

NATIONAL**President Open Rashtrapati Bhavan's annual 'Udyanotsav'**

- President 'Ram Nath Kovind' has opened the annual Udyanotsav of Rashtrapati Bhavan.
- About 10,000 programmed Tulip bulbs in 8 varieties of different colour were imported from the Netherlands and have been planted in the Mughal Gardens.
- The people will also be able to visit the Spiritual Garden, Herbal Garden, Bonsai Garden and Musical Garden. Online Booking can be done by visiting www.presidentofindia.gov.in.

India's tourism sector registers 19% growth in 2018

- According to Union Minister K J Alphons, the country's tourism sector fetched 234 billion US Dollar revenue last year, registering a growth of over 19%.
- The country is ranked third in the tourism sector, according to the 2018 report of the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC).
- This revenue was contributed by 87 per cent domestic and 13 per cent foreign tourists.

1.38 lakh MSME Projects set up by women entrepreneurs

- Women entrepreneurs have set up around 1.38 lakhs MSME (Micro, small and Medium Enterprises) projects under Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) scheme since inception and upto 23rd January, 2019.
- These projects are about 30% of the entire projects that come under PMEGP.
- Under PMEGP scheme, women entrepreneurship has been privileged to have a special category and are granted to 25% in urban areas and 35% subsidies in rural areas for project set up.
- MSME: Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises is the apex body for promoting entrepreneurship and skill development programmes by providing lower rate of interest for growing business.

Odisha launched Kalia scholarship scheme to boost education for farmers children

- Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched scholarship scheme named 'KALIA Chhatravritti Yojana', for the children of farmers under Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation (KALIA) scheme in Keonjhar district.

Kerala became the first State set up a price monitoring and research unit (PMRU)

- Kerala became the first state to set up price monitoring and research unit (PMRU) to track violation of prices of essential drugs and medical devices.
- The new watchdog will offer technical help to the State Drug Controllers to monitor notified prices of medicines, detect violation of the provisions of the Drugs Price Control Order (DPCO).

Assam tops in budgetary practices followed by states: Transparency International

- According to a survey by Transparency International, Assam tops in the ranking of best practices followed by states in budget formulation.
- Assam is the only state which has published a citizen's budget in the public domain and only government to conduct budget awareness campaign across 17 districts.
- Assam was followed by Andhra Pradesh and Odisha while Meghalaya, Manipur and Punjab were figured at lower positions.
- This survey is based on four parameters which includes public disclosure, budgetary process, post budget fiscal management and efforts to make budget more transparent and citizen friendly.

ICT Academy Bridge 2019' conference inaugurated in Tamil Nadu by IT Minister

- 'ICT Academy Bridge 2019' the 37th edition of the conference, was inaugurated by **Dr. Manikandan**, minister of Information and Technology, **Tamil Nadu**.
- The theme of the 37th edition of the conference "**Fostering India for Industry 4.0**"
- During this conference, ICT Academy conferred TN icon award 2019 "to the following people for their contribution to the growth of extensive use of new technology:
 - Shankar S, Film Director, Producer, Writer
 - Arun Alagappan, Executive Director, Cholamandalam
 - R. Dinesh, Managing Director, TVS Logistics Services Limited

Piyush Goyal launches the IEA's 'The Future of Rail' report

- Minister of Railways and Coal, Shri Piyush Goyal launched the **International Energy Agency's (IEA) "The Future of Rail"** report which analyses the current and future importance of rail around the world in New Delhi.

INTERNATIONAL

US pulls out of Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces treaty with Russia

- The United States of America pulls out of Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces treaty with Russia.
- Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces treaty was between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the elimination of their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles.
- This treaty was signed on 8 December 1987 in Washington D.C.USA.
- It prohibits the US and Russia from possessing, producing or test-flying a ground-launched cruise missile with a range of 300 to 3,400 miles.
- It also covers all land-based missiles including those carrying nuclear warheads.

Indian Online Companies rank 11th for overseas expansion-Report by Stripe firm

- Stripe, a San Francisco-based online payment processing firm that analyses Companies that do business online released the survey for the 2019.
- Stripe placed India in the 11th position for its extensive growth and overseas expansion.
- In the world doing business online, Singapore and Hong kong made its lead to the top position.

UK government approved Vijay Mallya's extradition order

- UK Home Secretary Sajid Javid signed the order to extradite Indian business tycoon and liquor baron Vijay Mallya from the United Kingdom to India.
- Mallya now has a 14-day window to appeal against the order to a higher court.
- India has been seeking the businessman's extradition on charges of fraud and money laundering amounting to almost Rs 9,000 crore. He has been on bail since his arrest.
- According to sources, the entire procedure to bring back Mallya to India may take at least 7-8 months if he uses all his legal options.
- The Indian Government, however, argued that Mallya, who moved to Britain in March 2016, had no intention of repaying the money it borrowed from IDBI in 2009 and the loans had been taken out under false pretences, on the basis of misleading securities.
- Vijay Mallya was declared as a proclaimed offender by a special court in June 2016 under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) in Mumbai in a loan diversion case. Recently he has been declared as India's first fugitive offender.

Observer Research Foundation has ranked India's highest Think Tank

- According to the global report named "2018 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report", Observer Research Foundation (ORF) has been marked as **India's highest ranked think tank**. ORF is highest ranked in India **and ranked 118 globally**.
- ORF has ranked as the top think tank in the "Best New Idea or Paradigm Developed by a Think Tank" category.
- Brookings Institution is the highest ranked think tank globally and followed by French Institute of International Relations and the Carnegie Endowment in second position.
- In the "Think Tanks with the Most Innovative Policy Ideas category", ORF has ranked eighth position.

ECONOMY

Asian Development Bank (ADB) bought 14% stake in Annapurna Finance

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) bought 14% stake in micro-financier Annapurna Finance.
- ADB Bank bought this stake with a motive of attracting long-term funds from global lenders and investors.
- ADB's investment increased Annapurna Finance's net worth by 580 crores.

50% India's working-age population out of labour force according to NSSO Report

- Half of India's working-age population (15 years and above), for the first time, is not contributing to any economic activity, according to the National Sample Survey Office's (NSSO's) latest jobs survey.
- LFPR is the section of working population in the age group of 16-64 in the economy currently employed or seeking employment. People who are still undergoing studies, housewives and persons above the age of 64 are not factored in the labor force.
- The National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) headed by a Director General is responsible for conduct of large-scale sample surveys in diverse fields on All India basis.
- The labour force participation rate (LFPR) stood at 49.8 per cent in 2017-18, falling sharply from 55.9 per cent in 2011-12.

Government decided to launch a campaign to saturate farmers for financial inclusion under Kisan Credit Cards (KCC).

- The Indian Banking Association (IBA) has issued advisory requesting banks to waive off the processing, documentation, inspection and all other service charges for Kisan Credit Card and crop loans upto three lakhs rupees.
- Agriculture Ministry in a release said, there are over 21 crore small and marginal farmers in the country and providing them timely and affordable credit is the key to attaining inclusive growth.
- The small and Marginal farmers are the most affected during times of floods, droughts, and other natural calamities.
- The Kisan Credit Card Scheme aims at providing adequate and timely credit support from the banking system to the farmers to meet the short-term credit requirements for cultivation of crops, investment credit requirements for agriculture and allied activities and other needs.

PERSON IN NEWS**Nilambar Acharya appointed Nepal Ambassador to India**

- Former Nepal's law minister Nilambar Acharya has been appointed as the Country's Ambassador to India.
- An ambassador is a diplomatic representative that attends international meetings, banquets and parties and acts as a figurehead for their country of origin.
- An ambassador is the ranking government representative stationed in a foreign capital.
- The position of Nepalese ambassador to India was lying vacant after Deep Kumar Upadhyay resigned in October 2017 to join politics.

SPORTS**Vani Kapoor becomes first Indian to Grab Australian LPGA Card**

- Vani Kapoor has become the first Indian golfer to receive Australian Women's PGA Tour (LPGA) card.
- Vani played 71, 78 and 69 cards in the first qualifying tournament played at Balatar Golf Club.
- Vani has also qualified for Vic Open, co-sanctioned by the Australian LPGA and the US LPGA.

South Korean Footballer Ki Sung-yueng announces retirement

- South Korean midfielder Ki Sung-yueng (30-years) has announced his retirement from the South Korean national team.
- Ki played for South Korea in three World Cups (2010, 2014, 2018) and three Asian Cups (2011, 2015, 2019).
- He is also a three-time KFA Player of the Year, having received the top honour in 2011, 2012 and 2016.

Haryana Hammers beats Punjab Royals to win PWL 4

- Haryana Hammers defeated two-time defending champion Punjab Royals 6-3 in the final to lift the Pro Wrestling League season 4 title at the Gautam Buddha University indoor stadium, Greater Noida.
- The Pro Wrestling League (PWL) is an Indian sports wrestling promotion that was established in 2015.
- It was initiated by ProSportify and Wrestling Federation of India.
- The Pro Wrestling League includes six franchises (Delhi Sultans, UP Dangal, Haryana Hammers, MP Yodha, Mumbai Maharathi and the NCR Punjab Royals) which represent cities throughout India.

Rohit Sharma 14th Indian to appear in 200 ODIs

- Rohit Sharma became the 14th Indian to play 200 one-day internationals when he walked out to toss with New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson in the fourth match of the five-ODI series in Hamilton.
- Rohit Sharma joined the likes of Sachin Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid, Sourav Ganguly, MS Dhoni, Anil Kumble, Javagal Srinath, Mohammad Azharuddin, Virender Sehwag, Harbhajan Singh and Virat Kohli in the Indian club of 200 ODIs.

Obituaries**Former IIMC Director Hiten Bhaya passed away**

- Former Planning Commission member Mr. Hiten Bhaya (98-years) passed away in Delhi.
- Bhaya was a member of the Planning Commission in the Rajiv Gandhi government.
- He had also served as director of the Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) and chairman of Hindustan Steel.

AWARDS AND HONOURS**Uniphore Software Systems Secured Prestigious Aegis Graham Bell Award 2019**

- 9th edition of Aegis Graham Bell Award was held in Panaji Goa.

- Uniphore Software Systems received the Aegis Graham Bell Award under Innovation in Data Science for its flagship product auMina.

MISCELLANEOUS

Bedin 1- New Dwarf Spheroidal Galaxy discovered by Hubble Space Telescope

- Astronomers from Italy, the UK, Germany and the United States discovered newly discovered galaxy consists of red giant particles
- This ancient galaxy is one of the oldest galaxy and was named after Luigi Bedin, a researcher at Italy's National Institute for Astrophysics
- Bedin 1 is located 28.38 million light years from Earth.

Special Postage Stamp on Kumbh Mela Released

- Union Minister of State for Railways and Communication Mr Manoj Sinha released a special postage stamp of the Indian Postal Department on KumbhMela. Its cost is five rupees.
- Prayagraj ArdhKumbh Mela 2019 is the ArdhKumbh Mela being held at Triveni Sangam in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh from 15 January to 4 March 2019.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Cancer day being observed :4th February

- The world cancer day is being observed on 4th February every year to raise awareness about cancer, its treatment and to encourage methods of its prevention.
- The primary goal of the day is to reduce the illness and related deaths by 2020.
- This year, Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) is launching a new three years (2019-2021) campaign with the theme: "I Am and I Will."
- India has around 2.25 million cases with over 1 lakh new cases being registered every year. In 2018, the disease led to nearly 7 lakh deaths.

National Road Safety Week launched on 4th February

- The Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has launched the National Road Safety Week with a host of initiatives planned for generating awareness and sensitizing people about safe road usage.
- The Union Ministers Nitin Gadkari flag off a motor car rally to commemorate the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi at Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti, Rajghat, New Delhi.
- The rally will travel through places historically associated with Gandhiji, both in India, as well as in Bangladesh and Myanmar.
- **30th Road Safety Week 2019** will be celebrated in India from **04th February to the 10th February**.
- **Theme for Road Safety Week 2019** is same as last year "**Sadak Suraksha-Jeevan Raksha**".

Sri Lanka celebrates 71st Independence Day:4th Feb

- Sri Lanka celebrated the 71st Independence Day in a grand ceremony at the Galle Face Green in Colombo.
- Maldives President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih attended the function as the guest of honour.
- Ending 133 years of colonial rule, Sri Lanka, then Ceylon, gained independence from Great Britain on 4th February 1948.

ONE LINER

- The Kala ghoda festival-KAGF, India's largest multi-cultural street festival begins in Mumbai to celebrate its 20 years of art and culture through cinema, theatre, dance, literature and sculpture.
- 325 children including 11 girls have been rescued in Hyderabad under "Operation Smile" which was launched.
- PM Narendra Modi inaugurated University of Ladakh, the 1st-ever university in the Ladakh region of Jammu and Kashmir.
- Sanjiv Ranjan has been appointed as India's new Ambassador to the Republic of Colombia.
- Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal inaugurated the 2nd ASEAN-India Youth Summit in Guwahati and underlined the need for mutual cooperation among the ASEAN countries for strengthening the multilateral relations of the region.
- Australia Cricketer Greg Chappell decided to retire after Ashes 2019 from all forms of cricketing roles.
- **Ramesh Abhishek**, secretary of the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (**DIPP**) now renamed as **DPIIT** was appointed as an additional charge Secretary of the **Civil Aviation Ministry** He succeeded **R N Choubey**, who resigned as he is appointed as the member of UPSC.