy objects explored previously by spacecraft till date. Ultima Thule, is a Greco-Latin term which means a distant unknown world.

- **Delhi HC: United Nation not State under Article 12**

In a recent judgement the Delhi High court (HC) ruled that United Nations Organization (UNO) is not 'State' in terms of Article 12 of the Indian Constitution and thus it is not amenable to its jurisdiction under Article 226.

About The Case

Case: The Delhi HC judgment adjudicated the petition filed concerning immunity enjoyed by UNO under United Nations (Privileges and Immunities) Act, 1947.

- **UGC directs Universities: observe 21 May as Anti-Terrorism Day**

The University Grants Commission (UGC, the higher education regulator) has directed universities and higher educational institutions (HEIs) in India to observe 21 May as Anti-Terrorism Day so as to wean youth away from terrorism.

- **Japan's 2nd Highest National Award conferred to Shyam Saran**

Former Indian Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran is selected for Japan's Second Highest National Award called 'The Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star'.

About The Order of the Rising Sun

It is the Japanese government's Second Highest National Honour. It was established by Japanese Emperor Meiji in 1875.

It is awarded for an exceptional civil or military merit.



'Formula One' Legend: Niki Lauda dies at 70

Three-time Formula One (F1) World champion Niki Lauda dies in Vienna at the age of 70. He underwent a lung transplant in August 2018.



May 21st

- **UN honors Late Chancy Chitete with Highest Peacekeeping Award**

The Malawian soldier Chancy Chitete will be honoured with the United Nation's (UN) highest peacekeeping award, dubbed as "Captain Mbaye Diagne Medal for Exceptional Courage". He will be awarded posthumously in New York, US on May 24 2019.

- **Vice President calls for protecting Ongole Cattle Breed**

Vice President Naidu asserted that cattle wealth was national wealth. He pointed out that Brazil which had imported these cattle and now produced hybrid Ongoles is gaining huge revenue through its export.

- **UN Dag Hammarskjöld Medal: awarded to Late Jitender Kumar**

Indian peacekeeper, Late Jitender Kumar, an Indian Police Officer, is among the 119 military, police and civilian personnel who will be honoured with this year's prestigious UN medal called Dag Hammarskjöld Medal for courage and sacrifice in line of duty.

India is the 4th largest contributor of uniformed personnel (Blue Helmet) to UNPKF. It is currently contributing more than 6,400 military and police personnel to UN peace operations in West Asia, Western Sahara, Congo, Lebanon, Abyei, Cyprus, Haiti, and South Sudan.



May 22nd

- **Man Booker International Prize: Jokha Alharthi winner**

Jokha Alharthi, an author from Oman won the prestigious Man Booker International Prize for her Arabic novel “Celestial Bodies“.

About Jokha Alharthi

The Omani author won Man Booker International Prize for her Arabic novel titled “Celestial Bodies”. It is a story of three sisters of a desert country confronting its slave-owning past and complex modern world.

She became the first Arabic language writer to win this award.

About Man Booker International Prize

It is an international literary award sponsored by the ‘Man Group’, which is the same organisation that gives Man Booker Prize for fiction. It is counterpart to Man Booker Prize for English-language novels.

- **22 May: International Day for Biological Diversity observed**

The International Day for Biological Diversity (IDB) was observed on 22 May 2019. The day is celebrated every year to increase understanding and awareness about biodiversity issues.

- **Bhawana Kanth: 1st Woman IAF Pilot to qualify for Combat Missions**

Flight Lieutenant Bhawana Kanth scripted history by becoming first woman pilot of Indian Air Force (IAF) to qualify to undertake combat missions on a fighter jet.

About Bhawana Kanth

She is from the first batch of women fighter pilots of the IAF and joined the fighter squadron in November 2017.

For the first time she flew solo in a MiG-21 Bison, in March 2018 and became second woman pilot of the Indian Air Force to fly solo. The 25-year-old flew from Ambala Air Force Station to achieve the feat.



Note

Within a year of government decision to open fighter stream for women on an experimental basis, three women namely Avani Chaturvedi, Mohana Singh and Kanth were commissioned as flying officers in July 2016.

The IAF has already selected next batch of its three women trainee pilots for fighter stream.

- **Supreme Court gets full strength of Judges**

Supreme Court has reached its full sanctioned strength of 31 with appointment of 4 new judges to the apex court. The total sanctioned strength of Supreme Court is 31 (30 + 1), which includes 30 Supreme Court Judges and 1 Chief Justice of India (CJI). The length of their term is from their joining till they retire at the age of 65.

The four newly appointed judges are-

Justice Aniruddha Bose– His parent High Court is Calcutta HC. He is Chief Justice of Jharkhand HC and stands at number 12 in all-India seniority of judges.

Justice Surya Kant– is incumbent Chief Justice of Himachal Pradesh HC.

Justice A S Bopanna– His parent high court is Karnataka HC. He is Chief Justice of Gauhati HC and stands at number 36 in all-India seniority of judges.

Justice B R Gavai – is a judge of the Bombay High Court. Once sworn in, he could become the Chief Justice of India in May, 2025 and will be second Dalit CJI after K G Balakrishnan who retired on May 11, 2010.

- **BrahMos Air Launched Missile test fired from a Su-30 MKI**

The Indian Air Force (IAF) successfully fired aerial version of supersonic BrahMos cruise missile from a Su-30 MKI fighter aircraft.

- **JF-17 Fighter Jet: delivered to PAF by China**

China has delivered the first overhauled multi-role JF-17 Thunder fighter jet the Pakistan Air Force (PAF). The delivery was part of a project undertaken by two nations more than a decade ago for development and manufacture of the aircraft.



May 23rd

- **UNGA resolution demands UK withdrawal from Chagos Archipelago**

The United Nation General Assembly (UNGA) passed a non-binding resolution asking United Kingdom (UK) to return Chagos Archipelago in Indian Ocean to Mauritius.

Key Highlights

Background: On February 2019 International Court of Justice (ICJ) issued an advisory opinion on the legal consequences of separation of Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius in 1965 when latter was a British colony. It also ruled the UK's decolonisation of the Indian Ocean islands was unlawful. This advisory opinion was endorsed by UNGA.

- **WHO: Algeria and Argentina declared Malaria-Free**

The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared Algeria and Argentina as 'Malaria-Free' countries after no cases of indigenous transmission of disease were recorded.

- **ADB to finance Railways Track Electrification Project in India**

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has signed an agreement to electrify railway tracks in India under Railways Track Electrification Project. As per agreement ADB will provide \$750 million (equivalent in Indian Rupee) long-term financing to Indian Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC).

- **ILO Report: Gender Diversity good for business and Economy**

According to a recent report released by United Nation's (UN) International Labour Organization (ILO), Companies that improve gender diversity especially at top perform better and rake in higher profits.

Key Highlights

About: The report released by UN's ILO is titled as "Women in Business and Management: The business case for change."



- **UNESCO: Women still under-represented in Science and Technology**

According to analysis by The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), women remain considerably under-represented across STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) studies and careers.

Key Highlights

Statistics: According to UNESCO, globally only 29% of those in science research and development (R&D) are women, with a low 19% in south and west Asia and high 48% in central Asia.

Reason: Most young women do not identify with STEM studies or careers and assume that these subjects would not align with their desire to be creative and make an impact in world.

- **UN Report: India to grow at 7.1% in 2020**

According to a United Nations' report titled World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) Report 2019 Mid-year Update, India's economy is projected to grow at 7.1 % in fiscal year 2020 which will be backed by strong domestic consumption and investment.

- **China continues to use Banned Ozone-Depleting CFC: Study**

According to a recent research published in journal Nature, China continues to use the banned ozone depleting chemical called **CFC-11** in violation of Montreal Protocol.

About Montreal Protocol

The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (a protocol to the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer) is an international treaty designed to protect the ozone layer by phasing out the production of numerous substances that are responsible for ozone depletion.

Signed: 26 August 1987

Condition: Ratification by 20 states

- **High-Level Committee submits recommendations on Crude Oil Imports**

A High-Level Committee constituted by Centre has submitted its recommendations to Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas on bringing down India's dependence on crude oil imports.



Key Highlights

Composition: The High-Level Committee constituted by the Centre consisted of Dr Anil Kakodkar, an eminent Scientist and Sidharth Pradhan, an expert on financial and tax issues.



May 24th

- **NASA unveils schedule for 'Artemis' 2024 Mission**

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) of United States (US) has unveiled the calendar for its forthcoming "Artemis" program.

Key Highlights

Artemis Program: The mission will return astronauts to Moon for first time in past 50 years, including eight scheduled launches and a mini-station in lunar orbit by 2024.

The schedule for Artemis Programme is as follows:

Artemis 1: It is planned for 2020. It will be an uncrewed flight test mission around Moon. It will demonstrate NASA's capability of sending crew spaceship to lunar orbit ahead of its return to surface of Moon.

About Artemis Mission

ARTEMIS is abbreviation for Acceleration, Reconnection, Turbulence and Electrodynamics of Moon's Interaction with the Sun. It is NASA's next mission to Moon.

It is named Artemis after Greek mythological Goddess of Moon and also twin sister to Apollo (the namesake of Apollo program which sent 12 American astronauts to Moon between 1969 and 1972).

Objective: It consists of a spacecraft to measure what happens when Sun's radiation hits our rocky moon, where there is no magnetic field to protect it.

- **NewSpace India Limited: ISRO's new Commercial Arm**

The Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) new commercial arm called NewSpace India Limited (NSIL) was officially inaugurated in Bengaluru.

About NewSpace India Limited (NSIL)

Background: on 6 March 2019, the Department of Space (DoS) registered its second commercial entity called NSIL in ISRO. The first commercial venture of DoS was Antrix Corporation Limited, which was set up in September 1992 to market products and services of Indian Space



Research Organisation (ISRO). The NSIL was incorporated for commercially utilising research and development (R&D) activities carried out by ISRO in area of space.

Capital: NSIL is provided an authorised share capital worth Rs.100 crore and initial paid up capital of Rs.10 crore.

Objective: NSIL's main objective is to scale up industry participation in Indian space programmes.

- **Sahara: Hostel for the 'Veer Naris'**

Lt. Governor of Delhi Anil Bajjal, inaugurated the Sahara Naval Hostel for the 'Veer Naris' at Vasant Kunj in New Delhi.



May 25th

- **IAF's AN-32 Aircraft Certified to Operate on Indigenous Bio-Jet Fuel**

The Indian Air Force's (IAF's) AN-32 aircraft was formally fleet certified to fly on blended aviation fuel which contain up to 10% of indigenous bio-jet fuel.

Key Highlights

About: The Russian made AN-32 aircraft is IAF's formidable workhorse. It received the approval certificate for flying on blended aviation fuel at the aero-engine test facilities at Chandigarh.

- **Sudirman Cup 2019: China beats Japan**

In Sudirman Cup Badminton title 2019 China beats Japan in men's doubles, women's singles and men's singles.

- **Swansea University International Dylan Thomas Prize 2019: Guy Gunaratne**

Sri Lankan writer Guy Gunaratne was announced as the winner of 2019's Swansea University International Dylan Thomas Prize and received the winning prize sum of £30,000. He won the award for his debut novel 'In Our Mad and Furious City'.



May 26th

- **Indian Army officer appointed Commander of UNMISS**

Indian Army's Lieutenant General Shailesh Tinaikar was appointed the new force commander of UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) by UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres.

About Lieutenant General Shailesh Tinaikar

He is a decorated Indian Army officer who has had over 34 years of long distinguished career with Indian Armed Forces.

- **ISSF World Cup Rifle: Apurvi Chandela wins Gold**

India's Apurvi Chandela won gold in women's 10m Air Rifle at ISSF World Cup Rifle held in Munich, Germany.

Key Highlights

Apurvi Chandela of India beat Wang Luyao of China with a score of 251 to win gold medal in 10m Air Rifle event at the 2019's third International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup Rifle/Pistol stage held in Munich (Germany).

- **SpaceX launches First 60 satellites of its 'Starlink' Constellation**

SpaceX launched a rocket carrying the first 60 satellites of its 'Starlink' constellation, from Cape Canaveral, Florida in US. The SpaceX's new array of Starlink communication satellites is intended to provide Internet from space

Key Highlights

Launch Vehicle: The launch was conducted by SpaceX's Falcon 9 rockets which began to release the satellites at an altitude of 280 miles (450 kilometers).

Orbit Position: The satellites later separated and used their thrusters to take up their positions in a relatively low orbit of 340 miles (550 kilometers).

The satellite orbit is slightly higher than International Space Station (ISS), but below the majority of terrestrial satellites placed. The highest of terrestrial satellites sit in a geostationary orbit of 22,400 miles (36,000 kilometers).



Satellite Features: Each of satellites weighs only 500 pounds (227 kilograms). They were built in-house in Redmond, near Seattle in US. Their weight makes them the heaviest payload carried aloft by SpaceX to date.

Starlink's constellation: will become operational once over 800 satellites will be activated, which will require at least 12 launches carrying similar payloads. The 60 launched satellites are among the first of a planned 12,000-satellite megaconstellation with aim to provide high-speed internet service from space to customers around the globe.

Significance: This launch made SpaceX an early forerunner, along with its rival OneWeb, a startup, but way ahead of Amazon's Project Kuiper, the brainchild of Jeff Bezos.

About SpaceX

The US California-based Space Exploration Technologies, or SpaceX is a private rocket company of high-tech entrepreneur Elon Musk. Musk is also chief executive officer (CEO) of automaker Tesla Inc.

When it comes to rocket launches it is leading the private space race.

With its Starlink venture the firm is now looking to seize a chunk of future space internet market.



May 27th

- **Government proposes NSSO and CSO merger**

The outgoing NDA government in one of its last decisions has decided to merge the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) with the Central Statistics Office (CSO) under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).

- **Ural: Nuclear-powered Arctic icebreaker launched by Russia**

Russia recently launched nuclear-powered Arctic icebreaker named 'Ural' at Baltic Shipyard in St. Petersburg. The move is to tap commercial potential of Arctic Ocean.

Objective: Launch of Ural, the Nuclear-powered icebreaker ship is part of an ambitious programme to renew and expand Russia's fleet of vessels in order to improve its ability to tap the benefits of Arctic's commercial potential and ensuring dominance of Russia in Arctic region.

Importance of Northern Sea Route (NSR)

According to a U.S. Geological Survey estimates, the Arctic region has about 22% of the world's undiscovered oil and gas and it probably holds oil and gas reserves equivalent to 412 billion barrels of oil.

- **AKASH-1S Missile: test fired by DRDO**

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully test fired Akash-1S surface to air defence missile system from Integrated Test Range (ITR) in Balasore off the Odisha coast. This is the second successive successful missile test by DRDO in last two days.

About Akash-1S

Background:

The Akash missile is a medium range multi-target engagement capable missile that was developed as part of Integrated Guided-Missile Development Programme (IGMDP). Other missiles under IGDMP are Nag, Agni, Trishul, and Prithvi missiles.



- **IAF pay homage to Kargil War Martyrs during Operation Safed Sagar**

The Indian Air Force (IAF) Chief Air Chief Marshal (ACM) B.S. Dhanoa visits Air Force Station in Bhisiana and Sarsawa to pay homage to the air warriors who made supreme sacrifice during Operation Safed Sagar at Kargil.



May 28th

P S Golay sworn in as new CM of Sikkim

The Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM) leader Prem Singh Tamang, better known as PS Golay was recently sworn in as Chief Minister of Sikkim.

Key Highlights

S. Golay's Chief Ministerial oath was administered by Governor Ganga Prasad at Paljor Stadium in Gangtok, Sikkim. He took the oath in Nepali language.

At present, Golay is not a member of State Legislative Assembly as he did not contest the polls.

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM): was formed in year 2013. In recent assembly polls it won a majority of 17 seats of the 32-member Sikkim Legislative Assembly. Its opposition party Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF) bagged 15 seats.

Succeeds: P S. Golay succeeded **Pawan Chamling of the SDF, who holds record for being the longest serving Chief Minister of India. Chamling won five consecutive terms for a little over 24 years.**

- **India elected to Executive Board of 1st UN-Habitat Assembly**

India has been elected to the Executive Board of first United Nations Human Settlements Program (UN-Habitat) Assembly.

Key Highlights

The India's election was made at the ongoing Plenary Session of Assembly which is being held at the headquarters of UN-Habitat in Nairobi, Kenya.



May 29th

- **BIMSTEC leaders invited to PM Modi's oath-taking ceremony**

India has invited the leaders of The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Member States for the swearing-in ceremony of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This invitation is in line with the Government's focus on its 'Neighbourhood First' policy.

About BIMSTEC

Background: In 1997, prior to joining of Myanmar as a full member in grouping of 'BIMST-EC' it was named as the 'BIST-EC'. The BIST-EC (Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, and Thailand Economic Cooperation) was initiated in 1997 itself and was encouraged by India's Look East Policy (LEP) and Thailand's Look West Policy it was Initiated. In 2004 Nepal and Bhutan became its members and the grouping was again renamed, now as the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC).

BIMSTEC is an international organization which involves a group of countries in South Asia and South East Asia (SEA).

Members (7): It comprises of primarily seven countries, those lying in littoral and adjacent areas of Bay of Bengal which includes India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar and Thailand.

Objective: to improve connectivity between the member countries through multi-modal transport corridors.

- **Murray Gell-Man: Nobel Prize winning physicist dies at 89**

The Nobel-winning physicist Murray Gell-Mann, died at the age of 89 in New Mexico. He is credited with bringing order to the universe by helping discover and classifying subatomic particles.

- **Ireland votes to ease restrictions on Divorce Law**

People in the Republic of Ireland have voted by an overwhelming majority to ease the constitutional restriction on country's divorce law.



- **Hindi version of Digital Dilemma launched**

John Bailey, President of Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences which is popularly known as Oscar Academy, e-launched the Hindi translation of Academy Publication “Digital Dilemma”, in Delhi. The Oscar Academy works towards goal of advancing arts and sciences of motion pictures.

- **Burnout classified as medical condition: WHO**

The World Health Organization (WHO) has for the first time recognised “burn-out” in its International Classification of Diseases (ICD). The decision was taken during the World Health Assembly (WHA) in Geneva.

- **Nine Dots Prize 2019: winner Annie Zaidi**

Indian writer Annie Zaidi was announced as the winner of Nine Dots Prize 2019.

About The Nine Dots Prize

The name of this global book prize is in reference to the ‘nine dots puzzle’ which is a lateral thinking puzzle that can only be solved by thinking outside the box.

About Annie Zaidi

She is a Mumbai-based freelance writer.

She won Nine Dots Prize for her entry titled ‘Bread, Cement, Cactus’.



May 30th

- **Pema Khandu sworn-in as Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister**

The Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) leader Pema Khandu was sworn-in as the new Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh.

Key Highlights

Pema Khandu was sworn in as the first Chief Minister of an elected Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government in Arunachal Pradesh.

- **Naveen Patnaik sworn in as Odisha Chief Minister**

Biju Janata Dal (BJD) leader Naveen Patnaik takes oath as CM of Odisha for a record 5th consecutive term. BJD has been in power in Odisha since 2000.

Key Highlights

The 72 year old Naveen Patnaik is the longest-serving chief minister of coastal state. BJD has been in power in the state since 2000.

He won a clear mandate of 112 out of the 147 seats in the recently conducted Odisha state election that were held along with national elections.

Out of 20 Parliamentary seats Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) bagged 8 seats and BJD won 12.

- **IMD World Competitiveness Rankings 2019**

India has moved up one place to rank 43rd most competitive economy in world in annual competitiveness rankings compiled by International Institute for Management Development (IMD).

Key Highlights

India: has moved one notch higher to 43th rank (from its 44th position in 2018, 45th in 2017 and 41st in 2016.) in terms of competitiveness worldwide. This improved rank is result of India's robust economic growth, a large labour force and its huge market size.



Singapore: The competitiveness chart was topped by Singapore that has topped the Hong Kong and the United States to take the top spot among the world's most competitive economies. Singapore has grabbed top position for the first time in nine years. In 2018 it stood at third rank.

MoU: signed between IAF and ISRO

The Indian Air Force (IAF) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) for astronaut selection and training for ambitious Gaganyaan Programme, scheduled for 2022.

About Gaganyaan Mission

Background: The launch of Gaganyaan programme was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his Independence Day address in 2018.

Gaganyaan Mission is India's maiden human spaceflight programme, scheduled for 2022.

- **29 MAY: International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers observed**

The International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers was observed on May 29 2019. The theme for this year is 'Protecting Civilians, Protecting Peace'.

About International Day of UN Peacekeepers

Background: It was instituted by United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) through Resolution 57/129 in December 2002. It was chosen to mark 20th anniversary of UN Security Council's (UNSC) first explicitly mandated a peacekeeping mission to protect civilians viz. UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) from 1999 until 2005.

- **ICC launches Criio Campaign on eve of Men's World Cup**

The International Cricket Council (ICC) launched the criio campaign on the eve of Men's World Cup. The initiative will bring together around 460 million people playing cricket globally and to celebrate magnificent diversity of cricket.

- **India removed from US's Currency Watchlist**

In a recent announcement by United States, it has removed India and Switzerland from the currency monitoring lists. The US has retained other countries like China, Japan and Germany in the list.



Objective: The list basically consists of major trading partners of US who are to be closely monitored for potentially questionable foreign exchange policies. The move is taken amid escalating trade tensions between the two countries.



May 31st

- **Binny: India's only Orangutan dies**

India's only orangutan named Binny died at the age of 41 in Nandankanan Zoological Park in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

About Orangutans

The word "orangutan" actually means "person of forest".

They are one of the world's three extant species of great apes.

- **Rajasthan bans Advertisement and sale of e-cigarettes**

The Rajasthan government recently announced its decision to ban production, distribution, advertisement and sale of e-cigarette in the state.

- **Narendra Modi sworn in as Prime Minister for 2nd term**

The National Democratic Alliance (NDA) leader Narendra Modi (68) was sworn in as 15th Prime Minister for a second consecutive five-year term.

Key Highlights

Oath: The oath of Office and Secrecy was administered by President Ram Nath Kovind to Narendra Modi and his team of 57 Union council of ministers.

Ceremony: The oath-taking ceremony was held at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi, which was attended by more than 6000 invitees including leaders from Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) countries and foreign envoys.

Minister: The portfolios allocation of Union Council of Minister includes 24 Cabinet ministers, 9 Minister of State with Independent charge and 24 Minister of State. One-third of total ministers in Cabinet are first-timers, which includes BJP president Amit Shah and former Foreign Secretary Subrahmanyam Jaishankar. The portfolios for new ministers are yet to be announced.

Background: The election for 17th Lok Sabha was held in seven phases from 11 April to 19 May 2019. Over 90 crore people were eligible to vote and the general election saw a turnout of more than 67% voters which is highest ever recorded and also the highest participation by women voters. The election was held for total 542 seats.



Key Highlights of 17th Lok Sabha Election

NOTA: The highest NOTA (none of the above) vote share of 5.04% in Lok Sabha election was reported from Gopalganj in Bihar. The Lowest NOTA vote share of 0.17% in Lok Sabha reported from Bidar in Karnataka.

Youngest Lok Sabha Member: Biju Janta Dal (BJD's) Chandrani Murmu, who won from Keonjhar in Odisha, became youngest candidate elected in history of Lok Sabha at 25 years, 11 months and 8 days.

Lowest Margin Victory: Bharatiya Janta Party's (BJP) Bholanath won Machhlishahr seat in Uttar Pradesh by just 181 votes which is the lowest margin recorded in the Lok Sabha elections.

- **Sri Lanka, Japan, India signs MoC to develop East Container Terminal**

Sri Lanka, India and Japan have signed an Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) to jointly develop the East Container Terminal (ECT) at the Colombo Port in Sri Lanka.

- **31 May: World No Tobacco Day observed**

On May 31 every year the World Health Organization (WHO) and its global partners celebrate World No Tobacco Day (WNTD). Theme for year 2019 was '**tobacco and lung health**'.

- **Punjab bans Online Food Delivery without Hygiene Rating**

The Punjab government has decided to make it mandatory for all online food aggregators to ensure that food supplied by them should compulsorily have hygiene rating as per Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) guidelines.

