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FIRST WEEK CURRENT AFFAIRS

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1. Which Indian think tank has been ranked among the top 30 think tanks globally, as per a recent report?

[A] Observer Research Foundation (ORF) ☒

[B] NITI Aayog

[C] Centre for Civil Society (CCS)

[D] The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)

- ✓ As per the 2019 'Global Go to Think Tank Index Report', Indian think tank Observer Research Foundation (ORF) has been placed among the top 30 think tanks globally, at rank 27. The report is released by the Lauder Institute at the University of Pennsylvania.
- ✓ The list was topped by Carnegie Endowment for International Peace of the United States. Last year, ORF was placed at 118th position. The Raisina Dialogue, jointly organised by ORF is also ranked 7th best conference globally.

2. Who has been appointed as the new Chairman of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs, recently?

[A] Pranab Kumar Das [B] Ajay Bhushan Pandey

[C] M Ajit Kumar ☒ [D] Atanu Chakraborty

- ✓ As per the recent order issued by the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of M Ajit Kumar as the next Chairman of Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC).
- ✓ The announcement has been made just 2 days ahead of the Union Budget, which is to be presented on 1st Feb 2020. M Ajit Kumar is a 1984 batch Indian Revenue Service Officer, who is presently a member of CBIC. Pranab Kumar Das was the previous Chairman of CBIC.

3. Ajmal Sultanpuri, who passed away recently, was a renowned poet in which language?

[A] Hindi [B] Urdu ☒

[C] Marathi [D] Gujarati

- ✓ Ajmal Sultanpuri was a 97 year old renowned Urdu poet, who passed away recently in his native place Sultanpur, Uttar Pradesh.

- ✓ The poet was a recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award by Uttar Pradesh Urdu Academy in March 2016 for his significant contribution to Urdu poetry. Some of his noted poems include "Kahan Hai Mera Hindustan" and "Agar Main Tera Shahjahan".

4. The Department of Telecom, India has recently taken over process to issue and manage the allocation of IMEI. What does IMEI stand for?

[A] Indian Mobile Equipment Identity

[B] International Mobile Equipment Identity ☒

[C] Indian Multimedia Equipment Identifier

[D] International Multimedia Equipment Identifier

- ✓ The IMEI (International Mobile Equipment Identity) number is a 15 digit unique serial number of mobile devices. It is allocated by a global industry body GSMA and its authorised organisations.

- ✓ In India, Mobile Standards Alliance of India (MSAI) is the official reporting body of GSMA. Recently, the Department of Telecom (DoT) has taken over the process of issuing and allocating the IMEI numbers for mobile phones in India from the private body MSAI.

- ✓ The new 'Indian Counterfeited Device Restriction (ICDR) system', which has been developed by the R&D unit of DoT is being tested on pilot basis on the web portal of Central Equipment Identity Register (CEIR).

5. Khadi wrist watches have been recently launched by the Khadi and Village Industries Commission, in association with which company?

[A] Fossil [B] Titan ☒

[C] Timex [D] Casio

- ✓ The Union minister Nitin Gadkari recently launched the unique Khadi wrist watches, which have been manufactured as part of a joint initiative by the Khadi

and Village Industries Commission and leading Indian consumer goods firm, Titan.

- ✓ The watches have been launched on the death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, also features the iconic charka. The Minister also suggested to showcase the watches in international airports to attract buyers.

- ✓ As per the announcement from KVIC, 1 sq.m of Khadi fabric is used for manufacturing 10 watches and 1,000 such watches are proposed to be sold.

6. Who has been appointed as the next ambassador of India to Nepal?

- [A] Taranjit Singh Sandhu [B] Vijay Gokhale
[C] Vinay Mohan Kwatra ☒ [D] Ajit Kumar

- ✓ Veteran diplomat Vinay Mohan Kwatra has been recently appointed as India's next ambassador to Nepal, as per the recent announcement made by the Ministry of External Affairs.
- ✓ Vinay Kwatra is a 1988 batch Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer, who is currently serving as the Ambassador of India to Paris. He has now replaced Manjeev Singh Puri who has attained superannuation from service.
- ✓ Vinay Kwatra has held instrumental positions in several organisations including Permanent Mission of India in Geneva, SAARC Secretariat in Nepal, Embassy of India in Washington among others.

7. 'SAMPRITI' is a joint military training exercise between India and which country?

- [A] Japan [B] Sri Lanka
[C] China [D] Bangladesh ☒

- ✓ 'SAMPRITI' is a joint military training exercise between India and Bangladesh. The ninth edition of the exercise (SAMPRITI-IX) is set to be conducted at Umroi, Meghalaya from February 3 to 16, 2020.
- ✓ The exercise, which is a part of the Indo – Bangladesh defence cooperation, is annually hosted by both

countries alternately. Last year, the exercise was conducted in Tangail, Bangladesh.

- ✓ During the exercise, the troops of both the countries will work together to tackle Counter Terrorist Operation in a simulated environment, as per the United Nations Charter.

8. India recently observed 'Martyrs' Day' on 30th January, to pay homage to which Indian leader?

- [A] Kamarajar [B] Jawaharlal Nehru
[C] B R Ambedkar [D] Mahatma Gandhi ☒

- ✓ 'Martyrs' Day' is observed across the country every year on January 30. The day is observed to pay homage to the death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi and the sacrifices of other Indians who laid down their lives for the country.
- ✓ This year India observes the 72nd death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. All national leaders including President, Vice President, PM and the heads of defence services paid homage to Mahatma Gandhi and other martyrs of India.
- ✓ March 23 is also observed as Martyrs' day to pay tribute to the three freedom fighters -Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev.

9. Which Indian journalist has been chosen as the recipient of 2019–20 PEN Gauri Lankesh Award?

- [A] Ravish Kumar [B] Yusuf Jameel ☒
[C] N Ram [D] Prannoy Roy

- ✓ Veteran Indian journalist Yusuf Jameel, was chosen for and awarded the '2019–2020 PEN–Gauri Lankesh Award for Democratic Idealism'. The award was presented to him, for his revolutionary journalism in Jammu and Kashmir, during the insurgency period.
- ✓ PEN International is a global association of writers, which was founded in 1921. PEN South India and PEN Delhi have instituted the annual award to cherish and honour the assassinated journalist and activist Gauri Lankesh.

- ✓ The award is offered to an individual or organisation, whose work demonstrates courageous and democratic journalism, on birth anniversary of Gauri Lankesh.

10. As per the recent Economic Outlook Survey released by FICCI, what is the estimated median GDP growth forecast for 2019–20?

- [A] 5.0% ☒ [B] 5.1%
[C] 5.2% [D] 5.3%

- ✓ The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) recently released its latest round of Economic Outlook Survey.
 - ✓ As per the survey, the annual median GDP growth forecast for 2019–20 is estimated at 5.0%. The survey also revealed that the GDP growth is likely to improve to 5.5% in 2020–21.
 - ✓ The median growth forecast for Agriculture and allied activities and the industry are predicted at 2.6% and 3.5% respectively for 2019–20. The services sector is expected to grow at 7.2% during the current year.
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1. What is the GDP growth rate of India, in 2018–19, as per the recent statement from the National Statistical Office (NSO), on January 31, 2020?

- [A] 6.8% [B] 6.4% [C] 6.2% [D] 6.1% ☒

- ✓ The National Statistical Office released revised estimates for economic growth of India for the last three years, on Jan.31, 2020. As per the report, it fixed the actual GDP growth 2018–19 at 6.1%, against its previous estimate of 6.8%, estimated in May 2019.
- ✓ The National Statistical Office also stated that the main reason for the downward revision in the GDP growth rate is deceleration in farming and mining activities in primary sector and manufacturing activities in secondary sector. It also marked the growth rate in 2017 – 18 as 7%. Recently, NSO estimated the growth rate in 2019–20 to be 5%.

2. Which global tech firm has launched a short–video making application called ‘Tangi’, which focusses on creativity?

- [A] Microsoft [B] Facebook
[C] Google ☒ [D] Adobe

- ✓ Technological major Google has recently launched a short–video making application called ‘Tangi’, which is similar to the popular application TikTok.
- ✓ The application has been launched initially on the web and iOS platforms. The application for 60–second–videos has been designed by the incubator of Google called ‘Area 120’.
- ✓ The name of the application is inspired by ‘Teach and Give’ & ‘Tangible’ things. Communities centered around similar hobbies can also be formed.

3. According to the recent Economic Survey 2019–20, which state has the cheapest Vegetarian Thali (food plate)?

- [A] Kerala [B] Jharkhand ☒
[C] Bihar [D] Tripura

- ✓ The Economic Survey 2019–20 was recently presented by the Chief Economic Adviser Krishnamurthy Subramaniam on Jan.31.

- ✓ The term called ‘Thalinomics’ was used, which means the affordability of buying a Thali (Food Plate). It states that, Jharkhand has the cheapest Vegetarian Thali (meals plate), less than Rs.50.

- ✓ The survey also revealed that the affordability for a vegetarian plate has improved by 29% in the last 13 years while the cost has increased in the year 2019. The affordability of the meals has saved nearly Rs.10000 on an average per year to an average household.

4. As per the recent Economic Survey 2019–20, what is the rank of India globally in number of new firms created?

- [A] 3 ☒ [B] 4 [C] 5 [D] 6

- ✓ The Economic Survey 2019–20 presented on January 31, stated that India is ranked third globally in number of new firms created. It also revealed that as many as 1, 24,000 new firms have been created in India in the year 2018 alone.
- ✓ The survey quoted this data on firm creation from the World Bank’s data on entrepreneurship. The number of new firms created from 2014 to 2018 grew at a rate of 12.2 percent.
- ✓ It also stated that more new firms were created in services sector in the country when compared to the agriculture and manufacturing sectors.

5. Which Indian–American has been appointed as the new Chairman of the tech company– International Business Machines Corporation (IBM)?

- [A] Arvind Krishna ☒ [B] Abidali Neemuchwala
[C] Sundar Pichai [D] Shantanu Narayen

- ✓ International Business Machines Corporation (IBM) has appointed Indian–American Arvind Krishna as its new Chairman.
- ✓ The 57–year–old leader is currently serving as the head of the ‘Cloud and Cognitive software unit’ of IBM. He is

known for playing an instrumental role in the acquisition of Red Hat by IBM, undertaken last year.

- ✓ He has also led the development of several advanced technologies by IBM including cloud and quantum computing. He replaces the long-time female CEO of IBM, Virginia Rometty, who will continue to serve as the company's executive Chairman.

6. When is the Anti-leprosy day for the year 2020, observed across the world?

- [A] January 26 ☒ [B] January 27
[C] January 28 [D] January 29

- ✓ The 'Anti-leprosy day' is observed annually on the last Sunday of January, across the world. This year, the day is observed on Jan.26, 2020, the month's last Sunday.
- ✓ The World Health Organisation has adopted a theme of 'Leprosy isn't you think' to create awareness to fight the prejudice and discrimination associated with the disease.
- ✓ In India, the Confederation of Indian Industry signed a MoU with the charitable organization – Sasakawa India Leprosy Foundation (S-ILF) to eradicate leprosy in the country.

7. The European Union has how many countries in its bloc, after the exit of the United Kingdom?

- [A] 26 [B] 27 ☒ [C] 28 [D] 29

- ✓ After nearly four years of the referendum voted by the British people for Brexit, the United Kingdom officially left the European Union, at 11.00 p.m on January 31, 2020. After Britain left the bloc, the European Union has 27 more countries.
- ✓ The process by which the member state leaves the Union has expired and UK has entered the transition period, which will remain till December 31, 2020.
- ✓ The UK will continue to obey the EU laws and courts during the transition period. A new 50-pence coin was launched recently to mark the occasion.

8. The India International Leather Fair (IILF), 2020 is being held in which city?

- [A] Coimbatore [B] Madurai
[C] Chennai ☒ [D] Vellore

- ✓ The 35th edition of India International Leather Fair (IILF), 2020 is being held in the capital city of Tamil Nadu, Chennai. The fair is being held from February 1 to 3, 2020 at the Chennai Trade Centre.
- ✓ The fair is organized by India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO), which functions under aegis of Ministry of Commerce and Industry for promoting country's external trade.
- ✓ A large variety of products related to leather industry are being displayed in the 3-day-long international fair. Latest trends and designs of the global fashion are also showcased in the event.

9. Abidali Neemuchwala, who resigned recently, was the Chief Executive Officer of which popular Indian IT firm?

- [A] Infosys [B] Tata Consultancy Services
[C] Wipro ☒ [D] HCL

- ✓ Abidali Neemuchwala recently submitted his resignation from the Chief Executive Officer post at the leading Indian Information Technology firm Wipro.
- ✓ He has served as the CEO and the Group President of the company for four years and Managing Director since July 2019. Abidali has sought resignation citing family commitments.
- ✓ He will continue to serve in the post until a proper successor is appointed by the company's board of directors. Rishad Premji has recently taken over as the Executive Chairman of Wipro, replacing his father Azim Premji.

10. The 250th flight operation under the RCS – UDAN scheme was recently commenced between Bhubaneswar and which Indian city?

- [A] Lucknow [B] Varanasi ☒
- [C] Patna [D] Prayagraj

- ✓ The wholly-owned subsidiary of Air India, Alliance Air recently commenced the direct flight operations from Bhubaneswar to Varanasi. The daily flight operation is started under the RCS-UDAN (Regional Connectivity Scheme – Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik).
 - ✓ This route also marks the 250th route which has been made operational under the RCS – UDAN. This is also the 58th route commenced by Alliance Air, under RCS.
 - ✓ Recently, the airline started daily flight operations on the Kolkata–Jharsuguda route. The flight is scheduled to depart Bhubaneswar at 12.15 pm and reach Varanasi at 2.05 pm while the flight from Varanasi will leave at 2.30 pm and reach Bhubaneswar at 4.20 pm.
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1. According to the recent Union Budget 2020–21, what is the disinvestment target of the Indian Government for 2020–21?

- [A] ₹ 1.0 Lakh Crores [B] ₹ 1.1 Lakh Crores
[C] ₹ 1.2 Lakh Crores ☒ [D] ₹ 1.3 Lakh Crores

✓ In the Union Budget 2020–21, the Government has set its disinvestment target at ₹ 1.2 Lakh Crores for the fiscal year 2020–21. The government also expects ₹90,000 crore revenue from disinvestment of government stake in public sector banks and financial institutions, including the LIC and IDBI bank.

✓ This is in addition to the 1.2 Lakh Crore target and hence a total of ₹ 2.1 Lakh Crores worth disinvestment is scheduled. This year, the government has missed the disinvestment target of ₹1.05 lakh crore. So far, ₹18,000 crore has been generated via disinvestment. The revised estimates set ₹65,000 crore as disinvestment target for this fiscal.

2. As per the recent Union budget, what is the estimated fiscal deficit target for 2020–21, expressed in per cent of GDP?

- [A] 3.3% [B] 3.4% [C] 3.5% ☒ [D] 3.6%

✓ In the recent Union Budget 2020–21, the government has estimated the fiscal deficit target for 2020–21 at 3.5% of GDP (Budget Estimate). The fiscal deficit target for 2019–20 was estimated at 3.3% earlier, which has also been revised to 3.8% of GDP, citing revenue shortage as the reason.

✓ Under the Fiscal Responsibility & Budget Management (FRBM) Act, the Section 4 (2) permits the govt. to relax its fiscal deficit target during time of unanticipated stress. This section has been used to increase the previous target to 3.8% in the revised estimates.

3. What is the maximum insurance provided for bank deposits, as per the latest Union budget 2020–21?

- [A] ₹ 1 Lakh [B] ₹ 2 Lakh
[C] ₹ 2.5 Lakh [D] ₹ 5 Lakh ☒

✓ The Union Finance Minister hiked the maximum insurance provided for bank deposits to ₹ 5 Lakh, per depositor, in her recent Union Budget 2020–21.

✓ As per the existing guidelines of the Reserve Bank of India, deposits of the customers with all commercial banks and cooperative banks are insured under the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation.

✓ Each depositor is insured up to a maximum of ₹1 lakh on deposits in all types of accounts (current, savings, fixed) in a particular bank. This 1 lakh limit is now increased to 5 lakhs, per depositor.

4. What is the name of the new scheme proposed in the budget, which is to be implemented by the Aviation Ministry, for transporting agricultural products?

- [A] Udan 5.0 scheme [B] Kisan Udan Scheme
[C] Krishi Udan Scheme ☒ [D] PM Kisan Udan Scheme

✓ A new scheme was proposed in the budget, which is to be implemented by the Aviation Ministry, for transporting agricultural products of farmers. The scheme was named as 'Krishi Udan Scheme'.

✓ The scheme will assist the farmers with more focus on north-east and tribal districts. The UDAN scheme was launched in 2016, to boost regional connectivity at affordable air-fares.

5. Who clinched the men's singles title in the recently held Australian Open tournament, 2020?

- [A] Roger Federer [B] Rafael Nadal
[C] Novak Djokovic ☒ [D] Dominic Thiem

✓ The Serb Tennis star Novak Djokovic clinched his eighth Australian Open title, second in a row, by defeating Dominic Thiem of Austria 6–4, 4–6, 2–6, 6–3, 6–4, in the Australian open finals.

✓ This is the 17th Grand Slam trophy of Djokovic, in his entire tennis career, and he is only behind the other two stars Roger Federer (20) and Rafael Nadal (19). He had already won 5 Wimbledon, 3 U.S Open and 1 French Open titles.

6. Pramod Agrawal was recently appointed as the new Chairman and Managing Director of which Public Sector Enterprise?

[A] SAIL

[B] BHEL

[C] IOCL

[D] CIL ☒

✓ Pramod Agrawal assumed charge as the new Chairman and Managing Director of Coal India Ltd, a Maharatna Public Sector Enterprise.

✓ Prior to this appointment, he was serving as the Principal Secretary for urban development and housing department in Madhya Pradesh. He replaced A K Jha, who retired as the chairman of Coal India Ltd on January 31, 2020.

7. The 3rd private train of the IRCTC is set to run between Varanasi and which Indian city?

[A] Indore ☒

[B] Bhopal

[C] Nagpur

[D] Jaipur

✓ As per the recent announcement of the Chairman of the Railway Board Vinod Kumar Yadav, the third private train of the IRCTC is set to run between Varanasi and Indore.

✓ The train, which is to be operated overnight, is expected to have the same rakes as in the Humsafar Express. The train is set to run three days a week between the cities – among them two days will be operated via Lucknow and one day via Allahabad.

✓ The first two private trains are operated on two routes namely Delhi–Lucknow and Ahmedabad–Mumbai.

8. Which Indian diplomat was recently appointed as India's High Commissioner to Sri Lanka?

[A] Ajay Bisaria

[B] Gopal Baglay ☒

[C] Vinay Mohan Kwatra

[D] Taranjit Singh Sandhu

✓ Veteran Indian diplomat Gopal Baglay was recently appointed as the India's High Commissioner to Sri Lanka. Gopal Baglay, who is currently serving at the

Prime Minister's Office, is expected to assume charge in a short time.

✓ He has succeeded Taranjit Singh Sandhu, who has recently been appointed as the Indian Ambassador to the United States. Gopal Baglay has held several important positions during his career. He has served as the Deputy High Commissioner of India to Pakistan and Spokesperson of the External Affairs Ministry.

9. Which country has national emergency to tackle the attack of locust swarms?

[A] India

[B] Pakistan ☒

[C] Iran

[D] Afghanistan

✓ Pakistan has recently witnessed its worst locust attack ever in decades and has declared national emergency for tackling their attack. The insects are reported to have destroyed crops on a large scale in Punjab, the main agricultural region of the country.

✓ The decision to declare national emergency was taken at a meeting convened by Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan. A National Action Plan (NAP) was also approved, which requires a sum of ₹7.3 billion to tackle the crisis. Somalia has also declared national emergency for the same reason, recently.

10. In which Indian city, the Indian navy conducted its coastal security exercise, 'Matla Abhiyaan'?

[A] Cochin

[B] Kolkata ☒

[C] Mumbai

[D] Vishakhapatnam

✓ The Indian Navy has conducted a 5 day-long coastal security exercise called 'Matla Abhiyaan' at Kolkata, which started on Jan.29. The exercise is named after the Matla River, which flows around the Sundarbans.

✓ During the exercise, the naval personnel interacted with the coastal police stations. The naval team also visited local schools to spread awareness on coastal security. This exercise is expected to help the naval crew in understand the navigational complexities in the Sundarbans.

1. "Sophisticated Analytical & Technical Help Institutes (SATHI)" is an initiative of which Ministry?

[A] Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology

[B] Ministry of Science and Technology ☒

[C] Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

[D] Ministry of Human Resource Development

- ✓ The Department of Science & Technology (DST), under the Ministry of Science and Technology has launched a scheme called "Sophisticated Analytical & Technical Help Institutes (SATHI)".
- ✓ It owns high-end analytical testing instruments and reduce the dependency on foreign sources. DST announced that it has planned to set up five SATHI Centres every year for the next four years.
- ✓ There are already three such institutes in the country at IIT Kharagpur, IIT Delhi and BHU, at a total cost of Rs.375 Cr. The SATHI Centre will run 24×7 throughout the year and external users from other academic institutes and start-ups will be given more time to use the instruments.

2. The Scientists at Indian Veterinary Research Institute have recently developed a low-cost vaccine for which disease?

[A] Bird Flu

[B] Swine Fever ☒

[C] Foot and Mouth Disease

[D] Monkey pox

- ✓ The Scientists at Indian Veterinary Research Institute (ICAR-IVRI), an institute of Indian Council of Agricultural Research, have recently developed a low-cost vaccine for the classical swine fever.
- ✓ Swine fever is a disease associated with high mortality and illness in pigs. Until now, the swine fever vaccines have been imported for domestic usage and moreover the imported vaccines are to be administered once in every six months.
- ✓ But a single shot of the new indigenous vaccine would be sufficient for the animal's life time. This would be an

affordable option for the farmers and also assist in pork production and export.

3. "Babenco: Tell Me When I Die", which won the 'Golden Conch Award for Best Documentary Film' at the Mumbai International Film Festival 2020, is a film of which country?

[A] Canada

[B] Brazil ☒

[C] France

[D] South Korea

- ✓ "Babenco: Tell Me When I Die" won the 'Golden Conch Award for Best Documentary Film' at the Mumbai International Film Festival 2020.
- ✓ It is a Brazilian documentary film, directed by the filmmaker Barbara Paz. The award was presented at the 16th edition of the film festival, which was graced by the Maharashtra governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari.
- ✓ Nagraj Manjule's "Paavsacha Nibandh" received the Silver Conch award for Best Short Fiction Film. The Silver Conch Award for the Best Animation Film has been shared by the German film "Portrait of Suzanne" and the Indian film "Panangaatu Nari" by Divakar SK.

4. L&T MBDA Missile Systems (LTMMSL) has recently set up a missile integration facility at which state?

[A] Tamil Nadu ☒

[B] Karnataka

[C] Maharashtra

[D] Kerala

- ✓ L&T MBDA Missile Systems (LTMMSL) has recently set up a missile integration facility at Coimbatore city in the state of Tamil Nadu. LTMMSL is a joint venture between the engineering and construction firm Larsen & Toubro and the European defence company MBDA.
- ✓ The integration facility is set up in a Special Economic Zone and will manufacture weapon systems to domestic and global markets.
- ✓ It also has finer equipment for testing the Missile Subsystems and weapon launch systems. This project is a part of the Tamil Nadu Defence Industrial Corridor.

5. Which state bagged the award for 'Best performance in Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana', recently presented by the Union Minister of Women & Child Development?

- [A] Madhya Pradesh ☒ [B] Andhra Pradesh
[C] Karnataka [D] Gujarat

✓ Union Minister of Women & Child Development Smriti Irani recently presented the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana awards to the best performing States, Union Territories and Districts.

✓ Madhya Pradesh bagged the first place in the category of best performance States/ UTs with more than 1 crore population. The state is followed by Andhra Pradesh and Haryana. In the category of states with less than 1 Crore population, Dadra & Nagar Haveli is at the first place, followed by Himachal Pradesh and Chandigarh.

6. Which Indian state has recently declared the disease caused by the novel coronavirus as a "state calamity"?

- [A] Tamil Nadu [B] Kerala ☒
[C] Karnataka [D] Telangana

✓ The state Government of Kerala declared the disease caused by the novel coronavirus as a "state calamity". This declaration comes at the backdrop of three people of the state being tested positive for coronavirus.

✓ Kerala reported the first infection from the virus in India and the person is being treated in isolation wards. Later two other patients, who are the students of a medical college in Wuhan, China are also diagnosed with the virus infection.

✓ The novel coronavirus was first reported in China's Wuhan city and has spread to nearly 25 other countries.

7. The Hubballi to Dharwad Bus Rapid Transit System (BRTS) project was recently inaugurated in which state?

- [A] Karnataka ☒ [B] Maharashtra
[C] Madhya Pradesh [D] Telangana

✓ The Vice President M Venkaiah recently inaugurated the Bus Rapid Transit System (BRTS) project between the twin cities of Karnataka, Hubballi to Dharwad.

✓ The project cost of Rs 970 crore is jointly funded by the state and central governments and the World Bank. The BRTS established between the cities on a trial basis already serves more than 1 lakh passengers per day.

✓ It has now become fully operational and is expected to be a major boost in the state's public transport.

8. Which banker of India has been named as the Central Banker of the Year (Asia-Pacific 2020), by the Banker magazine?

- [A] Raghuram Rajan [B] Shaktikanta Das ☒
[C] Urjit Patel [D] Viral Acharya

✓ The Banker magazine has named the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das as the Central Banker of the Year- Asia-Pacific 2020. 'Global Central Banker of the Year' award was presented to Jorgovanka Tabakovi, National Bank of Serbia.

✓ The award is given to central bankers who have significantly managed to stimulate growth and stabilise the economy of their country.

✓ Shaktikanta Das was nominated as he successfully managed various economic crises of the country including the Non-Banking Financial companies (NBFC) crisis and Non-performing assets of Indian banks.

9. The famous arts festival called 'Kala Ghoda Arts Festival' is celebrated annually in which Indian city?

- [A] New Delhi [B] Mumbai ☒
[C] Kolkata [D] Bengaluru

✓ The famous arts festival called 'Kala Ghoda Arts Festival' is celebrated annually in the city of Mumbai.

✓ The 21st edition of the street festival has recently commenced. This year, the nine-day-long festival has a variety of events in 12 sections, related to arts, music, cinema, literature, theatre and heritage walks.

- ✓ This year's edition of KGAF has been organised entirely through crowd – funding using the platform named 'Ketto', without the conventional sponsorship. The annual festival has been organised by the Kala Ghoda Association since 1999.

10. The third Defence Attaches conference, 2020 was recently held in which city?

- [A] Ahmedabad [B] New Delhi ☒
- [C] Kanpur [D] Lucknow

- ✓ Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated the third Defence Attaches conference at New Delhi. He also announced that India is set to have 10 more Defence Attaches in 10 different countries.
 - ✓ This creation of additional 10 defence wings will strengthen the defence diplomacy of the country and help in increasing exports in defence sector.
 - ✓ Under the central government scheme of promoting defence exports, funds are allocated for export through Defence attaches to 34 countries.
-

1. Which state government recently launched a scheme called 'Janasevaka' to home-deliver various government services to citizens?

- [A] Telangana [B] Karnataka ☒
[C] Madhya Pradesh [D] Gujarat

- ✓ The state government of Karnataka has recently launched a scheme called 'Janasevaka' to home-deliver various government services to citizens. The scheme ensures the delivery of ration cards, senior citizen identity and health cards at the door steps of citizens.
- ✓ The newly launched scheme is a part of the 'Sakala' scheme of the state and will cover as many as 53 services of 11 state departments. The scheme was first implemented in Dasarahalli area on a pilot basis and will be extended to other regions.
- ✓ Subsequently, the scheme would be made operational in Bengaluru, Mysuru, Mangaluru and Hubli-Dharwad.

2. The Union Cabinet of India recently approved amendments to bring which category of banks under the regulation of Reserve Bank of India?

- [A] Multi-state cooperative banks ☒
[B] Land Development Banks
[C] Primary agricultural societies
[D] Nidhi companies

- ✓ The Union Cabinet of India recently approved amendments to the Banking Regulation Act, which will bring multi-state cooperative banks under the regulation of the Reserve Bank of India.
- ✓ This amendment in regulation is expected to prevent malpractices in the co-operative banks and ensure better regulation. The administrative role of the banks will be managed by the cooperative registrars.
- ✓ This decision is taken at the backdrop of the collapse of Punjab and Maharashtra Co-operative (PMC) Bank last year. The banks would also be audited according to the norms stipulated by RBI.

3. Which country's delegation of educational institutions recently visited India and signed agreements in the fields of higher education and research?

- [A] Canada [B] Norway ☒
[C] Germany [D] Japan

- ✓ Authorities from the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research have recently signed agreements with India in the fields of higher education and research, in New Delhi.
- ✓ This agreement is a part of the visit of delegation of important educational institutions of Norway to India.
- ✓ Among the several agreements signed, the significant pact was between the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi and The Arctic University of Norway (UiT), for co-operation in the fields of bio-photonics, health and diagnostic tools, nanotechnology.

4. Which Indian actor was recently presented with the 'Kishore Kumar Samman' Award for 2018, by the Madhya Pradesh government?

- [A] Waheeda Rehman ☒ [B] Asha Parekh
[C] Vyjayanthimala [D] Hema Malini

- ✓ Veteran Indian actor Waheeda Rehman was recently conferred with the prestigious Kishore Kumar Samman Award for the year 2018. The award was instituted by the Madhya Pradesh government.
- ✓ Famous director Priyadarshan was conferred with the Kishore Kumar Samman for the year 2019, on the death anniversary of the legendary actor Kishore Kumar, October 13, 2019.
- ✓ As Waheeda Rehman could not receive the award during the ceremony, she was presented the award now, by the Madhya Pradesh culture minister Dr Vijaylaxmi Sadho.

5. Pranab Kumar Gogoi, who recently passed away, was a famous personality in which field?

- [A] Sports [B] Literature

[C] Arts

[D] Politics ☒

- ✓ The MLA of Sivasagar constituency in the state of Assam, Pranab Kumar Gogoi recently passed away.
- ✓ He had also served as the Speaker of the Assam state assembly. He was known for introducing the definition of the term "Assamese".

6. Which Indian city is set to play host to the 15th East Asia Summit conference, 2020?

[A] Chennai ☒

[B] Hyderabad

[C] New Delhi

[D] Ahmedabad

- ✓ The 15th East Asia Summit conference of the year 2020 is set to be organised by India, in the southern city of Chennai, Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ The conference will mainly focus on co-operation in maritime security and challenges in maritime domain.
- ✓ During the 14th East Asia Summit (EAS) in Bangkok in November 2019, the Indian Prime Minister announced that the Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) would organise the next EAS conference, in partnership with the governments of Australia and Indonesia.
- ✓ As announced, the EAS Conference on Maritime Security Cooperation would be held in Chennai from 2020 Feb 6 & 7. This is the 4th EAS conference organised by India.

7. The flagship biennial Defence exhibition of India 'DefExpo' is organised in which Indian city?

[A] New Delhi

[B] Lucknow ☒

[C] Bengaluru

[D] Hyderabad

- ✓ The biennial Defence exhibition of India, 'DefExpo' was recently inaugurated at Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh by the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- ✓ The Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister also attended the inaugural programme. A live demonstration of naval systems, aerial systems and land systems was performed during the ceremony.

- ✓ The main theme of the DefExpo 2020 is 'India: The Emerging Defence Manufacturing Hub' and the focus will be on 'Digital Transformation of Defence'.

- ✓ The 5 day exhibition is to be attended by delegates and military manufacturers from more than 70 countries. The 5th India–Russia Military Industry Conference is also to be held on the side-lines of the event.

8. Which Asian country recently introduced a "sustainable development fee" for regional tourists including Indian visitors?

[A] Thailand

[B] Bhutan ☒

[C] Cambodia

[D] Sri Lanka

- ✓ Bhutan recently introduced a "sustainable development fee" for regional tourists, as there is a sharp rise in Indian visitors to the country. The lower house of Bhutan Parliament passed the legislation in this regard.
- ✓ The regional tourists, who were previously exempted from the fee were the tourists from India, Bangladesh, and the Maldives. Now for entering Bhutan, they have to pay a fee of 1,200 ngultrums (\$16.85) per day.
- ✓ The fee, which will be charged from July 2020, will assist the government in tackling the traffic control due to sharp rise in tourist count.

9. What is the GDP growth rate of India in the 2020–21 fiscal, as estimated by the Moody's Investors Service?

[A] 6.5%

[B] 6.0%

[C] 5.5% ☒

[D] 5.0%

- ✓ Moody's Investors Service recently released its estimates for India's GDP growth in the upcoming fiscals. It lowered the real GDP growth projection for the next 2020–21 fiscal to 5.5%, from its previous estimate of 6.3%. The government's Economic survey has projected a growth rate of 6–6.5% for the next fiscal.
- ✓ It also stated that the GDP growth for the current fiscal ending March 31 would be 4.9%, which is slightly lower than the estimate of the government. For the fiscal 2021–22, it predicted a growth rate of 6%, down from 6.7% which was projected earlier.

10. Former world champion Mirabai Chanu, who recently set a new national record in the National Weightlifting Championships, belongs to which state?

[A] Haryana

[B] Uttar Pradesh

[C] Manipur ☒

[D] Rajasthan

- ✓ Ace Indian weight-lifter, Mirabai Chanu set a new national record in the National Weightlifting Championships in Kolkata, by improving her previous record. The former world champion and commonwealth gold medallist belongs to the state of Manipur.
 - ✓ Mirabai lifted a total of 203kg to win the 49kg gold, which was better than her previous best– 201 kg, which she had achieved at the World Championships at Thailand, in September last year.
 - ✓ The 25-year-old weight-lifter was placed fourth in the world rankings. Jeremy Lalrinnunga, another top weight-lifter from India won the men's 67kg title in the Championship.
-

1. Which Indian celebrity is at the top spot in the latest brand valuation study by Duff & Phelps?

- [A] Akshay Kumar [B] Virat Kohli ☒
[C] P V Sindhu [D] Deepika Padukone

- ✓ Indian Cricket star Virat Kohli retains his top rank in the latest brand valuation study by Duff & Phelps. He is placed at the first spot third year in a row. The report revealed that Virat Kohli has increased his brand value by 40 per cent to \$237.5 million in 2019.
- ✓ The 2nd place was bagged by Bollywood actor Akshay Kumar, who pushed the last year's second rank holder Deepika Padukone to 3rd. The 3rd spot is shared by actor Ranveer Singh. Former Indian captain M S Dhoni is placed at 9th place in the list.

2. Which social-media platform recently announced that it will label the fake news and remove harmful data shared on its platform?

- [A] Whatsapp [B] Twitter ☒
[C] Instagram [D] Youtube

- ✓ US-based social networking and microblogging service, Twitter recently announced that it would label the fake media shared on its platform.
- ✓ From next month, Twitter will start labelling the photo or video, so that its users can identify that the media has been manipulated. It also announced that, the firm may remove some media, which are harmful to public safety.

3. India's 13th major port is set to be established in which state, as per the recent Cabinet approval?

- [A] Tamil Nadu [B] Kerala
[C] Maharashtra ☒ [D] Gujarat

- ✓ The Union Cabinet of India recently approved to set up 13th major port of India, at Vadhavan in Maharashtra. The project is to entail a total cost of Rs 65,544 crore.
- ✓ All related business activities would be done under Private Public Partnership (PPP) mode. A special

purpose vehicle is proposed to be formed, which would develop the infrastructure of the new port.

4. Which Indian city was recently certified formally as a World Heritage site by UNESCO?

- [A] Varanasi [B] Ahmedabad
[C] Jaipur ☒ [D] Nagpur

- ✓ The Pink City of India, Jaipur was formally certified as a World Heritage site by the Director General of UNESCO, Audrey Azoulay.
- ✓ The World Heritage City certificate was presented at a ceremony held at the historic Albert Hall of Jaipur. It was also announced that UNESCO would collaborate with the Tourism department of Rajasthan Government to promote tourism sector in Western Rajasthan.
- ✓ The walled city of Jaipur was named as a UNESCO World Heritage site in July 2019, at the 43rd Session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee in the city of Baku, Azerbaijan.

5. The Union Cabinet recently approved to confer the status of Institution of National Importance (INI) to how many Indian Institutes of Information Technology?

- [A] 2 [B] 3 [C] 4 [D] 5 ☒

- ✓ The Union Cabinet recently approved the Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs) Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2020, to confer the status of Institution of National Importance (INI) to five Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs).
- ✓ The 5 IIITs in Public-Private-Partnership mode at Surat, Bhopal, Bhagalpur, Agartala and Raichur are conferred with the INI status.
- ✓ After the status has been granted, the institutions would be able to award degrees and to use the nomenclature of Bachelor of Technology (BTech) or Master of Technology or PhD degree. The existing 15 IIITs had already been provided with the INI status.

6. Israel's Elbit Systems recently signed a MoU with which Indian company for developing an unmanned aerial vehicle?

- [A] HAL ☒ [B] DRDO [C] BHEL [D] ISRO

- ✓ During the on-going exhibition DefExpo-2020, a MoU was signed between Hindustan Aeronautics Limited and Israel's Elbit Systems, for joint development of an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV).
- ✓ The agreement aims at analysing the feasibility of developing an UAV, which performs vertical take-off and landing, for maritime and land-based military operations.
- ✓ The proposed UAV will cut down the huge costs associated with maintenance of manned helicopters. The vehicles with greater potential, will also be more efficient in military operations.

7. What is the rank of India in the recently released International intellectual property index 2020?

- [A] 36 [B] 40 ☒ [C] 42 [D] 44

- ✓ The US Chamber of Commerce Global Innovation Policy Centre (GIPC) recently released the latest edition of International intellectual property index.
- ✓ In the list, India is ranked 40, with a score of 38.46%, higher than the last year's score. India was placed at 36th rank in the last year's list, which ranked 50 countries across the world. This year the Centre included 53 economies.
- ✓ The United States, the United Kingdom, Sweden, France and Germany retained their positions and were placed at the top 5 spots in the intellectual property index list.

8. Union Cabinet of India approved Alliance Air to start flight operations between India and which country, by waiving 20-aircraft rule?

- [A] Sri Lanka ☒ [B] Mauritius
[C] Thailand [D] Singapore

- ✓ The Union Cabinet has granted approval to Alliance Air to fly between India and Sri Lanka, by waiving the rule that an airline needs to own minimum 20 aircrafts to operate internationally.

- ✓ Alliance Air, which is a 100 per cent subsidiary of Air India, has five years of experience but does not have 20 aircrafts. A special exemption is allowed for the interim period, until the airline deploys the higher among- a minimum of 20 aircraft or 20 per cent of total capacity.

- ✓ There was no commercial operation scheduled from Palaly and Batticaloa airports of Sri Lanka, before this approval.

9. Britain's Prince Charles has launched a new Children's protection fund for which Asian country?

- [A] Sri Lanka [B] India ☒ [C] Bhutan [D] Nepal

- ✓ The Prince of Britain, Charles has recently unveiled a new children's protection fund for India. This fund is a part of the charity founded by him in 2007, the British Asian Trust.

- ✓ The trust was founded to fight poverty in South Asia. Noted American singer Katy Perry was named as the ambassador of the new fund. The Protection fund will focus on reducing the exploitation of children by 50% in India over 10 years.

10. Which country recently launched the 'International Religious Freedom Alliance' for protecting religious freedom across the world?

- [A] Russia [B] USA ☒ [C] Japan [D] India

- ✓ The United States recently launched the International Religious Freedom Alliance, which is aimed at protecting and preserving religious freedom across the world. The U S Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced the formal launch of the alliance.

- ✓ As many as 27 countries have joined the alliance and the prominent countries among them are Australia, Brazil, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands & Greece. He also announced that the next ministerial to Advance Religious Freedom will be hosted by Poland in Warsaw.