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FOURTH WEEK

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22 JANUARY - 31 JANUARY



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1. What is India's GDP growth rate for the current fiscal, as estimated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF)?

- [A] 5.2 % [B] 5.0 % [C] 4.8 % ☒ [D] 4.6 %

- ✓ The International Monetary Fund (IMF) decreased India's GDP growth forecast to 4.8% for this fiscal year, which is 1.3% point lesser than its previous estimates. The IMF also projected that India's economy will grow by 5.8% next year and 6.5% in 2021–2022.
- ✓ The Global economic growth rate was also lowered by the IMF to be 3.3 % in the current year and 3.4% in 2022. India's GDP forecast dip was mainly due to the NBFC crisis and weak demand in rural India. The slowdown in India is said to be the reason for cut in global growth rate.

2. Which Indian state has topped the production of vegetables in 2018–19, as per the recent data from the Ministry of Agriculture?

- [A] Uttar Pradesh [B] Bihar
[C] Odisha [D] West Bengal ☒

- ✓ The Ministry of Agriculture recently released the State-wise horticulture production data for the year 2018–19. As per the data, West Bengal was the top State in vegetable production with 29.55 million tonnes (mt) of vegetables last year.
- ✓ The state accounted for 15.9% of the country's total vegetable production in 2018–19. The number one state during 2017–18 was Uttar Pradesh, which is pushed to the second place this year, with 27.71 mt vegetables.
- ✓ In fruit production, Andhra Pradesh continued to hold the top spot with 17.61 mt, followed by Maharashtra with 10.82 mt.

3. Who was recently appointed as the new Managing Director of the State Bank of India (SBI)?

- [A] Challa Sreenivasulu Setty ☒ [B] Rajnish Kumar
[C] Atanu Kumar Das [D] Sanjiv Chadha

- ✓ The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the proposal of the Department of the

Financial Services for appointing Challa Sreenivasulu Setty as the Managing Director of the State Bank of India (SBI).

- ✓ Challa Sreenivasulu Setty, who is currently serving as the Deputy managing director of the country's largest lender, has been appointed as the MD of the SBI for a period of 3 years. Last year, an MD of SBI, Anshula Kant was appointed as the MD and Chief Financial Officer of World Bank.

4. What is the rank of India in the 'Social Mobility Index', recently released by the World Economic Forum?

- [A] 56 [B] 66 [C] 76 ☒ [D] 86

- ✓ In the recently released World Economic Forum's Social Mobility Index, India was ranked at 76 out of 82 countries. Denmark was placed at the first rank in the inaugural edition of the index.
- ✓ The index assessed the countries across five key dimensions, which are health, education, technology, work and protections & institutions. According to the index, the most socially mobile societies in the world are all European, the first five spots being held by Denmark, Norway, Finland, Sweden and Iceland.

5. Which organisation recently released the 'Time to Care' report?

- [A] World Bank [B] Asian Development Bank
[C] NGO Oxfam ☒ [D] NGO Pratham

- ✓ Oxfam, a confederation of charitable organizations and rights group recently released the 'Time to care' report, which focussed on global inequalities.
- ✓ The report said that inequalities pertaining at the global level is deep-rooted and vast while the number of billionaires has doubled in the last decade.
- ✓ It also revealed a comparison that the total wealth of 63 Indian billionaires is higher than the total Union Budget of India for the fiscal year 2018–19 (Rs 24,42,200 crore). It also suggested that gender inequalities must be resolved for an inclusive development.

6. Who has been recently appointed as the President of Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI)?

- [A] Ashish Garg ☒ [B] Aditya Garg
[C] Nagendra Rao [D] Narendra Rao

✓ The Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI) recently appointed Ashish Garg as its new President for the year 2020. Another member of ICSI, Nagendra D Rao has been elected Vice-President of the Institute.

✓ Ashish Garg was elected to the central council of ICSI for the 2015–18 term and has been re-elected for the 2019–22 term. The ICSI is a New Delhi based statutory body to promote and regulate the profession of company secretaries in India.

7. Which country is the largest recipient of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in 2019, according to the latest UNCTAD report?

- [A] India [B] China [C] USA ☒ [D] Singapore

✓ The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) recently released its 'Global Investment Trend Monitor report' and listed the countries on the basis of receipts of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).

✓ As per the report, the United States was the largest recipient of FDI in 2019 with inflow of investments amounting to \$251 billion. The second largest recipient was China at \$140 billion in 2019.

✓ India was also among the top 10 FDI recipients in 2019, which attracted investments worth \$49 billion. This is 16% higher than the previous year FDI inflow of the country. The report also stated that majority of India's FDI inflow went to its service sector.

8. The UN World Tourism Organization recently released its 'UNWTO World Tourism Barometer report'. Where is the headquarters of UNWTO located?

- [A] Paris [B] Madrid ☒ [C] Tokyo [D] New York

✓ The UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) is the United Nations Agency for promoting sustainable tourism, which is headquartered at Madrid, Spain.

✓ UNWTO recently released its comprehensive report on global tourism titled 'UNWTO World Tourism Barometer report'. According to the report, 1.5 billion international tourist arrivals were recorded in the year 2019, around the globe. This is an increase of 4% from the previous year and this is also the tenth consecutive year recording growth. It also predicted a growth of 3% to 4% in tourism sector, for the year 2020.

9. Who was recently appointed as the Managing Director and Chief Executive of Bank of Baroda?

- [A] Challa Sreenivasulu Setty [B] Rajnish Kumar
[C] Sanjiv Chadha ☒ [D] Atanu Kumar Das

✓ The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet appointed Sanjiv Chadha as the Managing Director and Chief Executive of the public sector bank, Bank of Baroda.

✓ Chadha was serving as the Deputy Managing Director at SBI Capital Markets. Another two key appointments were also made, which includes Lingam Venkat Prabhakar as MD & CEO of Canara Bank and Atanu Kumar Das as MD & CEO of Bank of India.

✓ While Lingam Venkat Prabhakar was the Executive Director of Punjab National Bank earlier, Atanu Kumar Das was Executive Director at Bank of India who will be promoted to the post of MD& CEO.

10. Man Mohan Sood, who passed away recently, belonged to which field?

- [A] Music [B] Sports ☒ [C] Literature [D] Politics

✓ The 80-year-old Former Indian cricketer and National Selector, Man Mohan Sood recently passed away. Sood was born on 06-07-1939 in Lahore (now in Pakistan). He had played one Test match representing India and 39 first-class matches.

✓ Man Mohan Sood also had served as an administrator at the Delhi and District Cricket Association (DDCA) and a member of the National Selecting Committee.

1. Which is the most polluted city in India, according to Greenpeace India's recent report?

[A] Gurugram

[B] Jharia ☒

[C] Lucknow

[D] Noida

- ✓ According to the recent report released by the environmental NGO Greenpeace India, Jharia, a city in Jharkhand is the most polluted city in India, which is followed by Dhanbad of the same state.
- ✓ The report also revealed that six of the country's ten most polluted cities are in the state of Uttar Pradesh. Lunglei city of Mizoram is the least polluted city and it is the only city with Particulate matter (PM) levels under the World Health Organisation's prescribed level.
- ✓ Greenpeace India has used data from the Central Pollution Control Board and analysis of particulate matter (PM) data of 287 cities, to rank the most polluted cities in India

2. Which state is the first in the country to implement agricultural land leasing policy?

[A] Tamil Nadu

[B] Gujarat

[C] Uttarakhand ☒

[D] West Bengal

- ✓ The State government of Uttarakhand recently released a notification that it has made a policy to lease agricultural land, becoming the first Indian state to implement such policy.
- ✓ According to the policy, any institution, company or NGO can take farm land on lease for 30 years, provided the leased land is below 30 acres. The farmers who own the land will receive the corresponding rent during the leased period.
- ✓ Difficulties in leasing land for agriculture and plantation in hilly areas and consolidation of fragmented land are being solved by the policy.

3. What is the name of the indigenous artillery guns, which are to be inducted into the Indian Army?

[A] Sharang ☒

[B] Shrirang

[C] Sevak

[D] Senak

- ✓ As per the recent announcement from the Indian Army, the first batch of 18 indigenously upgraded 'Sharang' artillery guns are to be inducted into the Army by March 31, 2020. The barrel of the indigenously designed gun has been upgraded from 130 mm to 155 mm.
- ✓ As a result, the hitting range of the gun has been increased by 12 km kilometres, to 39 kilometres. The Gun Carriage Factory (GCF) in Jabalpur had been awarded the global contract for upgrading the Sharang artillery gun, and the project was done with the help of ordnance factories, Indian Army and DRDO.

4. Which defence Force of India has recently signed a MoU with Geological Survey of India?

[A] Indian Army

[B] Indian Navy ☒

[C] Indian Air Force

[D] Indian Coast Guard

- ✓ A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was recently signed between Indian Navy and Geological Survey of India (GSI). The agreement was on 'Sharing of seabed sediments data, products and expertise for Naval Application in Meteorology and Oceanography'.
- ✓ The Marine and Coastal survey Division of GSI has mapped most of the country's Exclusive Economic Zone.
- ✓ This repository of data collected using the oceanic research vessels of GSI, will now be used by the Indian Navy. The data would be used for oceanographic modelling during their maritime operations in the Indian Ocean region (IOR).

5. The National Bravery Awards for children are presented by which ministry / organisation annually?

[A] Ministry of Women and Child Development

[B] Ministry of Defence

[C] UNICEF

[D] Indian Council for Child Welfare ☒

- ✓ The National Bravery awards for the year 2019 were recently presented by the Indian Council for Child

Welfare (ICCW) in New Delhi. 22 children including 10 girls were selected for the National Bravery awards. Among them, one award was given posthumously.

- ✓ The highest award called Bharat award was conferred on a 15 year old Kerala boy Adithya, for saving more than 40 lives after a bus accident.
- ✓ Indian Council for Child Welfare was formed in the year 1952, which initiated this award to recognize children for their brave and spontaneous selfless service or their daring act against a social crime.

6. Retired IAS Officer Yudvir Singh Malik has been recently appointed as the Chairman and Managing director (CMD) of which crisis-hit firm?

- [A] IL&FS [B] DHFL
[C] Unitech ☒ [D] Altico Capital

- ✓ Retired IAS Officer Yudvir Singh Malik has been recently appointed as the Chairman and Managing director (CMD) of crisis-hit realty firm Unitech. He assumed office on January 21, 2020.
- ✓ A few days back, the Supreme Court directed the Centre to take total management control of Unitech and appoint a new board of nominee directors. The firm was reported of allegedly using flat-buyer's money and default the delivery of flats.

7. Which Private sector bank launched 'Cardless Cash Withdrawal' facility from its ATMs, recently?

- [A] HDFC Bank [B] Axis Bank
[C] ICICI Bank ☒ [D] Kotak Mahindra Bank

- ✓ India's leading Private sector bank recently launched card-less cash withdrawal' facility from its ATMs. The facility will be available throughout the day, across all ICICI Bank ATMs, which count to nearly 15000.
- ✓ For availing the card-less service, the customer needs to log into the ICICI mobile app – 'iMobile' and generate a temporary PIN. The customer then can withdraw cash by entering the OTP received and the PIN, without the need of carrying any card. The daily transaction limit and limit per transaction is ₹20,000.

8. As per the recent survey of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) by consultancy firm PwC, which country has the highest growth prospects?

- [A] China [B] India
[C] United States of America ☒ [D] Germany

- ✓ The leading international consultancy firm PwC recently released the results of its annual survey of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) across the world. The firm surveyed more than 1,580 CEOs in 83 countries about global economy prospects.
- ✓ As per the survey, the United States has the highest growth prospects, according to the CEOs. China remained in the second place while India retained the position of the fourth rank. The report also stated that 53% of global CEOs believe international economic growth would decline in the next 12 months.

9. The recently set-up 'National Start-up Advisory Council' is to be chaired by which Union Minister?

- [A] Minister of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
[B] Minister of Corporate Affairs
[C] Minister of Commerce and Industry ☒
[D] Minister of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

- ✓ The Union government recently announced that a National Startup Advisory Council has been set up. The Council will advise the Centre on steps to be taken to create a strong environment for startup companies in India.
- ✓ The Council will be chaired by the Union Commerce minister while it will have non-official members with 2 year term, to be nominated by the Centre. The nominees of the ministries and organisations concerned, not below the rank of joint secretary will be ex-officio members.

10. India's first ever convention centre in Africa was recently inaugurated in which African country?

- [A] Libya [B] Ghana

[C] Niger ☒

[D] Algeria

- ✓ Indian External Affairs Minister Jai Shankar recently inaugurated the first ever convention centre of India in Africa. The Mahatma Gandhi International Convention Centre (MGICC) was inaugurated in the Western African country Niger with the assistance from India.
 - ✓ The International Convention Centre was jointly inaugurated by President of Niger Mahamadou Issoufou. This is also the first-ever visit by an Indian Foreign Minister to the West African country.
 - ✓ India has recently extended \$15 million grant to Niger in support of organizing the African Union (AU) summit held in Niger last year.
-

1. Hassan Diab is the Prime Minister of which country?

[A] Israel

[B] Jordan

[C] Syria

[D] Lebanon ☒

- ✓ Lebanon formed a new government recently under Prime Minister Hassan Diab amidst various economic and political crises.
- ✓ The country remained without an effective government, after the former Prime Minister Saad Al Hariri quit from his role in October 2019 under pressure from protests against state corruption and mismanagement.
- ✓ The President of Lebanon, Michel Aoun nominated Hassan Diab as the new Prime Minister. Hassan Diab is a 60-year-old professor at the American University of Beirut, who heads a new cabinet of 20 members.

2. Which Indian telecom service provider recently got approval from the telecom department to raise the FDI limit to 100%?

[A] Jio

[B] Bharti Airtel ☒

[C] Vodafone Idea

[D] BSNL

- ✓ Bharti Airtel recently got approval from the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) to increase the FDI limit up to 100% of the paid-up capital from the earlier limit of 49%.
- ✓ The company already received permission from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for overseas portfolio investors to invest up to 74% in Bharti Airtel.
- ✓ This DoT approval will help the tele-com company to source more funds from overseas investors. Singapore Telecommunications Ltd or Singtel, which owns a 35% stake in Bharti Airtel is expected to increase its stake in Bharti Airtel.

3. According to the recent notification issued by the Ministry of Law and Justice, India, which country was declared as the 'reciprocating territory'?

[A] United Arab Emirates ☒

[B] Oman

[C] Saudi Arabia

[D] Yemen

- ✓ The Ministry of Law and Justice recently issued a Gazette Notification, which declared the United Arab Emirates to be a "reciprocating territory" under Section 44A of the Civil Procedure Code, 1908.
- ✓ The notification also declared a list of courts in the UAE to be 'Superior Courts' under the same section of CPC. The orders passed by certain designated courts from a 'reciprocating territory' can be implemented in India, as if they were passed in India.
- ✓ Besides UAE, the other countries which were declared as reciprocating territories include United Kingdom, Singapore, Bangladesh, Malaysia and New Zealand among others. The decision is believed to help bring down the time required for executing verdicts between the two countries.

4. What is India's rank in the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) India annual report?

[A] Fifth ☒

[B] Sixth

[C] Seventh

[D] Eighth

- ✓ Carbon Disclosure Project-India (CDP), an environmental non-profit organisation released its annual report of 2018, titled "Corporates #StepUp Climate Action".
- ✓ As per the report, 25 companies committed to science-based targets in alignment with the Paris Agreement by December 2018. This has earned the 5th rank to India, which is only after the US, Japan, Britain and France in corporate climate action.
- ✓ The report examines carbon reduction activities of companies and revealed that 58 Indian companies of the 59 firms surveyed between 2018 and 2019, have board-level oversight of climate-related issues.

5. Which Indian actor was recently honoured with the Crystal Award of the World Economic Forum?

[A] Priyanka Chopra

[B] Deepika Padukone ☒

[C] Kareena Kapoor

[D] Anushka Sharma

- ✓ Famous Bollywood actor Deepika Padukone received the Crystal Award during the 50th Annual meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.
- ✓ The award was presented to her in recognition of her efforts to create awareness about the importance of mental health. Hilde Schwab, Chairwoman and Co-Founder of the World Economic Forum's World Arts Forum presented the award to the actor.
- ✓ Deepika Padukone runs a foundation named 'Live Love Laugh', which works towards conducting awareness programs in Indian schools. It also funds for free psychiatric treatment & medical education programs.

6. Which state government has recently launched the 'Mukhyamantri Krishak Durghatna Kalyan Yojana'?

- [A] Gujarat [B] Uttar Pradesh ☒
- [C] Maharashtra [D] Andhra Pradesh

- ✓ The state government of Uttar Pradesh Government has recently launched Mukhyamantri Krishak Durghatna Kalyan Yojana.
- ✓ Under the scheme financial assistance of Rs. 5 Lakh will be provided to the family of farmers on their death or occurrence of physical disability while working. The farmers in the age group of 18 to 70 are covered under the scheme.
- ✓ The assistance program will also cover the people who work in the fields of other owners and receive the crops after harvesting. The state has also decided to implement Mukhyamantri Paryatan Samvardhan Yojana to boost tourism in state.

7. What is the name of the humanoid robot, which was recently unveiled by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)?

- [A] Gagan Mitra [B] Vyom Mitra ☒
- [C] Vayu Mitra [D] Human Mitra

- ✓ The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) recently unveiled the humanoid robot, called Vyom Mitra at the inaugural session of the conference "Human Spaceflight

and Exploration — Present Challenges and Future Trends", held in Bengaluru.

- ✓ This humanoid with feminine features is to be launched into the space ahead of the first manned space mission of India. The humanoid will simulate the human functions required for space during its test flight. ISRO has scheduled two trail flights with humanoids in December 2020 and July 2021.

8. What is the capital of the newly formed Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu?

- [A] Daman ☒ [B] Nagar Haveli
- [C] Dadra [D] Silvassa

- ✓ Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently announced that the city of Daman will be the headquarters of the newly constituted Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu. Daman is a city in the erstwhile UT Daman & Diu, located on the west coast of India.
- ✓ Two separate Union Territories of India, Daman & Diu and Dadra & Nagar Haveli were merged to a single Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu on December 3, 2019. Silvassa was the previous capital of the erstwhile UT Dadra and Nagar Haveli.

9. Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL) of India recently signed a MoU to assist the Petroleum Authority of which country?

- [A] Ghana ☒ [B] Argentina
- [C] Brazil [D] Peru

- ✓ A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was recently signed between the Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL) and National Petroleum Authority (NPA) of Ghana to expand the country's Liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) network.
- ✓ Indian Oil will provide assistance and share its technical expertise with the Petroleum authorities of the African country to implement the National LPG Promotion Policy of Ghana. The announcement was made by the Ministry of Petroleum and natural gas.

- ✓ Indian Oil is also expected to assist Ghana in areas of infrastructure development for the new LPG Value chain.

10. Union Minister for Petroleum & Natural Gas and Steel has recently launched a volunteer scheme 'SERVICE' for the employees of which Indian PSU?

[A] Coal India Limited (CIL)

[B] Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) ☒

[C] National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC)

[D] Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL)

- ✓ Union Minister for Petroleum & Natural Gas and Steel has recently launched a volunteer scheme 'SERVICE' for the employees of the Indian PSU Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL).
 - ✓ The scheme called, SAIL Employees Rendering Volunteerism & Initiatives for Community Engagement (SERVICE), will be made operational from the foundation day of the company, which is on January 24.
 - ✓ Under the scheme, the employees are encouraged to voluntarily indulge themselves in social activities, with main focus on education, health and women empowerment.
-

1. Which organisation is set to develop the National Data and Analytics Platform (NDAP)?

[A] Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation

[B] NITI Aayog ☒

[C] Finance Commission

[D] National Development Council

- ✓ The Think tank of India, NITI Aayog is to develop the National Data and Analytics Platform (NDAP). Recently the Vice Chairman of NITI Aayog released the Vision document for the National Data and Analytics Platform.
- ✓ The stake holders can access all government data through the platform, in a user-friendly manner. The platform will comprise of the latest data from various government websites. It will also host tools for analysis of the data and different types of visualisation.
- ✓ The first version of NDAP will be released in 2021. A Technical Advisory Group (TAG) will also be set up with experts in the field, who guide in the development and management of the platform.

2. India recently handed over the consignment of Measles and Rubella vaccines to which country, after a suspected outbreak?

[A] Sri Lanka

[B] Maldives ☒

[C] Bangladesh

[D] Nepal

- ✓ More than thirty thousand doses of Measles and Rubella vaccines to the Maldives to control the outbreak of Measles in the island country.
- ✓ Though Maldives has eliminated the spread of Measles, the government in Male suspected an outbreak of the disease after it detected the case. The country made an emergency request to India, for the vaccines, which was handed over within three days of the request.
- ✓ Maldives had earlier approached Denmark and UNICEF for the vaccines. It is also said that 4 people of Maldives tested positive for the disease in the past one week.

3. World Holocaust Forum was recently convened in which city, to remember Holocaust and counter anti-Semitism?

[A] Moscow

[B] Jerusalem ☒

[C] Paris

[D] Berlin

- ✓ World Holocaust Forum was recently convened in the capital city of Israel, Jerusalem. The forum marked the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz death camp.
- ✓ More than 40 global leaders attended the forum, which includes the Russian President Vladimir Putin, US Vice-President Mike Pence, Presidents of France and Germany and the Prince of Wales.
- ✓ The forum was organised by the World Holocaust Forum Foundation, which is an international organisation found to preserve the memory of the Holocaust and to promote tolerance between all religions & nationalities.

4. When is the International Day of Education observed every year?

[A] January 21

[B] January 24 ☒

[C] February 21

[D] February 24

- ✓ January 24 is observed as the International Day of Education every year by UNESCO. It celebrates the role of education for Development and Peace. The theme for this year's International Day of Education is "Learning for People, Planet, Prosperity and Peace".
- ✓ On December 2018, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly adopted a resolution, which declared January 24 as 'International Day of Education'.
- ✓ This year's celebration is the 2nd year of observing the day and it has considered education and learning as the greatest Renewable Resource and it reaffirms that the Education is a Fundamental Right.

5. Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) has recently signed a MoU with which of the following organization?

[A] World Bank

[B] Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation ☒

[C] Asian Development Bank

[D] BRICS Bank

- ✓ A MoU has been signed by the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) with Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF). This MoU is under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM). The MoU aims to strengthen the rural poor institutions at grass root level.
- ✓ DAY-NRLM and BMGF has a shared focus on improving the lives of poor people and the marginalized, by creating employment opportunities through rural institutions.
- ✓ DAY-NRLM was launched by the MoRD IN June 2011. The scheme has an agenda of covering seven crore rural population in the country through self-managed Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and other such institutions in a period of 8 to 10 years.

6. Who has been recently awarded with the Subash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar, 2020?

[A] Vijay Kumar

[B] Sylendra Babu

[C] Kumar Munnan Singh ☒

[D] Naveen Kumar

- ✓ Kumar Munnan Singh has been selected for the Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar 2020 under the Individual category.
- ✓ Under the Institution category, Disaster Mitigation & Management Centre, Uttarakhand has been selected for the award. Kumar Munnan Singh was the founding member of the National Disaster Management Authority in 2005. He is also lauded for establishing the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), from scratch.
- ✓ The award is given by the Government of India to recognize the commendable work done by individuals and organisations in the field of disaster management.
- ✓ The award is announced every year on 23rd January which marks the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose.

7. Which state has recently made reading of preamble to constitution as a mandatory practice in schools?

[A] Uttar Pradesh

[B] Madhya Pradesh ☒

[C] Gujarat

[D] Maharashtra

- ✓ As per an order issued by the State Education Department of Madhya Pradesh, the state government has made the reading of the Preamble to the Constitution in schools mandatory.
- ✓ As per the order, the Preamble would be read out every Saturday, by the head master or the teacher in all the primary, middle, high and higher secondary schools after prayer, along with the students. It is said that such practice in school would inculcate the interest in our constitution among the students.
- ✓ Maharashtra has also has made reading of Preamble of the Constitution in all primary and secondary schools, starting from January 26, 2020. The resolution in this direction was adopted in 2013 but was not implemented so far.

8. Which state's Tourism department has received the special mention honour as "Emerging Global Destination" in UN World Tourism Organisation Global Destination Award 2019?

[A] Uttarakhand

[B] Manipur

[C] Assam

[D] Kerala ☒

- ✓ The Barrier Free Tourism Project implemented by Kerala Tourism in Trissur District has received the special mention honour as "Emerging Global Destination" in UN World Tourism Organisation Global Destination Award 2019.
- ✓ In March 2019, the Kerala Tourism has launched the barrier free project to make 120 destinations in Kerala disabled friendly. 80 such projects have been implemented and 8 of them are in the district of Trissur.
- ✓ Kerala is the first state to work as per the guidelines issued by UN WTO, on making the destinations disabled friendly.

9. What is the name of the award recently presented by the Indian President to children, in the fields of innovation, social service, sports, art and culture and bravery?

[A] Janani Puraskar [B] Shakti Puraskar

[C] Bala Shakti Puraskar ☒ [D] Bala Puraskar

- ✓ The Bala Shakti Puraskar award is given to children in the fields of innovation, social service, scholastic activities, sports, art and culture and bravery.
- ✓ The Indian President Ramnath Kovind recently presented the awards to 49 children in the age group of 5–18 years. Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bala Puraskar award was instituted by Ministry of Women and Child Development and is given under two categories.
- ✓ Bala Shakti Puraskar is awarded to meritorious children while Bal Kalyan Puraskar is awarded to individuals and institutions, who have contributed for child welfare.

10. What is the current investment limit for foreign portfolio investors in government and corporate bonds, after the recent directions of RBI?

[A] 20% [B] 25%

[C] 30% ☒ [D] 35%

- ✓ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) recently increased the investment limit for FPIs in government and corporate bonds from 20% to 30%.
- ✓ As of now, the foreign portfolio investors (FPI) could not invest more than 20 per cent of their total investment in either central government securities or state development loans or corporate bonds.
- ✓ This relaxation is expected to attract more investments and increase the inflow of funds into the Indian market. FPIs are allowed to invest in exchange-traded funds that invest only in debt instruments.

1. The 1st edition of Ganga–Volga dialogue was recently held in New Delhi, to enhance the bilateral co-operation between India and which country?

[A] China

[B] Russia ☒

[C] Nepal

[D] Bangladesh

- ✓ The inaugural edition of the Ganga Volga Dialogue was recently held in New Delhi, the idea of which was originated during the India–Russia Summit between President Putin and Prime Minister Modi, held in October 2018.
- ✓ The Dialogue was organised by the Union Ministry of External Affairs, India in association with Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee Research Foundation.
- ✓ Several scholars of India and Russia participated in the event and had discussions in the context of India–Russia bilateral cooperation, with the main focus on culture and civilization.

2. The International Summit on Women in STEM – “Visualizing the Future: New Skylines”, was recently held in which city?

[A] Mumbai

[B] New Delhi ☒

[C] Hyderabad

[D] Kolkata

- ✓ The Department of Biotechnology, under the Ministry of Science and Technology organized an International Summit on Women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics) – “Visualizing the Future: New Skylines” at India Habitat centre, New Delhi.
- ✓ The Summit was organized to encourage the participation of women in STEM field and for developing their career in the field.
- ✓ Renowned women scientists from different countries, who pursue their career in the STEM field addressed the participants and motivated them to pursue their scientific career.

3. What is the theme of the National Voters’ Day celebrated across the country?

[A] Electoral Literacy for Stronger Democracy ☒

[B] Voting Rights for All

[C] Ethical Voting

[D] Sab Se Pehle Voting

- ✓ National Voters’ Day is being celebrated across the country on January 25. It was first celebrated on January 25, 2011, to commemorate the foundation day of the Election Commission of India (ECI). Which was established on the same day in 1950.
- ✓ The National Voters’ day of this year marks the tenth year of celebration and the 70th year of functioning of the Election Commission of India. The theme for the National Voters’ Day, 2020 is ‘Electoral Literacy for Stronger Democracy’.
- ✓ Indian President Ram Nath Kovind will be the Chief Guest of the celebration organised at New Delhi, by the ECI.

4. India signed a MoU with the World Bank for the Agri–Business and Rural Transformation Project of which state?

[A] Gujarat

[B] Maharashtra ☒

[C] Madhya Pradesh

[D] Haryana

- ✓ The Government of India, the state government of Maharashtra and the World Bank signed a loan agreement of \$210 million for the Agri–business and Rural Transformation Project of the state.
- ✓ The fund will help small and marginal farmers to increase their market access and assist them to participate in the value chains.
- ✓ The farmers are encouraged to adopt climate resilient production techniques in agriculture. The project will be implemented in all 36 districts of the state of Maharashtra and nearly 1 million farming households are expected to benefit from the project.

5. Which Indian Private sector bank has recently launched its wealth management platform called ‘Pioneer Banking’?

[A] ICICI Bank

[B] HDFC Bank

[C] Axis Bank

[D] IndusInd Bank ☒

- ✓ Leading Private Sector bank IndusInd bank has launched its wealth management platform called 'Pioneer Banking', which serves the banking needs of its high net-worth customers.
- ✓ The new service of wealth management recently introduced is expected to be merged with the other set of personal and commercial banking products offered by the bank to its customers.
- ✓ The new service mainly focuses the high net-worth individual customers and provides various benefits including free doorstep banking up to Rs 4 lakh per day and Services of dedicated wealth managers and investment specialists.

6. Which steel plant of India was recently awarded at the WEF Annual meet, for being included in the WEF's Lighthouse Network?

[A] Salem Steel Plant

[B] Tata Steel, Kalinganagar ☒

[C] Vijayanagar Steel Plant

[D] Vishakhapatnam Steel Plant

- ✓ Tata Steel Kalinganagar was recently awarded at the WEF Annual meet, for being included in the WEF's Lighthouse Network.
- ✓ In July 2019, Tata Steel Kalinganagar became the first and only Indian manufacturing plant to be included in the coveted 'Lighthouse Network' of the World Economic Forum. Other ten manufacturing plants from around the world were also included in the network.
- ✓ Tata Steel's IJmuiden plant located in the Netherlands has already been included in the network.

7. The Global Consortium for Digital Currency Governance was recently announced by which organisation?

[A] World Bank

[B] World Economic Forum ☒

[C] IMF

[D] World Trade Organisation

- ✓ The first Global Consortium which focussed on creating a framework for Governance of Digital Currencies was recently announced by the World Economic Forum. The announcement was made during the last day of the 50th annual meeting of WEF, held in Davos, Switzerland.
- ✓ This initiative is to create a global platform for financial institutions, government representatives and technical experts in the field. The consortium is announced with the objective of increasing access to the financial system through inclusive policies.
- ✓ The Governance of Digital currencies, including cryptocurrencies and stable-coins would also be focussed.

8. Jair Messias Bolsonaro, who has arrived India to attend the Republic Day celebrations as chief guest, is the President of which country?

[A] Argentina

[B] Brazil ☒

[C] France

[D] Germany

- ✓ The President of Brazil, Jair Messias Bolsonaro recently arrived India along with his ministers, parliamentarians and top businessmen, to grace the Indian Republic Day celebrations as the chief guest.
- ✓ India and Brazil are expected to sign as many as 15 agreements to enhance bilateral cooperation in the fields of like oil and gas, mining and cyber security.
- ✓ Agreements on social security, on mutual legal assistance in criminal matters, on cooperation in bio – energy are also expected to be inked between the countries. Bolsonaro became the President of Brazil in October 2018 and this is his first visit to India.

9. The International Children's Film festival was recently inaugurated in which South Asian country, with the theme 'Under the World'?

[A] Sri Lanka

[B] Bangladesh ☒

[C] Nepal

[D] India

- ✓ The International Children's Film festival was recently inaugurated in the capital city of Bangladesh, Dhaka. It is one of the biggest film festivals in the country and the

only international festival which is celebrated exclusively for children and young adults since 2008.

- ✓ The festival is organized by the Children's Film Society of Bangladesh and will feature 173 films from 39 countries. The 7 day-long festival is set to conclude on 31st of January.
- ✓ To mark the 100th birth anniversary of the country's founding President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, 'Khoka Jekhoni Chhoto Chhilen' movie was screened. The theme of this year's festival is 'Under the World'.

10. India has signed an agreement with which country to upgrade Ashuganj-Akhaura road into 4-lane highway?

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

- ✓ India has recently signed an agreement with Bangladesh to upgrade 50.58 km road between Ashuganj river port and Akhaura in Bangladesh into 4-lane highway. This is the part of \$2 billion Line of Credit extended by India to Bangladesh in 2016.
- ✓ Out of the 50.58 km, a stretch of 39 km would be upgraded by Roads and Highways Department (RHD) of Bangladesh and an Indian Company – Afcons Infrastructure Limited.
- ✓ The RHD and an India-Bangladesh joint venture firm will take up the work of upgrading the remaining part of the road. The project is expected to improve the road connectivity between the two countries and facilitate regional connectivity between South and South-east Asian countries.

1. Which legendary Indian sportsperson was awarded with the prestigious 'Padma Vibhushan' award recently?

- [A] Sachin Tendulkar [B] Dhanraj Pillai
[C] M C Mary Kom ☒ [D] Abhinav Bindra

- ✓ 6 time World Champion and Olympian boxer Mary Kom was conferred with the prestigious 'Padma Vibhushan' award on the Republic day of the year 2020.
- ✓ Seven eminent personalities were presented the 'Padma Vibhushan' award, which is the second highest civilian award in India, only next to the 'Bharat Ratna'.
- ✓ Other awardees are Former Union Ministers Arun Jaitley, Sushma Swaraj and George Fernandes (posthumously), Singer Chhannulal Mishra of Uttar Pradesh and former Mauritius Prime Minister Anerood Gugnauth.

2. How many personalities were selected for the 'Padma Bhushan' award, on the republic day 2020?

- [A] 14 [B] 15 [C] 16 ☒ [D] 17

- ✓ Sixteen eminent personalities were selected for the 'Padma Bhushan' award, for their distinguished service of high order. Out of the 141 total Padma awardees selected this year, there were seven Padma Vibhushan, 16 Padma Bhushan and 118 Padma Shri Awardees.
- ✓ Famous personalities who were selected for the 'Padma Bhushan' award includes, top-rated Badminton Player PV Sindhu, Former Chief Minister of Goa – Manohar Parrikar (posthumous), father of modern legal education in India, N R Madhava Menon and businessmen Anand Mahindra and Venu Srinivasan.

3. 'The National Tourism Conference' of the year 2020 was recently organised in which Indian city?

- [A] Varanasi [B] Konark ☒
[C] Shimla [D] Leh

- ✓ The National Tourism Conference was recently hosted in the city of Konark, Odisha. The 2 day conference was jointly organized by the state government of Odisha and

The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).

- ✓ Union Tourism Minister Prahelad Singh Patel attended the conference and announced that the Ministry of tourism would fund the travel expenditure of the tourists, who visit 15 places in the country in a year.
- ✓ Such tourists have to travel outside their home states and submit the photos on the ministry's website. A Memorandum of Intent (MoI) was signed between Odisha and Gujarat for cross-promotion of tourist sites.

4. Mark Rutte, who was seen in news recently, is the Prime Minister of which country?

- [A] Germany [B] Netherlands ☒
[C] France [D] Italy

- ✓ The Prime Minister of Netherlands Mark Rutte was recently seen in news, as he made the country's first apology for the persecution of Jews during the World War II.
- ✓ He made this historic apology, first-of-its kind made by any government in this regard, during the country's annual Holocaust commemoration in Amsterdam, on the eve of the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi death camp at Auschwitz.
- ✓ More than 1.1 million Jews out of the 1.4 million who lived in Netherlands were killed in the Auschwitz concentration camp, at the outbreak of World War II.

5. Which city plays host to the annual event 'Bharat Parv, 2020' which celebrates the spirit of India?

- [A] Mumbai [B] New Delhi ☒
[C] Ahmedabad [D] Jaipur

- ✓ The annual event 'Bharat Parv, 2020' is being celebrated from 26th – 31st January, 2020 in New Delhi. The aim of the festival is to encourage Indians to visit different tourism destinations of India and to encourage them with the spirit of 'Dekho Apna Desh'.

- ✓ The theme of this year's festival is set as "Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat" and "Celebrating 150 Years of Mahatma Gandhi".
- ✓ The six-day-event which is to held in front of Red Fort at Gyan Path and Red Fort grounds in New Delhi has several attractions including performance by armed forces bands cultural Performances from different regions of the country.

6. National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR) has recently partnered with which global organisation to establish a 'Communication Resource Unit'?

- [A] World Bank [B] UNICEF ☒
[C] UNESCO [D] IMF

- ✓ National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR), an autonomous organisation under the Union Ministry of Rural Development, has recently partnered with UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund) to establish a 'Communication Resource Unit'.
- ✓ The unit will act as a mechanism to provide communication support to national flagship programmes including POSHAN Abhiyaan, National Health Mission and Swachh Bharath Mission.
- ✓ The Communication Resource Unit is currently operating in three states of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Karnataka, to furnish communication support including capacity building and consultation, to different government departments.

7. India's first and biggest walk-through aviary with over 100 species of birds, was recently inaugurated in which city?

- [A] Mumbai ☒ [B] Guwahati
[C] Bengaluru [D] Thiruvananthapuram

- ✓ The Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Uddhav Thackeray inaugurated the country's first and biggest walk-through aviary at the Veermata Jijabai Bhosale Udyan and Zoo commonly called as the Byculla zoo in Mumbai.

- ✓ The aviary comprises of an area of over 18,200 sq.ft. It will be home to over 100 different species of exotic and common birds. A small bridge passes through the aviary which will be opened for the public to walk through and view the birds.

8. What is the name of the national award that is given to a person for meritorious act of human nature in saving the life of a person?

- [A] Jeevan Raksha Padak ☒ [B] Raksha Puraskar
[C] Jeevan Shakti Padak [D] Jeevan Puraskar

- ✓ President Ram Nath Kovind has approved to confer the Jeevan Raksha Padak Series of Awards, 2019 to 54 persons. This includes Sarvottam Jeevan Raksha Padak to 7 persons, Uttam Jeevan Raksha Padak to 8 and Jeevan Raksha Padak to 39 persons. Five awards are to be given posthumously.
- ✓ Jeevan Raksha Padak awards, a branch of the Ashoka Chakra series of Gallantry awards, were instituted in the year 1961. The award is given for meritorious act of human nature in saving the life of a person in incidents like accidents, electrocution, natural calamities or rescue operation in mines.

9. 'Shiv Bhojan' scheme, which is aimed at providing a meal to the poor at subsidised rates, was recently launched in which state?

- [A] Uttar Pradesh [B] Bihar
[C] Maharashtra ☒ [D] Karnataka

- ✓ The state government of Maharashtra launched the 'Shiv Bhojan' scheme, which aims to provide a meal to the poor for Rs 10. The scheme was launched on the occasion of the 71st Republic Day celebrations.
- ✓ Under the scheme, thalis or lunch plates would be available to the people at designated centres in all districts. Nearly 50 'Shiv Bhojan' outlets were set up in a pilot basis, which will be extended to other parts of the state.

10. Sher Singh Kukkal, who passed away recently, was a famous personality in which field?

[A] Politics

[B] Sports

[C] Art ☒

[D] Business

- ✓ The 86-year-old veteran artist and sculptor Sher Singh Kukkal passed away after age-related illness in New Delhi recently. Sher Singh Kukkal was a noted artist with a great experience in several branches of fine arts including drawing, painting, sculpture, printing and photography.
 - ✓ He also taught arts at the Sainik School Satara. The artist had won several national and international awards including the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation Award and the Senior Fellowship in Visual Art Photography by Union Ministry of Culture during 2008–09.
-

1. The Government of India and the state government of Assam recently signed a tripartite agreement with which tribal group?

[A] Bodo ☒

[B] Kuki

[C] Adi

[D] Nishi

- ✓ The Centre and the state government of Assam recently signed a tripartite agreement with National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB).
- ✓ The Bodo tribal group was demanding a separate state of Bodoland from Assam for several years. The All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU) and another group called United Bodo People's Organisation, which led the insurgency, also signed the agreement.
- ✓ More than 1500 militants of NDFB are expected to surrender with arms. Rs.1500 crore has been sanctioned by the government for implementing the accord in next three years.

2. Which Indian squash player became the runner-up in the Pittsburgh Open squash tournament?

[A] Joshna Chinappa

[B] Dipika Pallikal

[C] Saurav Ghosal ☒

[D] Sunayna Kuruvilla

- ✓ Ace Indian squash player Saurav Ghosal became the runner-up in the Pittsburgh Open squash tournament after he lost to the top seed Egyptian player, Fares Dessouky in the final.
- ✓ The second seed Saurav Ghosal lost 7-11, 4-11, 9-11 to the Egyptian player after he advanced to the finals by defeating the fifth seed Egypt's Omar Mossad in the hard-fought semi-final match, which lasted for an hour and 13 minutes.

3. Which state assembly recently passed a resolution to abolish the state's legislative council?

[A] Telangana

[B] Maharashtra

[C] Andhra Pradesh ☒

[D] Karnataka

- ✓ The state assembly of Andhra Pradesh recently passed a resolution to abolish the state's legislative council.

The decision was supported by 133 legislators of the ruling YSR Congress Party.

- ✓ This decision is taken at the backdrop of the constant opposition faced in the upper house of the legislature, the Andhra Pradesh Legislative council. The main opposition party, Telugu Desam Party led by Chandrababu Naidu has 27 seats out of 58 in the council.
- ✓ It recently sent two bills related to the decentralization of Andhra Pradesh's capital to a select committee for further deliberation, after it was passed in the assembly.

4. What is the planned percentage of the government's stake in Air India to be divested?

[A] 50%

[B] 60%

[C] 75%

[D] 100% ☒

- ✓ According to the recent bid document released by the Government, it would sell all its 100 per cent of its equity share capital in Air India, which includes the Air India's 100% stake in AI Express Limited and 50% in Air India SATS Airport Services Private Limited.
- ✓ The government has also announced that it would absorb 30% more in debt and liabilities, than it did in the previous year. March 17 has been set as the dead line for the submission of bids for the sale, which is to be implemented through the open bidding route.
- ✓ The net worth for the interested entities is also reduced to Rs.3500 Cr from the earlier limit of Rs.5000 Cr.

5. Which Indian city plays host to the third Global Potato Conclave of 2020?

[A] Mumbai

[B] Ahmedabad

[C] Gandhinagar ☒

[D] Surat

- ✓ The third Global Potato Conclave recently commenced in Gandhinagar, with the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address through video-conferencing.
- ✓ Two Global Potato Conferences were organised in 1999 and 2008, one in every 10 years. The conclave for this decade is being organised by the Indian Potato Association (IPA) in association with the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), Shimla based ICAR-

Central Potato Research Institute and International Potato Centre (CIP), Peru. The 3 day global event will showcase the achievements in potato research and to set a blueprint for the decade.

6. Which Indian ship-builder is to deliver the anti-submarine stealth warship INS Kavaratti to Indian Navy?

[A] Mazagon Dock Limited

[B] Cochin Shipyard Limited

[C] Hindustan Shipyard Limited

[D] Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers ☒

✓ Kolkata-based Defence PSU- Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers is to deliver the anti-submarine stealth warship, INS Kavaratti to the Indian Navy soon, as per the recent announcement.

✓ Kavaratti is the last of the four Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) stealth corvettes built by the GRSE for the Indian Navy under Project P28, the 1st 3: 'Kamorta', 'Kadmatt' and 'Kiltan', named after islands in the Lakshadweep archipelago, were delivered from 2014-17.

✓ The new Kavaratti warship has 90 per cent indigenous components and is expected to require lower maintenance. With all the trials being completed, the ship is to be delivered by the month end.

7. The world's smallest gold coin, which features Albert Einstein, is recently released by which country?

[A] USA

[B] Switzerland ☒

[C] Germany

[D] France

✓ Switzerland has recently minted the world's smallest gold coin, which bears the famous picture of the great Scientist Albert Einstein. The govt-run Swissmint announced that the world's smallest coin has a diameter of 2.96-millimeter and weighs 0.063 grams.

✓ The value of the coin is pegged at 1/4 Swiss francs or approximately Rs 18.50. Einstein came to Switzerland at the age of 17 and completed his education in the country.

He also became a Swiss citizen in 1902. Another coin featuring the Swiss tennis star Roger Federer was also minted.

8. Marjan Sarec, who was seen in news after his resignation, was the Prime Minister of which country?

[A] Slovenia ☒

[B] Slovakia

[C] Serbia

[D] Croatia

✓ The Prime Minister of Slovenia, Marjan Sarec was seen in news as he recently submitted his resignation from the post to the country's parliament. He also called for an early election as his minority government could not pass important legislations.

✓ The next regular election is due to be held in the middle of 2022. The ruling coalition of five parties, which assumed power in Late 2018, had only 43 out of 90 seats in parliament. Before the announcement of the Prime Minister, the Finance Minister Andrej Bertoncelj also submitted his resignation.

9. Who has been appointed as the chief executive of Indian Bank's Association (IBA)?

[A] Rajnish Kumar

[B] V G Kannan

[C] Sunil Mehta ☒

[D] Rakesh Sharma

✓ As per the recent announcement from the Indian Bank's Association (IBA), Former Managing Director and CEO of Punjab National Bank, Sunil Mehta has taken charge as the Chief Executive of IBA. Sunil Mehta has recently retired as the MD and CEO of Punjab National Bank.

✓ He has previously held the post of Chairman of Indian Banks Association, which was replaced by the head of State Bank of India, Rajnish Kumar in October 2019. Now, Sunil Mehta has replaced VG Kannan, who assumed office on December 31, 2019.

10. Which Indian theatre artist is to be conferred the prestigious French honour, Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters?

[A] Naseeruddin Shah

[B] Sanjana Kapoor ☒

[C] Girish Karnad

[D] Lillette Dubey

- ✓ Veteran theatre personality and the daughter of Bollywood star Shashi Kapoor, artist Sanjna Kapoor is to be presented with the French honour, Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters.
 - ✓ The award is conferred on her for the outstanding contribution the artist has made to the theatre arts. The Culture Minister of France, Franck Riester, who is currently on an official visit to India, is expected to confer the prestigious award on Sanjna Kapoor in a proposed ceremony.
-

1. The Supreme Court of India recently permitted to introduce which animal to Indian habitat from Namibia?

- [A] African Elephant [B] African Lion
[C] African Cheetah ☒ [D] African Rhinoceros

- ✓ The Supreme Court of India recently permitted the Centre to introduce the 'African Cheetahs' to the appropriate habitats in India. As the Asiatic cheetah, commonly called as the Indian Cheetah, has become almost extinct, National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) filed a petition, which sought permission for introducing African Cheetahs to India.
- ✓ The bench headed by the Chief Justice S A Bobde also set up a committee with three members from Wildlife Institute of India, Ministry of Environment and Forests, which will guide the NTCA in this regard.

2. How many wetlands in India were recently added to the 'Ramsar Site' list?

- [A] 8 [B] 10 ☒ [C] 12 [D] 14

- ✓ The Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar recently announced that 10 more Indian wetlands have been declared as sites of international importance by Ramsar. The number of wetlands with Ramsar site tag has now increased to a total of 37.
- ✓ The total surface area covered by the 37 Ramsar sites is also increased more than 1 million hectares. In the new declaration, Maharashtra gets the first Ramsar site tag for Nandur Madhameshwar.
- ✓ Punjab added 3 more sites and now has a total of 6 sites while Uttar Pradesh added 6 new sites and now has 7 Ramsar sites. The Ramsar Convention was signed by the member countries to preserve the ecological significance of their wetlands.

3. The tableau of which state has won the Best Tableaux awards for Republic Day Parade, 2020?

- [A] Odisha [B] Uttar Pradesh
[C] Gujarat [D] Assam ☒

- ✓ The tableau of Assam with the theme, "Land of Unique Craftsmanship and Culture" was adjudged as the winner of 'Best Tableaux awards for Republic Day Parade, 2020'.

- ✓ The tableaux of Odisha and Uttar Pradesh were jointly selected for the second place. While Odisha displayed the famous Rukuna Ratha Yatra of Lord Lingaraja, Uttar Pradesh showcased the cultural and religious tourism of the state with the theme 'Sarva Dharma Sama Bhav'.

- ✓ The tableaux of National Disaster Relief Force and Jal Shakti Mission which portrayed 'Jal Jeevan Mission' were chosen as the best among the Ministries and Departments and Central Public Works Department got the Special Prize.

4. Who was recently appointed as the Ambassador of India to the United States?

- [A] Harsh Vardhan Shringla [B] Jai Shankar
[C] Taranjit Singh Sandhu ☒ [D] Vijay Gokhale

- ✓ Veteran diplomat Taranjit Singh Sandhu has been recently appointed as the next Indian Ambassador to the United States. He replaces Harsh Vardhan Shringla, who was the previous Indian envoy to the US.
- ✓ Taranjit Singh Sandhu is an Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer of 1988 batch and is currently posted as High Commissioner of India in Sri Lanka. Sandhu has earlier worked as the Deputy Chief of Mission at Embassy of India in Washington D.C. for four years from 2013–2017.
- ✓ He has also served as the Joint Secretary (United Nations) at the Ministry of External Affairs between 2009 and 2011.

5. The recently launched Bhuvan Panchayat web portal's new version 3.0 uses the technology of which organisation?

- [A] Indian Space Research Organisation ☒
[B] Defence Research and Development Organisation
[C] Hindustan Aeronautics Limited

[D] Bharat Electronics Limited

- ✓ Union Minister of State Jitendra Singh recently launched the version 3.0 of Bhuvan Panchayat web Portal, which will function with the help of satellite technology developed by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

- ✓ The project is aimed at providing geo-spatial services to assist the process of developing Gram Panchayats, undertaken by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj. The integrated high-resolution satellite data will provide better visualisation and enable decentralised planning and monitoring of schemes at panchayat levels.

6. Which Hindi word is chosen as the 'Oxford Hindi Word of 2019' by the Oxford University Press?

[A] Samriddhi [B] Samvidhaan ☒

[C] Sampriiti [D] Sammaan

- ✓ The Oxford University Press has selected the hindi word 'Samvidhaan' as the Oxford Hindi Word of 2019'. Samvidhaan is the Hindi word which represents the meaning of constitution. It also denotes a body of fundamental principles as per which a state or an organisation is to be governed.

- ✓ A word or expression that has attracted the attention of large number of people and reflects the mood and character of the past year is selected as the Oxford word. The Oxford Hindi Word of the Year is chosen by the team of Oxford Dictionaries in India with the guidance from a panel of language experts.

7. Which Indian cueist won the title at the Senior National Billiards Championship, which was his career's 33rd National title?

[A] Saurav Kothari [B] Pankaj Advani ☒

[C] Dhvaj Haria [D] Geet Sethi

- ✓ World-class Indian cueist and 23-time world champion Pankaj Advani has recently clinched his 33rd National title by winning the title at the Senior National Billiards Championship.

- ✓ In the tournament held at Pune, Pankaj defeated his fellow cueist Sourav Kothari 5-2 in the finals. In the semi-final held earlier, Pankaj dominated with a 5-0 victory over Dhvaj Haria of Gujarat.

- ✓ This is not only the 33rd national title of Pankaj Advani, but this is also his 10th senior title. He will also participate in the national snooker championship, which is scheduled in the same venue from February 3.

8. Union Social Justice Minister has recently inaugurated the Composite Regional Centre for empowerment of persons with disabilities in which city?

[A] Hyderabad

[B] Port Blair ☒

[C] Chennai

[D] Kochi

- ✓ Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Thaawar Chand Gehlot recently inaugurated the Composite Regional Centre (CRC) in the city of Port Blair, Andaman & Nicobar.

- ✓ The Composite Regional Centre is aimed at providing skill development, rehabilitation and empowerment of persons with disabilities in the local region. The centres are set under Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment to create infrastructure facilities and resources for persons with disabilities.

- ✓ In India, the CRCs are located in several other cities including Bhopal, Lucknow, Patna, Guwahati and Ahmedabad.

9. Who was recently appointed as the Foreign Secretary of India?

[A] Harsh Vardhan Shringla ☒

[B] Jai Shankar

[C] Taranjit Singh Sandhu

[D] Vijay Gokhale

- ✓ India's former ambassador to the United States and Senior diplomat Harsh Vardhan Shringla recently assumed charge as the next Foreign Secretary of India.

- ✓ He has succeeded Vijay Gokhale to take charge in the said post for a fixed two-year term. Harsh Vardhan Shringla is an Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer of the 1984 batch.

- ✓ Shringla had successfully hosted the 'Howdy Modi' event in Houston, US in September 2019. He had also served as the Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh, when he played an instrumental role in the historic India–Bangladesh Land Boundary Agreement 2015.

10. The skill development centre to train tribals, named 'Sardar Valabhbhai Patel Centre for Empowerment and Livelihoods', is to be set up in which state?

[A] Odisha [B] Uttar Pradesh

[C] Gujarat ☒ [D] Assam

- ✓ External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar lays the foundation stone of the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Centre for Empowerment and Livelihoods near the Statue of Unity at Kevadia in Gujarat.
- ✓ This center aims to provide training to youth, farmers, Self Help Groups every year through its various capacity building programs.
- ✓ GMR Varalakshmi Foundation has taken a joint initiative with Sardar Sarovar Narmada Nigam Limited to establish this Centre with an investment of over Rs 15 crore.

1. Which district has topped the list of aspirational districts for the month of December, released by NITI Aayog?

[A] Sahibganj (Jharkhand)

[B] Hailakandi (Assam)

[C] Belangir (Odisha)

[D] Chandauli (Uttar Pradesh) ☒

✓ The think tank to Indian Government, NITI Aayog has ranked the aspirational districts on the basis of incremental progress made across six developmental areas in December 2019.

✓ As per the list, Chandauli district of Uttar Pradesh has been placed in the top position, followed by Belangir district of Odisha. Andhra Pradesh's YSR district is in the third place.

✓ The six developmental areas which are taken into account are: Health and nutrition, agriculture and water resources, financial inclusion, education, skill development and infrastructure.

2. What is the upper limit for legal abortion, as per the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Bill, recently approved by the Cabinet?

[A] 20 weeks

[B] 24 weeks ☒

[C] 28 weeks

[D] 32 weeks

✓ The Union Cabinet has recently approved the 'Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Bill, 2020 and increased the upper limit for legal abortion to 24 weeks.

✓ Prior to the amendment, the upper limit was only 20 weeks. The existing act of 'Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971' has been amended and the 'Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Bill, 2020', which was drafted by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare was approved by the Cabinet.

✓ The bill is expected to be introduced in the upcoming session of the Parliament.

3. In which city, the Indian Coast Guard has recently commissioned its 'C-448' high-speed boat?

[A] Kochi

[B] Vishakhapatnam

[C] Mangaluru ☒

[D] Chennai

✓ The Indian Coast Guard has recently commissioned its 'C-448' high-speed boat at Mangaluru, Karnataka. The Chief Secretary of Karnataka attended the ceremony of commissioning the Coast Guard vessel.

✓ C-448 is an interceptor vessel, which is set to be deployed in for patrolling and rescue operations off the coast of Mangaluru.

✓ The boat also comprises of world-class navigation and communication equipment systems, which helps in search operations and maritime surveillance.

4. What was Tushar Kanjilal, the famous personality who passed away recently in Kolkata?

[A] Sportsperson

[B] Social worker ☒

[C] Politician

[D] Musician

✓ The 85-year-old veteran social worker and educationist Tushar Kanjilal passed away recently in Kolkata. He was the recipient of the prestigious 'Padma Shri', the fourth highest civilian honour of India, in 1986.

✓ Fondly called as 'Mastermoshai', he worked as the head of a high-school in Rangabelia village of Kolkatta and strived for promoting education among the local population. He also authored a book titled 'Who Killed the Sunderbans?' which is based on the issue of destruction of the Sunderbans' mangrove forests.

5. What is the theme of the World Sustainable Development Summit, 2020?

[A] Towards 2030 Goals: Making the Decade Count ☒

[B] Sustainable Energy across the world

[C] Attaining SDG before 2030

[D] Energy and Resources for all

- ✓ The World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS) is the annual flagship event organised by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI).
- ✓ This year, the global summit is scheduled to be held at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. The three-day event was inaugurated on January 29, 2020 with the theme, 'Towards 2030 Goals: Making the Decade Count'.
- ✓ The summit has been organised for 18 years from 2001, to provide a platform for global leaders to discuss climatic issues. This year, the event focusses on the global efforts to meet the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations.

6. The Surajkund International Crafts Mela is the flagship annual event organised by which state?

- [A] Bihar [B] Haryana ☒
- [C] Himachal Pradesh [D] Assam

- ✓ The 34th Surajkund International Crafts Mela is set to be held from Feb.1 to 16, 2020, at Surajkund, Haryana. It is an annual flagship event organised by the state government of Haryana. This year, Himachal Pradesh is selected as the theme state for the festival.
- ✓ The Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh, Jai Ram Thakur attended the inaugural ceremony of the Mela. Various cultural programmes and exhibitions are arranged to promote the tourism of the state.
- ✓ This will enable the state to showcase its tourism potential and attract more people to the state.

7. As per the recent survey of Transparency International, which state has been ranked as the top state in budget formulation practices?

- [A] Odisha [B] Andhra Pradesh
- [C] Assam ☒ [D] West Bengal

- ✓ According to the recent survey conducted the international NGO Transparency International, Indian state Assam has been ranked as the top state in terms of best practices followed during budget formulation.

- ✓ The survey considered four parameters for ranking the states, which are: public disclosure, budgetary process, post budget fiscal management and efforts to make budget more transparent and citizen friendly.
- ✓ The survey also revealed that the states which are placed at the bottom of the list were Goa, Maharashtra and Punjab.

8. Which Indian has been recently appointed as the UN Resident Coordinator in Thailand?

- [A] Harsh Vardhan Shringla [B] Gita Sabharwal ☒
- [C] Jai Shankar [D] Taranjit Singh Sandhu

- ✓ Gita Sabharwal of India has been recently appointed as the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Thailand, with the approval of the host country. Gita Sabharwal was serving as the Peace-building and Development Adviser representing the United Nations, in Sri Lanka.
- ✓ The UN Resident Coordinators are the representatives of the UN Development system and leaders of the UN country teams. They also support to member countries in achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) targets.

9. Amazon India recently partnered with Eastern Railways, to set up a pick-up kiosk in which railway station?

- [A] Dum Dum junction [B] Bidhan Nagar
- [C] Sealdah ☒ [D] Durga Nagar

- ✓ E-Commerce giant, Amazon India recently partnered with Eastern Railways, to set up a pick-up kiosk in Sealdah railway station in Kolkata.
- ✓ By selecting the railway station as their pick-up location while ordering their products in the company's website or application, the customers can pick up their packages conveniently at the station.
- ✓ In 2019, Amazon successfully launched pick-up kiosks at four railway stations in Mumbai by partnering with Indian Railways.

10. Which international smartphone firm recently signed a MoU with IIT – Hyderabad for Research and Development projects?

[A] Xiaomi

[B] OPPO ☒

[C] Huawei

[D] Vivo

- ✓ The international smartphone firm OPPO recently signed an MoU with the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Hyderabad for collaborating in Research and Development projects in emerging technologies.
 - ✓ As per the agreement signed between the R&D Department of the IIT and Head of OPPO India, joint research and development for multiple projects will be undertaken for a period of two years, in technologies such as Image processing, 5G networks and Artificial Intelligence.
 - ✓ The partnership also aims to create industry-ready and skilled workforce from the institution.
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