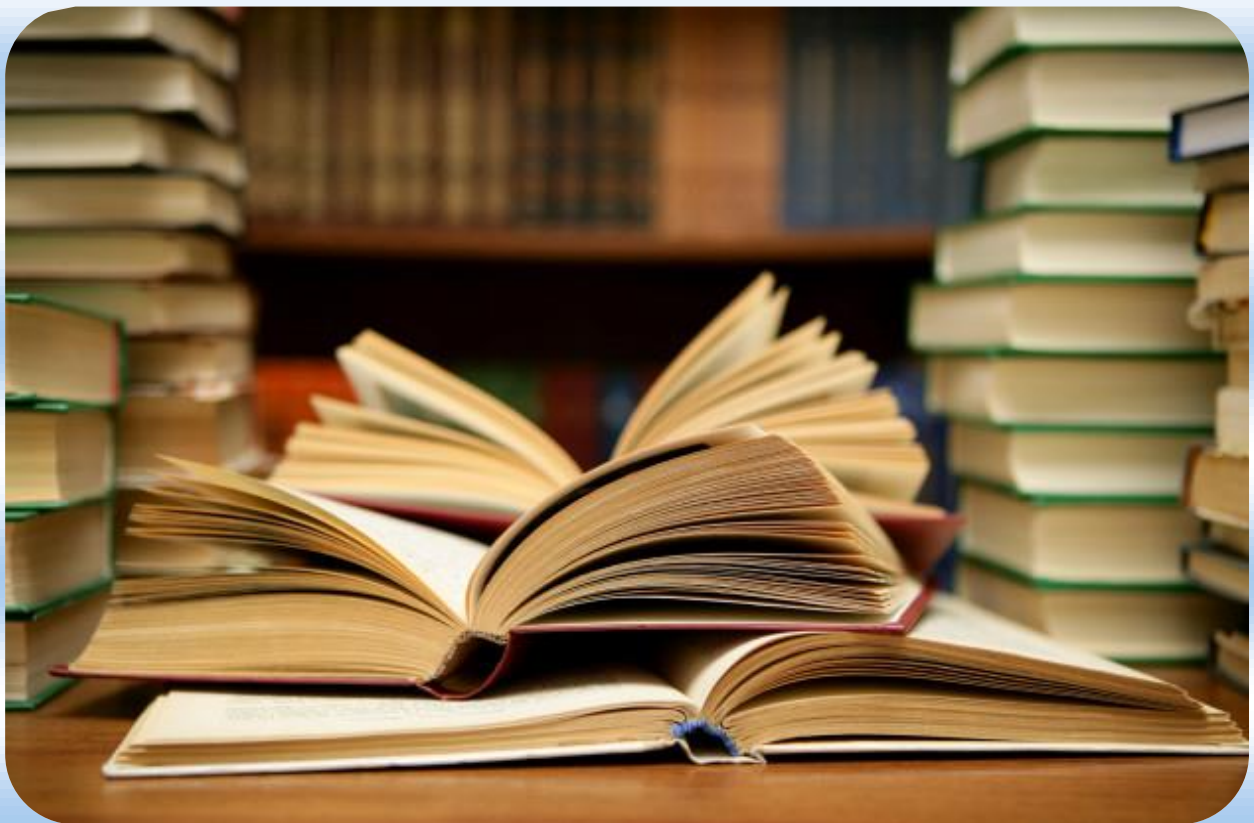


## LIBRARY & RESOURCE CENTER, NOIDA

## GENERAL KNOWLEDGE MONTHLY



# DECEMBER-2019

# NATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

## ***Infosys launches three block-chain powered distributed applications***

Infosys on Wednesday announced the launch of three blockchain-powered distributed applications for government services, insurance, and supply chain management domains. "These comprehensive applications designed as ready-to-subscribe business networks ensure quick deployment, interoperability across disparate systems of value chain stakeholders and a wide variety of use cases involving other digital technologies like IoT, Analytics as well," it said.

## ***HDFC Bank becomes third Indian company to cross \$100 bn M-cap***

HDFC Bank Ltd on Thursday crossed \$100 billion market capitalization in intraday trading, becoming only the third company in the country to achieve this milestone. However, it closed below the \$100 billion mark at \$99.5 billion. It is now in the league of Reliance Industries Ltd, which has a market value of \$140.74 billion, and Tata Consultancy Services Ltd that has a market capitalization of \$114.60 billion. It now ranks 110th in the world's most valued firms. HDFC Bank ranks 26th among most valued banks and financial companies around the world that have a market capitalization of more than \$100 billion.

## ***SEBI signs pact with Kazakhstan's AFSA for mutual co-operation***

Markets regulator Sebi on Monday said it has signed a pact with Kazakhstan's Astana Financial Services Authority (AFSA) for mutual co-operation and technical assistance. The objective of the bilateral memorandum of understanding (MoU) is to strengthen cross border co-operation in the area of securities regulation, Sebi said in a press release. "This will facilitate mutual assistance, contribute towards efficient performance of the supervisory functions, and enable effective enforcement of laws and regulations governing the securities markets," it added.

## ***NTPC to invest Rs. 50,000 cr to add 10GW Solar Energy Capacity by 2022***

NEW DELHI: State-owned power giant NTPC NSE 0.21 % is planning to add 10GW of solar energy generation capacity by 2022, which entails an investment of around Rs 50,000 crore, to be funded mainly by green bonds, a source has said. At present, NTPC has installed renewable energy capacity of 920 MW, which includes mainly solar energy. It has formulated a long term plan to become a 130 GW company by 2032 with 30 per cent non-fossil fuel or renewable energy capacity.

### ***RBI Financial Stability Report: NPAs will increase***

New Delhi: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday cautioned that the asset quality of scheduled commercial banks (SCB) may worsen next year owing to changes in the macroeconomic scenario. In its latest Financial Stability Report, the central bank also warned that there remains an inherent risk of "froth"—conditions that precede a market bubble—building up in the system due to excess liquidity. Citing factors such as an increase in slippages and declining credit growth, the central bank in its biannual commentary said.

### ***Finance Minister launches 'eBkay' auction platform for assets attached by banks***

New Delhi: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday launched eBkay, an online platform to increase the transparency in auctioning of assets attached by banks. The platform is equipped with property search features and navigational links to all PSB e-auction sites, provides single-window access to information on properties up for e-auction as well as facility for comparison of similar properties, and also contains photographs and videos of uploaded properties.

### ***Sridhar Patra appointed CMD of NALCO***

Sridhar Patra was on Monday appointed as the chairman-cum-managing director of NALCO, a Personnel Ministry order said. Patra is at present Director (Finance) in the National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO). He has been appointed as the CMD of NALCO till the date of his superannuation, i.e. October 31, 2024, the order said.

### ***National Anti-Doping Agency appoints Actor Suniel Shetty as its brand ambassador***

After Bollywood actor Suniel Shetty was appointed as the brand ambassador for the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA), India's top badminton player Jwala Gutta and boxer Vijendra Singh have expressed disappointment. They believe a sportsperson would have suited the role better. Suniel Shetty was on Tuesday unveiled as the brand ambassador of NADA with the country's anti-doping body hoping that his celebrity status will help its efforts to clean up sports in the country from the menace.

### ***Foreign Exchange reserve touches a new high of 451.08 billion USD***

MUMBAI : The country's foreign exchange reserves surged by \$2.342 billion to touch a life-time high of \$453.422 billion in the week to December 6, according to the RBI data. In the previous week, the reserves had increased by \$2.484 billion to USD 451.08 billion, the weekly data released by the Reserve Bank on Friday showed. In the reporting week, the rise in reserves was mainly on account of an increase in foreign currency assets, a major component of the overall reserves, which surged by \$1.891 billion to \$421.258 billion.

### ***Lt General Manoj Mukund: The Next Army Chief***

Lt Gen Manoj Mukund Naravane will be the next Chief of Army Staff helming the 1.3 million-strong force, official sources said on Monday. Lt Gen Naravane is currently serving as Vice Chief of the Army. Sources said Naravane's appointment has been cleared at the highest level, adding the government has followed the principle of seniority in the appointment. Army Chief Gen Bipin Rawat is due to retire on December 31 after a three-year stint.

### ***Pinaka missile successfully test fired by DRDO***

BALASORE (ODISHA): An upgraded version of India's indigenously developed Pinaka guided rocket system was successfully test-fired from a base on Odisha coast on Thursday in a boost to the Army's artillery power, defence sources said. The multi-barrel rocket launch system, developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), was fired from the Proof and Experimental Establishment firing test range at Chandipur near here around noon, they said.

### ***MiG 27 Retire: Last Squadron of fighter jet Decommissioned***

JODHPUR: Indian Air Forces's "lethal" fighter aircraft Mig-27, which proved to be "ace attacker" during the 1999 Kargil war and earned nickname of 'Bahadur' from pilots, are all set to pass into the glorious history of country's air force on Friday when their last squadron of seven planes will have its last sortie from Jodhpur air base. "The squadron of seven MiG 27 will have its last sortie from Jodhpur Air Base on December 27.

### ***Girish Chandra Chaturvedi appointed new of Chairman National Stock Exchange***

New Delhi: Leading stock exchange NSE on Friday said it has appointed Public Interest Director Girish Chandra Chaturvedi as its new chairman. The appointment comes following the approval of the markets regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi). The position was vacant since Ashok Chawla resigned as the chairman of the National Stock Exchange(NSE) in January.

### ***Rohtang pass tunnel named after former PM Vajpayee***

A day before the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the Union Cabinet on Tuesday approved two schemes in his honour: one to improve groundwater management in villages and the other to rename the tunnel being built under the Rohtang Pass after him. Announcing the decisions taken by the Cabinet at a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar said at a press conference here that the water scheme and the renaming of the tunnel would be launched on Wednesday.



### ***Lok Sabha passes Central Sanskrit Universities Bill, 2019***

NEW DELHI: The government on Thursday, amid a Sanskrit versus Tamil spat between the ruling BJP and opposition DMK and Left members in Lok Sabha, sought to assure the House that it will strengthen all Indian languages. Responding to the debate on the Sanskrit Central Universities Bill, 2019, HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal "Nishank" said the government wants to strengthen all Indian languages, be it Tamil, Hindi, Kannada or Bengali.

### ***Delhi enters list of top 10 most popular destinations in the world***

Hong Kong is likely to hold on to its status as the world's most popular city with international visitors in 2019, despite months of political unrest that led to a sharp drop in tourist numbers. Meanwhile New York City falls out of the top 10, and Delhi joins the ranks for the first time. The Top 100 City Destinations report from global market research company Euromonitor International shows Asian destinations dominating the list, with over 40 entries.



### ***India plans to boost clean energy sector***

India is all set to cross the 100GW renewable energy capacity mark in 2020 and can make rapid strides towards the ambitious 175GW clean energy target by 2022 provided the government keeps a close eye on key issues and deals with those well in time. The government however needs to promote storage to ensure 24X7 clean energy supply as coal fired thermal power still remains the base load in the country.

### ***Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019***

NEW DELHI: Protests have broken out across India, a few of them violent, against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2019. The Act seeks to amend the definition of illegal immigrant for Hindu, Sikh, Parsi, Buddhist and Christian immigrants from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh, who have lived in India without documentation. They will be granted fast track Indian citizenship in six years.

### ***Five Documents developed by UGC released***

These five documents cover evaluation reforms, eco-friendly and sustainable university campuses, human values and professional ethics, faculty induction and academic research integrity. Speaking on the occasion, HRD minister said that to improve the quality in Higher Educational Institutions, UGC has adopted the Higher Education Quality Improvement Programme Mandate.

### ***First Trial run of Double Stack Train***

New Delhi: A trial run of a double-stack freight train on the newly built 306-km-long Rewari-Madar section of the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (WDFC) was conducted on Friday, a statement from the Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation India Limited (DFCCIL) said. The section between Madar (Ajmer) in Rajasthan and Kishangarh (Rewari) in Haryana contains 16 major bridges and viaduct, 270 minor bridges, four rail flyovers.

### ***CSC e-Governance India restarts Aadhaar registration work***

New Delhi: CSC e-Governance Services India Ltd, a special purpose vehicle under Meity, on Friday restarted Aadhaar registration and other related works which it plans to expand across the country next week. CSC SPV has signed an agreement with Aadhaar custodian, Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), to roll out Aadhaar enrolment, make corrections and changes in the profile of the unique ID holders within its premises.

### ***PM Modi reviews Namami Gange Project***

Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired the first meeting of the National Ganga Council here on Saturday and said that rejuvenation of the river should be a shining example of cooperative federalism. The prime minister was received by UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and other dignitaries at the Chakeri airport. Modi also reviewed the progress of works under the ambitious Namami Gange project.

### ***Oxygen Parlour opened at Nashik Railway Station to combat Air Pollution***

In a unique initiative to battle rising air pollution in cities, an 'Oxygen Parlour' has been opened at Nashik railway station to provide an experience of breathing clean air to the commuters.



### ***Delhi cabinet approves new policy on pollution***

The Delhi Cabinet on Monday passed an Electric Vehicle Policy to help reduce air pollution, said Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. Under the policy, the government aims to make electric vehicles 25% of all new vehicles registered in the city by 2024. Also, the government will develop public charging infrastructure, instal charging stations every three km and give subsidies to people buying electric vehicles, among others.

### ***Future Skills: Wipro, NASSCOM launch platform to train 10,000 engineering students***

New Delhi: IT firm Wipro on Friday said it has partnered with IT body Nasscom to launch a skilling platform for new age technologies like AI that will reach 10,000 students from over 20 engineering colleges in India. The platform Future Skills will bridge the industry-academia skill gap and help students keep pace with the emerging technologies. The initiative is a part of Wipro's Corporate Social Responsibility programme, TalentNext which aims to enhance the quality of engineering education by preparing faculty and academic leaders to train students.

### ***NPL scientists develop ink to stop fake passports and currency notes***

New Delhi: In a latest research, scientists from CSIR-National Physical Laboratory (NPL) in New Delhi have come up with a security ink — which can prevent duplication of printable documents and counterfeiting of currency notes. The research, published in the Journal of Materials Chemistry C in October, was conducted on the principle of the fluorescence-phosphorescence technique, which emits two colours on the excitation of a single wavelength.

### ***Sustainable Development Goal Index Released***

NEW DELHI : Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Telangana were top performers in the race to achieve sustainable development goals (SDG), including the eradication of poverty and inequality, while Bihar, Jharkhand, Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya have a lot to catch up, according to the SDG India index brought out by NITI Aayog and the United Nations.

### ***Results of Swachh Survekshan League, 2020 released***

Indore ranked first in the Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 results of Swachh Survekshan League 2020 (SS League 2020) among the cities where population is more than 10 lakh. The second and third spot was taken by Bhopal and Surat in Q1 while Rajkot and Navi Mumbai came at number two and three respectively in Q2 in the same population category. Indore has retained the title of the cleanest city in the last three years. This time a total of 4,372 cities participated in the league.

### ***India will overtake Germany; Become 4th largest economy in the world in 2026***

India is expected to overtake Germany to become fourth-largest economy in 2026 and Japan to become third largest in 2034, according to a recent report by the UK-based Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR). It further said India is also set to reach a gross domestic product (GDP) of USD 5 trillion by 2026, 2 years later than the government's target. "India has decisively overtaken both France and the UK to become the world's fifth-largest economy in 2019.

### ***Human Library event held in Mysuru***

A human library, a concept which seeks to replace books with humans, will be organised in Mysuru on December 8. The first event of Human Library, Mysuru Chapter 2, will be held at Mysore Institute of Commerce and Arts (MICA), 123-127, near GRS Fantasy Park at Metagalli in Mysuru from 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. on December 8, said a note from Pavithra K., founder of Human Library, Mysuru Chapter.

### ***Kerala: the first state to pass anti-CAA resolution***

Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala today became the first state to pass a resolution against the Citizenship Amendment Act amid widespread protests across the country. The resolution, which was moved by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and asks the centre to revoke the new citizenship law, was supported by leaders across party lines except the lone BJP MLA - O Rajagopal. Chief Ministers of several non-BJP ruled states including Bengal, Punjab, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Delhi, had previously voiced their opposition to the law.

### ***General Bipin Rawat appointed as CDS officer***

NEW DELHI: Army Chief General Bipin Rawat has been appointed as the new Chief of Defence Staff by the government on Monday. With him being the CDS, smooth coordination among the army, air force and navy is expected to happen, as tri-services agencies on cyber and space came up during his tenure as the Army Chief. Importantly, some of the strongest military actions against Pakistan have taken place during his tenure.

### ***Senior diplomat Harsh Vardhan Shringla to be new Foreign Secretary***

India's ambassador to the US, Harsh Vardhan Shringla, was named by the government on Monday as the next foreign secretary and he will take over from incumbent Vijay Gokhale in January. Shringla, who took over as the envoy in Washington in January, is a career diplomat who was seen as a frontrunner for the top post for several months. An official statement said the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet had approved the appointment of Shringla, an officer of the 1984 batch of the Indian Foreign Service (IFS).



# INTERNATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

## ***Long March-5: China successfully launches largest carrier rocket***

WENCHANG, Hainan, Dec. 27 (Xinhua) -- China launched the third Long March-5, the largest carrier rocket of the country, from Wenchang Space Launch Center in south China's Hainan Province on Friday evening. The rocket, coded as Long March-5 Y3, blasted off from the coastal launch center at 8:45 p.m. (Beijing time), carrying the Shijian-20 technological experiment satellite weighing over eight tonnes, the heaviest and most advanced communications satellite of the country. About 2,220 seconds later, the satellite was sent into its planned orbit..

## ***India and Sweden to sign Polar Science Cooperation Agreement***

India and Sweden are likely to sign their first maritime cooperation agreement, Cooperation in Polar Science, during the visit to India of the Swedish royal couple and senior Ministers, including Foreign Minister Anne Linde. "We have a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that's being prepared, its both Arctic and Antarctic, so we call it Polar encompassing both... It has been in the works for some time. We have a tentative agreement," Swedish Ambassador to India Klas Molin told The Hindu, ahead of the visit of King Carl Gustaf and Queen Silvia from December 1 to 6.

## ***Pacific Air Chiefs' Symposium 2019 being held in Hawaii***

New Delhi: Indian Air Force chief RKS Bhaduria and officers of his team were said to be safe following a shooting incident at the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard in Hawaii on Wednesday. At least three people were injured, two of them critically, when the gunman opened fire at the US military facility before taking his own life, French news agency AFP said quoting local news reports. An Indian Air Force spokesman said Bhaduria and others in the Indian delegation were unharmed..

## ***Climate Emergency named as Oxford's Word of the Year 2019***

Every year, the folks at Oxford, choose a 'Word of the Year', which is essentially an expression which has grabbed a significant amount of attention in the last 12 months and has become an important part of the public discourse. This year's word, chosen by Oxford through usage evidence, is 'Climate Emergency'. Needless to say, the discourse around climate in the year 2019 became mainstream, thanks to the young climate activist, Greta Thunberg's speech at the UN Climate Action Summit going viral.

### ***Funding for India-Palestine Techno Park released***

On Thursday, the Representative of India to Palestine, Sunil Kumar, released third tranche of funding, worth \$3 million, for the construction of a Palestine-India Techno Park. In total, India has made a commitment of investing over \$12 million, part of India's broader framework of capacity building in Palestine. The Indian government pays \$3 million on a half-yearly basis. In 2017, the park became a member of the International Association of Science Parks and Areas of Innovation (IASP), a global network of science and technology parks.

### ***Russia-Ukraine agree to cease fire***

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelensky met face to face at a Paris summit on Monday. Mr Zelensky was downbeat, saying little had been achieved at the meeting and he had wanted to see more resolved. Five-and-a-half years of fighting between Ukrainian forces and Russian-backed rebels have cost 13,000 lives. The negotiations were brokered by the leaders of France and Germany..

### ***Abu Dhabi selected as World's leading Sports Tourism Destination***

Abu Dhabi: Representatives from the Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi received the award for the World's Leading Sports Tourism Destination at the 26th edition of the World Travel Awards in Muscat. The award is the latest in several prestigious accolades gained by Abu Dhabi this year, including being selected as the Middle East's Leading Business Tourism Destination.



### ***Lahore-Wagah shuttle train service resumes operation after 22 years***

The shuttle train service between Lahore and Wagah railway station resumed operation on Sunday after a gap of 22 years. The train would complete three round trips daily and provide the travelling facility to over 1,000 passengers in three trips. The fare has been fixed at PKR 30, Dawn reported. The service would provide hassle-free commute to hundreds of visitors intending to witness the flag hoisting and lowering ceremony at Wagah or visiting Jallo Park.

### ***US President Donald Trump impeached***

The House voted on two charges - that the president had abused his power and that he had obstructed Congress. Nearly all Democrats voted for the charges and every Republican against. President Trump's Republicans control the Senate so it is highly unlikely he will be removed from power. Democrats are already unhappy at the way the trial could be held. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has now indicated it might delay sending the articles of impeachment to the Senate, in order to bargain on the terms of the proceedings.

### ***Afghanistan becomes first country to recognize Indian Pharmacopoeia***

New Delhi, December 20: Afghanistan has become the first country to recognize the Indian Pharmacopoeia (IP). The IP has been recognised formally by the National Department of Regulation of Medicines and Health Products of the Ministry of Public Health of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. It will also be used based on the requirement as reputable pharmacopoeia in the laboratory of medicines and health products quality.

### ***3000 Global Leaders to meet at WEF's 50th annual meet***

Union ministers Piyush Goyal and Mansukh Mandaviya as well as three chief ministers -- Amarinder Singh, Kamal Nath and B S Yeddyurappa -- will join over 100 Indian CEOs in the Swiss ski resort town of Davos next month for the WEF's 50th annual meeting, which will be attended by thousands of rich and powerful from across the globe. Among the global leaders, US President Donald Trump and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin are also expected to attend the high-profile summit.

### ***Space Force: Trump officially launches new US military service***

The new military service, the first in more than 70 years, falls under the US Air Force. At an army base near Washington, Mr Trump described space as "the world's newest war-fighting domain". "Amid grave threats to our national security, American superiority in space is absolutely vital," he said. "We're leading, but we're not leading by enough, but very shortly we'll be leading by a lot."

### ***Eight West African countries rename common currency to Eco***

By Our Foreign Staff West Africa's monetary union has agreed with France to rename its CFA franc the Eco and cut some of the financial links with Paris that have underpinned the region's common currency since its creation after the Second World War. Under the deal, the Eco will remain pegged to the euro but the African countries in the bloc won't have to keep 50 per cent of their reserves in the French Treasury and there will no longer be a French representative on the currency union's board.

### ***Manuel Marrero Cruz appointed as Cuba's first PM in more than 40 years***

The post of prime minister was scrapped in 1976 by the then revolutionary leader Fidel Castro. It was reinstated under the rules of a new constitution for the communist-run island passed earlier this year. Mr Marrero, 56, will take on some of the responsibilities that currently fall to the president. "The head of government will be the administrative right hand of the president of the republic," state-run online news outlet Cubadebate said.

### ***Winner of 2019 Ballon d'Or awards***

Messi sets up his sixth title on a table on the podium with the rest of his five titles. That is some sight. And that's the end of the proceedings from the ceremony. Van Dijk on finishing second: "It was amazing. He is pure natural. He is a six time winner so i need to respect that. I hope we can do again what we did with Liverpool and Netherlands last year." Sadio Mane finished fourth, Cristiano Ronaldo third while Virgil van Dijk came close in second behind Messi.

### ***Greta Thunberg named TIME's 2019 Person of the Year***

Greta Thunberg, the Swedish schoolgirl who inspired a global movement to fight climate change, has been named Time magazine's Person of the Year for 2019. The 16-year-old is the youngest person to be chosen by the magazine in a tradition that started in 1927. Speaking at a UN climate change summit in Madrid before the announcement, she urged world leaders to stop using "creative PR" to avoid real action. The next decade would define the planet's future, she said.

### ***Angela Merkel tops 2019 Forbes' List of World's most-powerful women***

Last December, leader of House Democrats Nancy Pelosi met with President Trump in the Oval Office to discuss a possible government shutdown. During the contentious 15-minute exchange, Pelosi challenged the President, interrupted his interruptions and made clear she would not back down. "Mr. President," she said, "please don't characterize the strength that I bring to this meeting."

### ***Jamaica's Toni-Ann Singh crowned Miss World 2019***

Jamaica's Toni-Ann Singh was crowned as Miss World 2019 on December 14 and said she wanted to use her title to work for "sustainable change" for women and their children. Asked about the value of beauty contests in today's world of #MeToo and the drive for equality and respect for women, the 23-year-old graduate of Florida State University said beauty for her



was the least important aspect of her achievement.



### *South Africa's Zozibini Tunzi wins Miss Universe 2019 title*

South Africa's Zozibini Tunzi is the Miss Universe 2019. Zozibini and Miss Universe Puerto Rico Madison Anderson were the top two contestants for the Miss Universe title. Miss Universe Mexico is the second-runner up. Miss Universe 2018 Catriona Gray crowned Zozibini Tunzi at the event held in Atlanta on Sunday night.



### *New Zealand win 2019 Christopher Martin-Jenkins Spirit of Cricket award*

The team has been recognised for their sporting conduct following a dramatic defeat by England in the men's World Cup final at Lord's in July. New Zealand lost on boundaries scored in the match after the scores were tied after 50 overs and a super over. "The New Zealand team are worthy winners of this award," said MCC president Kumar Sangakkara. "In the heat of battle they displayed a level of sportsmanship that was fitting for such a fantastic final, and indeed tournament.



## ***World's First Electronic Flight takes off from Canada***

The world's first fully electric commercial aircraft has taken its inaugural test flight, taking off from the Canadian city of Vancouver and flying for 15 minutes. "This proves that commercial aviation in all-electric form can work," said Roei Ganzarski, chief executive of Australian engineering firm magniX.



## ***Scientists find World's oldest Fossil forest***

(CNN)Evidence of the world's oldest forest, dating back some 385 million years, has been discovered in an abandoned quarry in upstate New York, according to a new study published in Current Biology. The fossilized roots-- footprints of an ancient landscape-- belonged to trees with wood and leaves, similar to what we see today, the study says.



## ***Pritivirajsing Roopun elected as new President of Mauritius by parliament***

Lawmakers in Mauritius on Monday picked former arts and culture minister Pritivirajsing Roopun as president of the island nation, a largely ceremonial post. His predecessor Ameenah Gurib-Fakim resigned in March 2018 after being embroiled in a scandal over her use of a credit card to buy luxury personal items. She denied wrongdoing. In Mauritius, the prime minister is head of the government and holds most political power while the president is head of state but has no executive role and is considered the guardian of the constitution.

### ***Sanna Marin becomes World's Youngest-Serving Prime Minister***

Finland will have the world's youngest serving prime minister later this week when Social Democrat Sanna Marin, 34, is sworn in at the head of a coalition whose four other parties are all led by women, three of them in their thirties. Marin, currently the transport minister, will take over from Antti Rinne, a former trade unionist who resigned last week after just six months in office when he lost the confidence of the Centre party, a coalition partner, over his handling of a postal strike.

### ***ETRSS: Ethiopia's first satellite launched from China***

ADDIS ABABA – Ethiopia launched its first satellite on Friday, a landmark achievement for the country's space program that caps a banner year for the African space industry. The launch of the Ethiopian Remote Sensing Satellite took place at a space station in China, though scores of Ethiopian and Chinese officials and scientists gathered at the Entoto Observatory and Research Center outside the capital, Addis Ababa, early Friday to watch a live broadcast

### ***Koneru Humpy bags 2019 World Rapid Chess title***

Koneru Humpy's long wait finally ended after she beat Lei Tingjie in the Armageddon to win the Women's World Rapid Chess Championship in Moscow. India's best-ever women's chess player, Humpy, was crowned the world women's rapid champion in Moscow at the same venue where Magnus Carlsen won the men's title in the space of a few minutes. This is a significant triumph for Humpy, who is more at ease in the classical format and was clearly trying to take her skills in the rapid format to a new level.

### ***NASA astronaut Christina Koch sets record for longest single spaceflight by woman***

After making history in October as one of the first women to conduct an all-female spacewalk, NASA astronaut Christina Koch is breaking another glass ceiling. On Dec. 28, Koch broke the record for having the longest single spaceflight by a woman, with 289 days in space. Retired astronaut Peggy Whitson previously held that record, with 288 days in space.



### *Portugal sets up Gandhi Citizenship Education Prize*

Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Costa on Thursday announced the setting up of a Gandhi Citizenship Education Prize while attending the second meeting of the National Committee for the Commemoration Mahatma Gandhi's 150th Birth Anniversary chaired by President Ram Nath Kovind at the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

