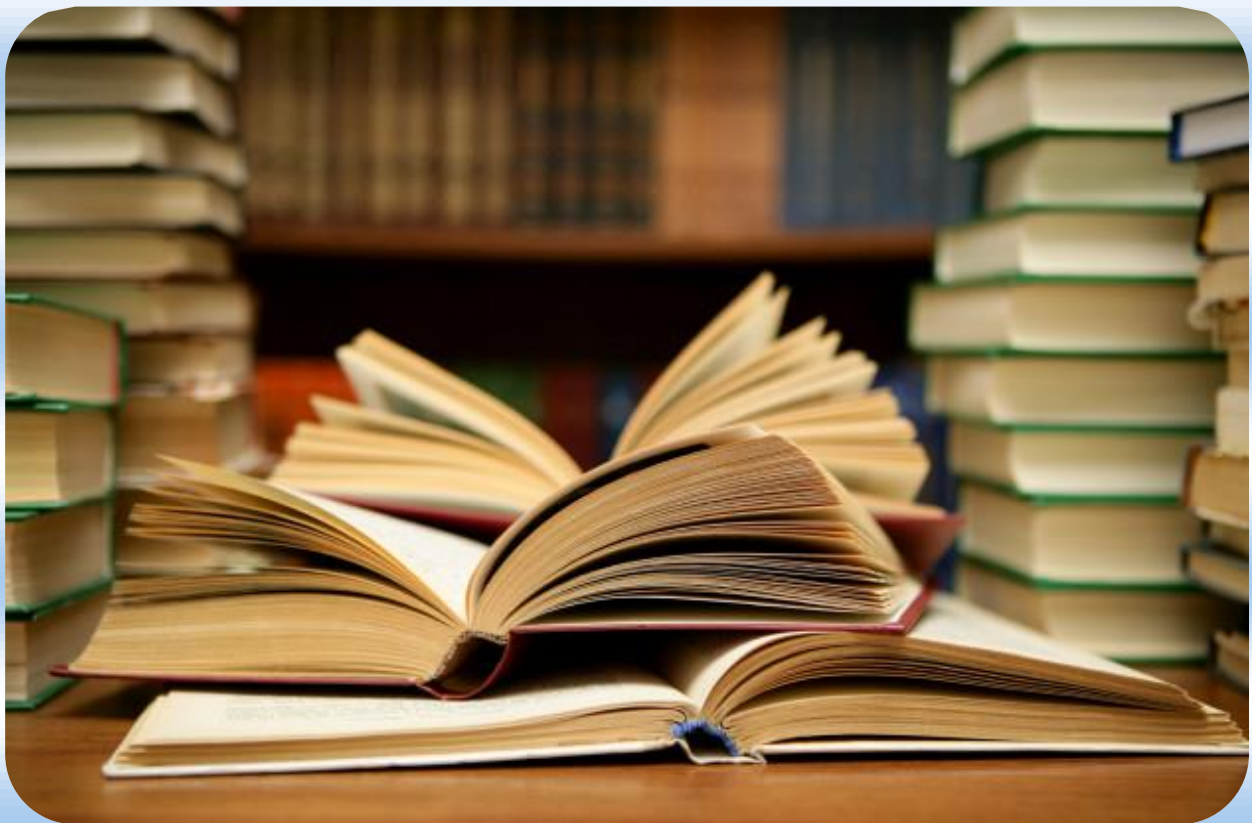


## LIBRARY & RESOURCE CENTER, NOIDA

## GENERAL KNOWLEDGE MONTHLY



# NOVEMBER-2019

# NATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

## **Avian Botulism-Reason behind birds' death in Sambhar Lake**

The Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI), Bareilly, on Thursday confirmed avian botulism — a neuro-muscular illness caused by a toxin which is produced by a bacterial strain — as the reason for mass mortality of birds, including migratory species from Northern Asia, at Sambhar Lake in Rajasthan. The laboratory tests conducted on the samples of carcasses collected from the lake confirmed the disease infecting the birds, the probability of which was earlier stated by veterinarians in the State. The illness, caused by a bacterium called *Clostridium botulinum*, affected the nervous system of birds, leading to flaccid paralysis in their legs and wings and neck touching the ground.

## **Researcher finds Earth's Most Uninhabitable Place**

Researchers have found an aquatic environment on the Earth with a complete absence of any forms of life, an advance that may lead to an improved understanding of the limits of habitability. The study, published in the journal *Nature Ecology and Evolution*, revealed that any form of microbial life was absent in the hot, saline, hyperacid ponds of the Dallol geothermal field in Ethiopia.



## **Guru Ghasidas National Park to become Chhattisgarh's 4th tiger reserve**

The Chhattisgarh government has decided to declare Guru Ghasidas National Park in the state's Korea district as a tiger reserve, a senior official said. The decision was taken at a meeting of Chhattisgarh State Wildlife Board chaired by Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Sunday, a government public relation official said. Presently the state has three tiger reserves, namely Indravati in Bijapur district, Udanti-Sitanadi in Gariaband and Achanakmar in Bilaspur, he said. "The meeting discussed drafting of action plans for conservation of the wild buffalo, which is the state wild animal, the state bird hill myna and vultures.

### ***ADB, India sign \$451 million loan to strengthen Power Connectivity in Tamil Nadu***

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of India today signed a \$451 million loan to strengthen power connectivity between the southern and northern parts of the Chennai-Kanyakumari Industrial Corridor (CKIC), which is part of the East Coast Economic Corridor (ECEC), in Tamil Nadu. ADB is the lead partner of the Government of India for developing ECEC. The project is expected to help Government of Tamil Nadu meet the increasing demand for power supply from industry and commercial enterprises.

### ***Aditya Birla Finance becomes first company to list commercial papers on stock exchanges***

Aditya Birla Finance Ltd (ABFL), the NBFC arm of Aditya Birla Capital, on Thursday became the first company to list its commercial papers on the stock exchanges. The move comes after the exchanges -- the BSE and the NSE -- came out with a framework for listing of commercial papers (CPs), in a bid to broaden investors' participation in such securities. Listing of CPs is expected to lead to efficient transmission of information regarding corporate borrowings and liquidity positions to market participants, the NSE said in a statement.

### ***Rising Himachal Global Investors' Meet 2019***

New Delhi: At Global Investors' Meet in Himachal Pradesh today, Prime Minister Narendra Modi encouraged the investors to put money in the state. The two-day investment meet, starting today, showcases investment opportunities in the state. "The Global Investors Meet in Dharamshala might sound surprising, but it is the truth. It is unprecedented, and I congratulate all of you. Earlier, investors' summit like these used to happen in just a few cities in the country.

### ***Andhra Pradesh launches 'Nadu-Nedu' programme***

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has asked the administration to gear up for the 'Nadu-Nedu' programme scheduled be launched at the PVR High School in Ongole on Thursday (November 14). The programme envisages showcasing the educational reforms being implemented by the State. In the first phase, the State will take up 15,000 schools for renovation and a pictorial representation.

### ***Grassroot Olympic- Mission Talent Hunt launched in Assam to groom talent***

The Assam Olympic Association (AOA) will launch a new programme called 'Grassroot Olympic - Mission Talent Hunt' to identify the sports talent in the state and groom them, Assam chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal said on Monday. The decision was taken during the executive committee meeting in presence of Sonowal, who is also the President of the Association, an official release said.

### ***Kolkata becomes first City to Install ‘Third Umpire’ RT-PCR Machines in India***

Kolkata: In a major step towards upholding public health, the Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC) has installed first of its kind high-end reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) machines in India for quick detection of diseases like dengue, tuberculosis and swine flu. These machines are to serve as a ‘third umpire’ in situations when medical reports and blood tests reveal contradictory results.

### ***India-Netherland: “Water 4 change”, an urban water management system***

The Centre for Water Resources Development and Management (CWRDM) with the support of six prominent institutes has come up with a new project, ‘Water 4 Change’, which will be piloted in a phased manner in Kozhikode city, stimulating long-term research and field-level action on urban water management systems. As many as six prominent organisations from The Netherlands too are part of the project, which will be considered for implementation in Bhuj, Bhopal, and Shimla.

### ***Mumbai and Hyderabad included in UNESCO Creative Cities Network***

UNESCO has announced that Mumbai and Hyderabad have been included in its network of 'Creative Cities' on the occasion of World Cities Day 2019 on Thursday. Mumbai has been designated as Creative City of Films and Hyderabad a Creative City of Gastronomy, an official press release said. In India, Chennai and Varanasi are UNESCO cities of music while Jaipur is the City of Crafts and Folk Arts, the release said.



### ***5 lakh government vehicles to be converted into e-vehicles***

Minister for Environment and Climate Change Prakash Javadekar today said that all the 5 lakh government vehicles on conventional fuel will be converted into e-vehicle in a phased manner. He said, besides their cost-effectiveness, these e-vehicle are eco-friendly and save consumption of petrol and diesel. Addressing the media during flagging-off the electric vehicles procured by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in New Delhi, the Union Minister said, that these e-vehicles can play major role in curbing high level of pollution in Delhi during winters.

### ***8th Indo German Energy Forum***

The eighth Indo-German Energy Forum (IGEF) 2019 took place in Delhi where officials from the two countries discussed areas to enhance cooperation in the energy sector. The forum concluded on Friday and was co-chaired by Sanjiv Nandan Sahai, Secretary (Power) from the Indian side and Christian Hirte, Secretary of State, Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Energy, Germany, according to an official statement.

### ***PM Modi releases commemorative coin***

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday released a commemorative coin marking the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev, as well as a Thai translation of Tamil classic 'Tirukkural' prior to his speech at the Sawasdee PM Modi event in Bangkok. In his address at the event, PM Modi said that no particular government can be credited for the deep friendship and close ties between India and Thailand, adding that every moment shared between two countries in the past has contributed in building.

### ***West Bengal celebrates 'Rosogolla Dibas' to mark GI Tag granting***

KOLKATA: 'Rosogolla Dibas' (Rasgulla Day) was celebrated in West Bengal on Thursday to mark the granting of Geographical Indication (GI) tag of 'Banglar Rosogolla' (Bengal's Rasgulla) to the state on this day two years ago. The statue of Nobin Chandra Das, inventor of the Bengal variant of the sweetmeat, at Bagbazar area of north Kolkata was garlanded in the presence of state minister Sashi Panja, said Dhiman Das, a descendant of Nobin Chandra Das and owner of KC Das Private Ltd.

### ***India to host the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme***

More than 300 delegates will participate in the inter-sessional meeting of Kimberley Process being hosted by India from June 17 to 21 in Mumbai, the government said on Friday. The Kimberley Process is a commitment to remove conflict diamonds from the global supply chain. Conflict diamonds means rough diamonds used by rebel movements or their allies to finance conflict aimed at undermining legitimate governments.

### ***26 November 2019: 70th Constitution Day***

November 26 has a unique historical significance as it was on this day in 1949 that the Constitution was adopted, and, thereafter, came into force on January 26, 1950, marking the beginning of India as a republic. The government is celebrating 'Constitution Day' or 'Samvidhan Diwas' on Tuesday in the Central Hall of Parliament to mark the 70th anniversary of adoption of the Constitution by the Constituent Assembly.

### ***Girish Chandra Murmu sworn in as first Lieutenant Governor of J&K***

Girish Chandra Murmu was on Thursday sworn in as the first lieutenant governor of the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir following the bifurcation of the state. The oath of office to Murmu, who will turn 60 next month, was administered by Jammu and Kashmir Chief Justice Gita Mittal at a simple function held at Raj Bhawan at the foothills of the Zaberwan range. The warrant of appointment of Murmu, a 1985 batch IAS officer of Gujarat cadre, was read out by Chief Secretary B V R Subrahmanyam.

### ***Radha Krishna Mathur sworn in as first Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh UT***

Former IAS officer Radha Krishna Mathur was Thursday sworn-in as the first Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, which officially became a Union Territory after the bifurcation of Jammu and Kashmir. Mathur, who will turn 66 in a month, is a 1977-batch IAS officer from Tripura. He retired as the defence secretary in 2015 and was appointed as the chief information commissioner in December of the same year.

### ***Former Chief Election Commissioner TN Seshan passed away***

Former chief election commissioner (CEC) and former Cabinet secretary Tirunellai Narayana Iyer Seshan, who ushered in reforms in the country's electoral process during his tenure as CEC in the 1990s, died of a cardiac arrest on Sunday in Chennai. He was 86. He was not keeping good health for the past couple of years and he passed away at about 9.30 pm. Born on December 15, 1932, in Thirunellai, Palakkad district, Kerala, Seshan was the youngest of six siblings in a middle-class family. His father was a lawyer in the district court.

### ***Nita Ambani elected to board of New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art***

Chairperson of Reliance Foundation, Nita Ambani, has been elected to the Board of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. Ambani became the first Indian to be honoured with the role of a trustee in the Museum's 149-year-history. The Metropolitan Museum of Art is the largest art museum in the United States, with permanent collections consisting of works of art from ancient Egypt, as well as scriptures from nearly all the European masters.

### ***World-famous mathematician Vashishtha Narayan Singh passes away***

PATNA: World famous mathematician Vashishtha Narayan Singh, who came to be known as India's Einstein, passed away in Patna on Thursday. Born in Bihar, he was suffering from a prolonged illness from the last 35 years. Singh who was recently brought back home from Patna Medical College and Hospital had to be admitted back due to an unexpected emergency. A number of politicians including Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar had visited him at the hospital.

### ***India withdraws from RCEP***

India pulled out of a trade pact covering much of Asia, paving the way for 15 other countries to sign the China-backed regional trade deal next year. India conveyed its decision to exit the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, or RCEP, foreign ministry official Vijay Thakur Singh told reporters in Bangkok on Monday. Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlighted that he was guided by the impact it would have on the lives and livelihoods of all Indians, especially vulnerable sections of society, she said.

### ***Finance Minister: Rs 25,000 crore Fund for stuck Housing Projects***

NEW DELHI: The cabinet approved a Rs 25,000-crore special window to provide funding to housing projects that are stuck, with the aim of reviving the key sector, providing a boost to the economy and bringing relief to home buyers. The money will be available for "net worth positive" projects, said FM Nirmala Sitharaman. As many as 1,600 projects with 458,000 dwelling units will potentially be covered under the dispensation.

### ***What is 'Project Zero' introduced by Amazon in India?***

NEW DELHI : In a bid to ensure that customers receive authentic goods when shopping on Amazon. Amazon on Tuesday announced to bring "Project Zero" to India. "Project Zero" introduces additional proactive mechanisms and powerful tools to identify, block and remove counterfeits. Over 7,000 brands have already enrolled in Project Zero across US, Europe and Japan. A number of Indian brands participated in a pilot to help the company test the experience in India.

### ***Central Electricity Authority Data: India's Electricity Demand fell to a 12-year low***

NEW DELHI : India's power demand fell 13.2% in October from a year ago, posting its steepest monthly decline in over 12 years, government data showed, reflecting a deepening growth slowdown in Asia's third-largest economy. The South Asian country needs electricity to fuel its expanding economy but a third decline in power consumption in as many months points to tapering industrial activity in the nation that aims to become a \$5 trillion economy by 2024.

### ***BHIM UPI goes global: Demonstrated at Singapore FinTech Festival***

A pilot demo of BHIM UPI QR-based payments in Singapore began on Wednesday through a live transaction at a merchant terminal at the ongoing Singapore FinTech Festival 2019, the payment system's first approach to the international market. The demo will continue during the festival, which started on November 11 and would end on November 15. This QR code-based system would allow anyone with a BHIM app to scan the SGQR at NETS terminals for payments in Singapore.

### ***World Bank's 300 million USD plan to Develop Kolkata***

West Bengal Finance Minister Amit Mitra on Saturday said the World Bank has prepared and submitted a conceptual master plan for development of logistics infrastructure within the city metropolitan area. He said that the proposed master plan would entail a project cost of around USD 300 million to be funded by the World Bank. Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of CII Logistics Colloquium here, Mitra said, "World Bank has submitted a master plan to the state on logistics infrastructure in and around Kolkata metropolitan area."

### ***Gol merges three Insurance PSUs***

Public-sector general insurance companies which are slated to be merged have urged the government for fund infusion before the amalgamation. According to top officials of two public sector general insurance firms, the companies in their communication with the department of financial services have highlighted the need for immediate recapitalisation in order to maintain the regulatory solvency ratio and wipe out losses.

### ***IRCTC Revenue doubles; 14% increase in profits***

IRCTC's bumper ticketing revenue! The contribution of the e-ticketing services almost doubled, boosting the overall revenue of the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) in the first half of FY20. The revenue from the online ticketing segment saw a jump of just over 80 per cent to Rs 199 crore in the April-September period as against Rs 110 crore in the corresponding period of FY19, IRCTC said in a regulatory filing on Wednesday.

### ***IRCTC signs an MoU with KSTDC to run the Golden Chariot Train***

Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Limited (IRCTC), a tourism arm of Indian Railways, on Tuesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation (KSTDC) to market and operate the Golden Chariot train. The MoU was signed in the presence of Minister of State of Railways, Suresh C Angadi, and Karnataka Tourism Minister C T Ravi, Chairman Railway Board Vinod Kumar Yadav amongst others.

### ***Government to launch first fixed income ETF of bluechip PSUs***

The government is expected to launch India's first fixed income Exchange Traded Fund (ETF) comprising debt securities of about a dozen state-owned companies by mid-December 2019. The ETF is expected to have a size of Rs 15,000 crore to Rs 20,000 crore. Government sources said roadshows are currently on for the Fund, which could be launched as early as December, and that there is significant interest in the market. The fund will comprise only AAA-rated papers of the PSU companies.



### ***RBI enhances scope of Special Non-Resident Rupee accounts***

MUMBAI : To popularise cross-border transactions in Indian rupee, the Reserve Bank has enhanced the scope of 'Special Non-resident Rupee' (SNRR) by allowing persons residing outside India to open such accounts for purposes like external commercial borrowing and trade credit in INR. The RBI, in a notification on Friday, said: "With a view to promote the usage of INR products by persons resident outside India, it has been decided, in consultation with the Government of India.

### ***CBDT inaugurates Web Portal for exchange of information on Income Tax***

New Delhi: The tax department has launched a portal that will provide information, including about procedures, related to automatic exchange of information under common reporting standard. Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) Chairman P C Mody inaugurated the web portal on Income Tax website. India is committed to exchange financial account information automatically from 2017 under the Common Reporting Standard (CRS) on AEOI, the CBDT said in a release.

### ***Indian Railways sets up Institute of Financial Management in Hyderabad***

The Indian Railway Institute of Financial Management (IRIFM) has been set up here. The new entity, set up to impart professional training in management of railway finances, was formally inaugurated by Vinod Kumar Yadav, Chairman, Railway Board, on a 14-acre campus at Moula-Ali, Secunderabad. Speaking on the occasion, Yadav said, "IRIFM will herald a fine chapter in financial management in Indian Railways."

### ***Authorised capital of Food Corporation of India increased to Rs.10000 cr from Rs.3500 cr***

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday increased the authorised capital of the Food Corporation of India (FCI) by Rs 6,500 crore to Rs 10,000 crore. This will allow the FCI, which is sitting on a huge stockpile of foodgrain, to manage its inventories and procure more. The current paid-up capital of the FCI (Rs 3,500 crore) allowed it to borrow up to 10 times more, that is Rs 35,000 crore, according to the FCI Act, 1964.

### ***Kolkata students create Guinness World Records for largest astrophysics assemble***

Over 1,598 students on Tuesday created a Guinness World Record for the Largest astrophysics lesson and assembly of spectrosopes here, organisers said. The feat was achieved on the first day of the India International Science Festival (IISF) at the Science City. Astronomers use spectrosopes to know details such as temperature and chemical composition of celestial objects that are light years away from the earth. A small model of advanced spectrosopes can be made by using a cardboard box with a very narrow window.

### ***Sand Artist Sudarsan Pattnaik-The first Indian to win Italian Golden Sand Art Award***

Acclaimed Indian sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik has been conferred the Italian Golden Sand Art Award, 2019 at a ceremony in Rome, becoming the first Indian to win the prestigious award for his contribution to sand art. Representing India at the International Scorrano Sand Nativity event held in Lecce from November 13 to 17, Mr. Pattnaik created a 10-foot high sand sculpture of Mahatma Gandhi along with Russian artist Pavel Minilkov.

### ***Indira Gandhi Peace Prize for 2019: David Attenborough***

The Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2019 will be conferred on renowned naturalist and broadcaster Sir David Attenborough. His name was selected for the prize by an international jury chaired by former president Pranab Mukherjee, the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust announced on Tuesday. "Few individuals have come to be as identified with the well being of our planet, of all living creatures, and their relationship with human beings, as Sir David," the Trust said in a statement.

### ***DRDO Chairman G Satheesh Reddy awarded honorary fellowship by Royal Aeronautical Society of UK***

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) chairman G Satheesh Reddy was awarded the honorary fellowship by the Royal Aeronautical Society of United Kingdom. The aeronautical society recognised contributions of Reddy towards indigenous design, development and deployment of diversified missile systems, aerospace vehicles, guided weapons and avionics technologies in India. "Dr Reddy spearheaded Mission Shakti.

### ***CJI Office under RTI act***

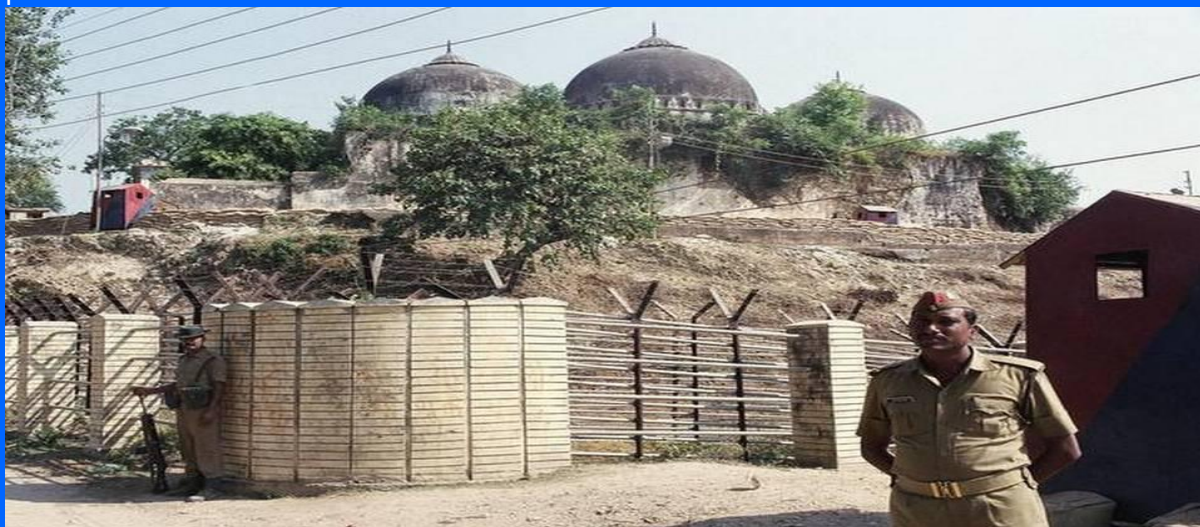
New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday ruled that the office of the Chief Justice of India is a public authority under the Right to Information Act. In a majority verdict 3:2 in favour of bringing the office under the purview of RTI, The Supreme Court added that some protection should also be given to the judges as right to privacy, confidentiality clauses come under the Act. The order was passed by a five-judge Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi.

### ***Cabinet approves Industrial Relations Code, 2019***

New Delhi: The Union cabinet on Wednesday approved the Labour Code on Industrial Relations 2019, allowing companies to hire workers on fixed-term contract of any duration. The code has retained the threshold on the worker count at 100 for prior government approval before retrenchment, but it has a provision for changing 'such number of employees' through notification. Fixed-term employment means a worker can be hired for any duration, three months or six months or a year depending on season and orders.

## ***Ayodya Verdict***

The verdict is out. A five-judge Bench of the Supreme Court has allowed the construction of a temple in the Babri Masjid-Ram Janmabhoomi site in Ayodhya, while ordering the grant of a five-acre plot to the U.P. Central Sunni Wakf Board for the construction of a mosque. Behind this judgment is a 70-year-long litigation, which, in turn, was foreshadowed by a legal dispute, albeit settled quickly, in the 19th century. The legal battle over the possession of a 2.77-acre piece of land is now over.



## ***India ranks 59th in 2019 IMD World Talent Ranking***

India has slipped 6 places to 59 rank on a global annual list of 63 countries, due to low quality of life and expenditure on education, according to the latest edition of IMD World Talent Ranking, which was topped by Switzerland. The ranking, which is based on the performance in three main categories -- investment and development, appeal and readiness, noted that India is also lagging behind fellow BRICs countries - China ranked 42nd on the list, Russia (47th) and South Africa (50th). India also witnessed one of the sharpest declines among Asian economies owing to low quality of life, negative impact of brain drain, and the low priority of its economy on attracting and retaining talents.

## ***India's Ravi Prakash wins BRICS-Young Innovator Prize***

Ravi Prakash, an Indian PhD scholar has won the USD 25,000 BRICS-Young Innovator Prize for inventing an affordable indigenous milk chilling unit for smaller and marginal rural dairy farmers. Prakash, PhD scholar of ICAR-National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI), Bangalore, was a part of 21-member delegation sent to Brazil by the Department of Science and Technology for the 4th BRICS-Young Scientist Forum (YSF), 2019. India won the first prize, carrying USD 25,000, in the forum, the Department of Science and Technology said in a Facebook post.

### ***Chandrayaan 2: Argon 40 found in Lunar Exosphere***

Chandrayaan-2 currently orbiting the Moon has detected Argon-40 in the lunar exosphere according to ISRO. It has been able to do that with the help of its Chandra's Atmospheric Composition Explorer-2 (CHACE-2) payload. Chandrayaan-2 has detected Argon-40 from an altitude of about 100 km. Argon-40 also known as  $^{40}\text{Ar}$  is an isotope of the noble gas Argon. Argon is third most abundant gas in the Earth's Atmosphere.



### ***IIIT Hyderabad create first ever Indian Brain Atlas***

Researchers at the IIIT Hyderabad said that the first ever Indian Brain Atlas (IBA) has been created. They stated that the next step is to prepare atlases for different age groups to study age related affects on brain anatomy. The average brain size of an Indian was smaller in height, width and volume in comparison to people of the Caucasian and eastern races. The immediate implication of this finding can be seen in treatment outcomes of neurological problems or brain related ailments - like dementia, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease etc.



### ***Microsoft launches K-12 Education Transformation Framework***

Microsoft has launched its "K-12 Education Transformation Framework" to facilitate comprehensive digital transformation of schools in India, a model which has been adopted in over 50 countries so far, the company said on Thursday. According to officials at Microsoft's Education wing, the framework comprises four pillars -- leadership and policy, modern teaching and learning, intelligent environments and technology blueprint. To help school principals initiate their journey of digital transformation.

# INTERNATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

## ***Rajnath Singh to co-chair 19th India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission***

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh is scheduled to visit Russia from November 5-7 to co-chair the 19th India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Military and Military-Technical Cooperation (IRIGC-M & MTC) in Moscow. "During his visit, the Defence Minister is expected to hold extensive discussions with Defence Minister of Russia General Sergei Shoigu covering all areas of military-to-military cooperation and defence industrial cooperation," an official release by the Ministry of Defence said.

## ***PM Modi to attend BRICS***

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be in Brazil on November 13 and 14 to attend the 11th BRICS summit, the theme of which is "economic growth for an innovative future." This will be the sixth time Modi will be participating in the BRICS summit, his first being at Fortaleza, also in Brazil in 2014, a statement from the Prime Minister's Office said. Sources said he would leave for Brasilia, Brazil on Tuesday afternoon. A large business delegation from India is also expected to be present during the visit, especially to attend the BRICS Business Forum where the business community of all the five countries are represented.

## ***Iran discovers new oil field with 53 Bn barrels of reserves***

A new oil field that would increase Iran's proven reserves by about a third has been discovered, President Hassan Rouhani has said. The field, in the south-western province of Khuzestan and about 2,400 sq km (926 sq miles) in area, contains 53 billion barrels of crude, he said. Iran has been struggling to sell oil abroad because of tough US sanctions. They were imposed after the US pulled out of a nuclear deal with world powers last year. "We have found an oil field with 53 billion barrels of oil in place, 53 billion barrels.

## ***India to host 19th Council of Heads of Governments of SCO in 2020***

India will host the 19th Council of Heads of Government of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation next year, the first such high level meeting of the eight-member grouping to be organised by New Delhi after its admission to the bloc in 2017, SCO Secretary General Vladimir Norov said on Tuesday. The SCO is a China-led eight-member economic and security bloc, in which India and Pakistan were admitted as full members in 2017. Its founding members included China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. "I would like to say that in 2020, India will host a meeting of the Heads of Government for the first time,".

## ***2nd edition of Paris Peace Forum held in France***

People participate in the second edition of the Paris Peace Forum, in Paris, France, Nov. 12, 2019. The second edition of the Paris Peace Forum, a two-day event of debate sessions aiming at global solutions for global issues, was held from Nov. 11 to 13, 2019 at la Grande Halle de La Villette in Paris. (Xinhua/Gao Jing)



## ***Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro to be chief guest at Republic Day 2020***

Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro has accepted Prime Minister Narendra Modi's invitation to be the Chief Guest at India's Republic Day celebrations in 2020. Prime Minister Modi met Bolsonaro on Wednesday on the sidelines of the 11th BRICS Summit, which is being held in Brasilia. During his meeting with Bolsonaro, Prime Minister Modi invited the President of Brazil to be the chief guest at the Republic Day in 2020. Bolsonaro accepted the invitation with pleasure. "Both leaders agreed that on this occasion, the two countries can comprehensively enhance our strategic partnership," an official statement said.

## ***6th Parliamentary Speakers' Summit of G20 countries***

An Indian parliamentary delegation led by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla will travel to Japan on Saturday to take part in the 6th Parliamentary Speakers' Summit of the G20 countries, slated to be held from November 3 to November 5 in Tokyo. The summit will have three sessions on separate themes pertaining to trade, technology and sustainable development. As per an official release, the First Session is based on the theme 'Promotion of Free, Open and Fair Trade and Investment'. The theme of the Second Session is 'Utilization of Innovative Technology towards a human-centred Future Society' while the Third Session would be held on the theme of 'Efforts towards Resolution of Global Challenges and Achievement of the SDGs (Financing for Development, Need for Transparent and Effective Government, etc.)'.

### ***European Investment Bank to stop Fossil Fuel Funding by 2021***

The European Union is to stop funding oil, gas and coal projects at the end of 2021, cutting €2bn (£1.7bn) of yearly investments. The European Investment Bank (EIB), the EU's financing department, will bar funding for most fossil fuel projects. The ban will come into effect a year later than originally proposed after lobbying by EU member states. Since 2013, the EIB has funded €13.4bn of fossil fuel projects.



### ***Sri Lanka Election: Gotabaya Rajapaksa to be sworn in as new President***

Sri Lanka's controversial wartime defence secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa was on Monday sworn-in as the country's President at the Ruwanweli Seya precincts in the ancient north central town of Anuradhapura. The newly-elected president worshipped at the Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi, a sacred fig tree in the Mahamewna Gardens and Ruwanweli Seya, a stupa and a hemispherical structure containing relics and considered sacred to many Buddhists all over the world, in the town. "Sustaining the victory is more important than the journey towards it," Rajapaksa said in a tweet before the swearing-in ceremony.



### ***India-2nd largest in sending students to US***

India sent more than 202,000 students to the U.S. in 2018-19, the second largest after China which for the tenth consecutive year remained the largest source of foreign students in America, according to a report released on Monday. The '2019 Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange' said the number of foreign students in the US set an all-time high in the 2018/19 academic year, the fourth consecutive year with more than one million international students.

### ***India extends Visa-on-Arrival facility to UAE nationals***

The Centre has extended the Visa-on-Arrival facility to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) nationals travelling to India in a bid to strengthen people-to-people and trade links, as well as the strategic ties between the two countries, Indian embassy here said on Sunday. "The government of India, with effect from November 16, 2019, has decided to extend the Visa-on-Arrival facility to nationals of the United Arab Emirates.

### ***Pakistan-First Country to introduce WHO approved India made Typhoid Vaccine***

Pakistan on Friday became the first country in the world to introduce a new typhoid vaccine in an effort to combat a drug-resistant strain of the potentially fatal disease in the Sindh province, officials said. Pakistani health officials have reported an ongoing outbreak of an extensively drug-resistant typhoid fever that began in the country in November 2016. The strain of Salmonella Typhi bacteria, which has become a so-called "superbug", has so far infected around 11,000 people in the country, with Sindh province the worst-hit.

### ***NIA hosts the first counter terrorism exercise for Quad Countries***

The National Investigation Agency is hosting the first counter-terrorism exercise for the "Quad" countries — India, U.S, Japan and Australia — in Delhi on November 21 and 22. The 'CT-TTX' (counter-terrorism table-top exercise) is first such engagement among the Quad countries on regional and global issues of common interest and also in the domain of counter-terrorism and cooperation, NIA officials said.

### ***AIIA signs MoU with Western Sydney University to promote Ayurveda***

The All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) has inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Western Sydney University, Australia aimed at promoting collaboration in research and developing guidelines for integrating Ayurveda principles with modern medicine. Professor Barney Glover, Vice Chancellor of Western Sydney University, Australia and Prof Tanuja Nesari, Director, All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) signed the MoU on Friday during the visit of the delegation led by Dan Tehan, Minister for Education, Australian government.



### ***China warns cattle imports as India notifies OIE about cattle disease in Odisha***

Trade experts say proper containment measures will ensure exports don't get hurt. The outbreak of 'lumpy skin disease' in cattle in certain parts of Odisha has prompted China to issue a warning notification against imports of cattle and cattle products from India. Exporters and trade experts, however, say that if the government takes enough timely steps to contain the disease within the affected districts, exports of cattle and cattle products to other destinations may not get hit.

### ***Cabinet approves MoUs with Saudi Arabia to combat smuggling of narcotic drugs***

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the Memoranda of Understandings (MoUs) inked between India and Saudi Arabia in the field of combating illicit trafficking and smuggling of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and chemical precursors. The MoUs shall facilitate and enhance the cooperation between the two countries in combating illicit trafficking and smuggling of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and chemical precursors, as defined by the United Nations International Drug Control Conventions.

### ***UNDP launches Accelerator Lab in New Delhi***

Seeking to address some of the most pressing issues facing India, including air pollution, through innovation, the United Nations Development Programme on Thursday launched the country chapter of its Accelerator Lab here. The laboratory that will be housed in the UNDP India office has partnered with the Indian government's Atal Innovation Mission to achieve its objectives.

### ***Pravind Jugnauth sworn in as Mauritius PM***

Mauritius's incumbent Prime Minister Pravind Jugnauth was sworn in for a five-year term on Tuesday after elections in which his coalition consolidated its grip on parliament. Jugnauth, 57, took over from his father in 2017 without going through a vote, and the decisive victory of his centre-right Morisian Alliance in the November 7 elections has strengthened his legitimacy.

### ***World's first CNG port terminal to be built in Gujarat***

AHMEDABAD: The Gujarat government on Sunday gave its approval for a Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) terminal in Bhavnagar with a proposed investment of 1,900 crore, an official said. A state government release said the facility, approval for which was given by the Gujarat Infrastructure Development Board headed by chief minister Vijay Rupani, would be the world's first CNG port terminal.

### ***AIB to invest 100 million USD in solar and wind projects in India***

Beijing-headquartered Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) expects an annual private investment worth \$100 million a year in solar and wind projects in India from next month. AIIB expects to tap as much as \$100 million green and renewable projects in India from next month, bank's Director General (Investment Operations) Pang Yee Ean said. In a month's time, you will see approval of projects in the Renewable Energy sector (in India), said Pang after addressing the South Asian Diaspora Convention on Saturday. We should be consistently doing wind and solar projects up to \$100 million each year I would say each year there would be a \$100 million in the private sector for renewable projects.

### ***Sri Lanka becomes first South Asian nation to criminalise match-fixing related offences***

Sri Lanka has become the first South Asian nation to criminalise several offences related to match-fixing as its parliament passed all three readings of a bill labelled "Prevention of Offences Related to Sports". If a person is found guilty of committing an offence related to corruption in sports, then he may find himself jailed for a term up to 10 years and he will also be required to pay various fines, ESPNcricinfo reported. The newest legislation covers all sports and it is believed that the recent investigation by Anti Corruption Unit prompted this bill to be drafted. Sri Lanka's Sports Minister Harin Fernando presented the bill in the parliament and former skipper Arjuna Ranatunga who is a now a cabinet minister supported the new legislation during parliamentary debates.

### ***Indian boxer Sarita Devi elected to AIBA first Athletes Commission***

India's boxing ace, Laishram Sarita Devi, has been elected unopposed as a member of the first-ever international boxing body (AIBA) athletes' commission. In a letter, the AIBA's interim president, Mohamed Moustahsane, has officially informed the top Indian women boxer about her inclusion in the prestigious panel. "I am confident that with your knowledge and experience, you will be an important contributor to the activities of the Commission," Moustahsane wrote in his letter. And Sarita is excited to be part of the commission. "It is a great honour for me and I am happy that AIBA has included me as a member.

### ***2020 Hockey Pro League: Bhubaneswar to host India's home matches***

Bhubaneswar will host India's home matches during the 2020 Hockey Pro League, the sport's governing body announced on Monday. The second edition of the Hockey Pro League will be played between January 11 and June 28, the International Hockey Federation (FIH) said in a statement. Bhubaneswar has become a hockey hub in India and has been hosting a majority of tournaments, the most recent being the Olympic qualifiers. The Pro League will feature 144 matches in the coming season. Australia's home matches will be played in Perth and Sydney, while England will be playing its share in London.

### ***NASA unveils its first electric plane***

NASA, most prominent for its many Florida-launched exploits into space, showcased an early version of its first all-electric experimental aircraft, the X-57 "Maxwell," at its lesser-known aeronautics lab in the California desert. Adapted from a Italian-made Tecnam P2006T twin-engine propeller plane, the X-57 has been under development since 2015 and remains at least a year away from its first test flight in the skies over Edward Air Force Base.



### ***Pooja Gehlot wins silver in UWW Under-23 World Championships***

Wrestler Pooja Gehlot (53kg) claimed India's second silver medal after going down to Japan's 2017 world champion Haruna Okuno in the finals of the UWW Under-23 World Championships. Gehlot lost 0-2 to Okuno in the summit clash to emulate Ravinder (61kg), who also won a silver earlier this week. Three-time World Junior Championships medallist Sajan Bhanwal (77kg), however, lost a close semifinal bout 4-5 to Japan's Kodai Sakuraba. He will now fight for the bronze on Saturday. A terrific Bhanwal had earlier blanked Jesse Alexander Porter 6-0 in the qualifiers to move into the pre-quarterfinals, where he notched up a 3-1 win over Azerbaijan's Tunjay Vazirzade.

