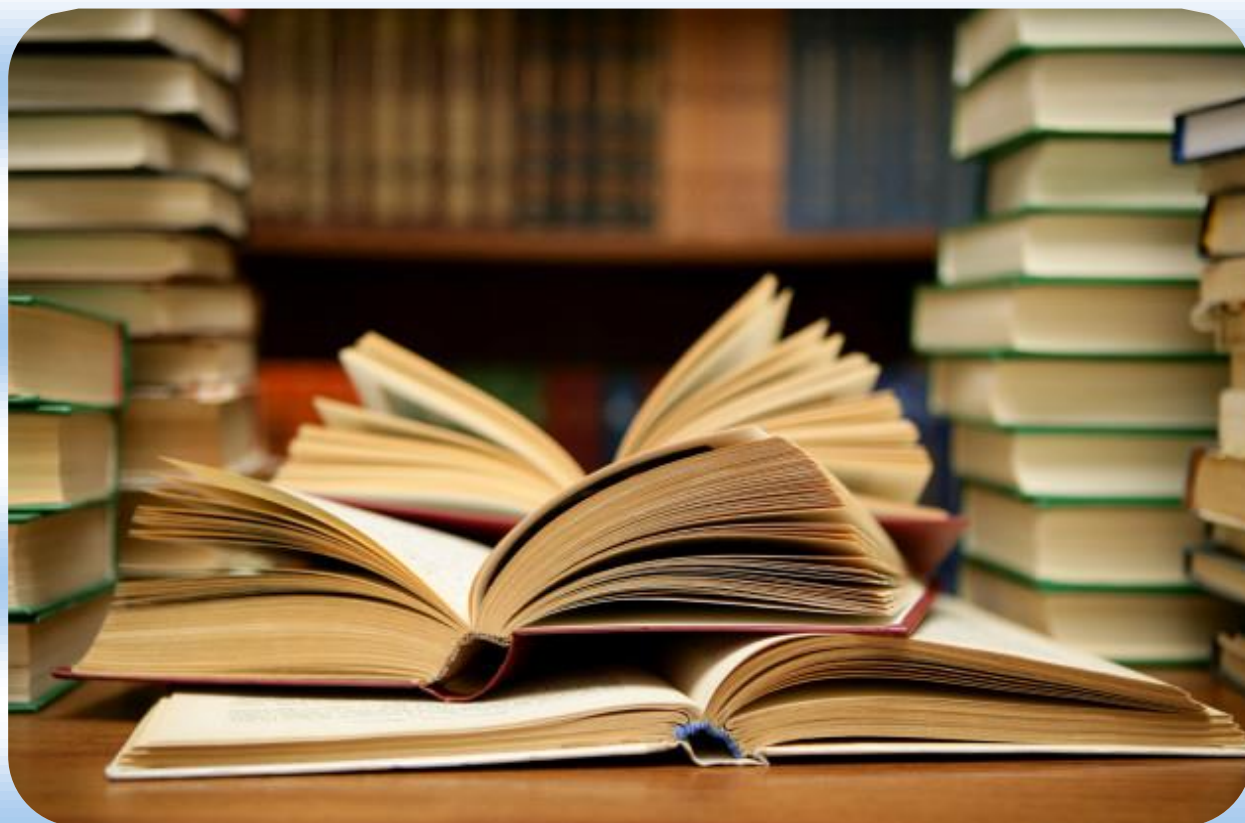


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GENERAL KNOWLEDGE MONTHLY



JANUARY-2019

NATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

Telangana to have separate High Court from 1st January 2019

NEW DELHI: Come New Year, Andhra Pradesh will have a separate high court which will function from Amravati, the new capital of the state, as President Ram Nath Kovind Wednesday issued orders to this effect. Since the bifurcation of the state on June 2, 2014, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana have had a common high court at Hyderabad, the latter's capital city. With the creation of the new high court, the country now has 25 high courts. "...the President hereby constitutes a separate High Court for the State of Andhra Pradesh, namely, the High Court of Andhra Pradesh, from the 1st day of January, 2019 with the principal seat of such High Court at Amaravati in the State of Andhra Pradesh.

Centre approves renaming Allahabad to 'Prayagraj'

The Union Home Ministry has approved a Uttar Pradesh government proposal to rename Allahabad as Prayagraj. The decision comes days ahead of the Kumbh Mela being organised by the State government in the city, and over two months after the State Cabinet decided to rename it.



Asia Competitiveness Institute releases Ease of Doing Business Rankings for Indian states

Maharashtra ranked highest according to a broad measure of Ease of Doing Business (EDB) in Indian states announced at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy here. The new gauge has given 21 major states entirely different ranks when compared with the only other previous measure of this sort, the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index. The latest measure produced by the Asian Competitiveness Institute (ACI) research centre of the School extends the definition of ease of doing business beyond the core measure of business friendliness that the Bank had focussed on for successive years.

One family One Job scheme of Sikkim

Sikkim Chief Minister Pawan Kumar Chamling on Saturday launched the 'One Family One Job' scheme which entitles one government job for every family in the state. Chamling had announced the scheme last year during the winter session of the state Legislative Assembly. At a "Rojgar Mela" (employment fair) organised at the Paljor stadium here, over 12,000 unemployed youths were handed out appointment letters on Saturday. However,

World's longest expressway to come up in Uttar Pradesh

Ganga Expressway: Uttar Pradesh is set to construct the world's longest expressway! During the ongoing Kumbh Mela, the Yogi Adityanath-led UP government approved the construction of the Ganga Expressway for better connectivity of Prayagraj with western districts of the state.



Gita Gopinath becomes the first female chief economist of IMF

Prominent Indian-American economist Gita Gopinath has joined as the chief economist of the International Monetary Fund, becoming the first woman to occupy the top post at the global lender. Gopinath, 47, joined last week at a time, when she believes the world is experiencing a retreat from globalisation, posing challenges to multilateral institutions. He John Zwaanstra professor of International Studies and Economics at Harvard University.

IPS officer Aparna Kumar completes South Pole expedition

NEW DELHI: Aparna Kumar, who become the first woman Indian Police Service (IPS) DIG and Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) officer to successfully complete the South Pole expedition, is now aiming to set her foot on the North Pole in April, to mark the achievement of conquering both the poles. Speaking to ANI about her adventurous journey, Aparna said: "I started my journey from Union Glacier; there were seven other members in my team. It took us eight days to reach the South Pole covering 111 miles (178.6 km).

Punit Goenka named as new chairman of BARC India

The MD and CEO of Zee Entertainment Enterprises Limited (ZEEL), Punit Goenka has been elected as the new chairman of Broadcast Audience Research Council of India (BARC). Goenka was elected by the board at its meeting held on Tuesday. He will be taking over from Nakul Chopra, a senior advisor at Publicis. Goenka was the founder Chairman of BARC India and played an instrumental role in setting up of the TV Viewership measurement company.

Satyarup Siddhanta becomes world's youngest to climb 7 highest volcanoes, 7 highest mountains in 7 continents

Kolkata, January 16 Mountaineer Satyarup Siddhanta on Wednesday became the youngest man to climb the seven highest peaks and volcanic summits across all continents after conquering Antarctica's highest point Mount Sidley. Satyarup climbed Mt Sidley at 6:28 IST, at a temperature of minus 40 degree Celsius according to the inReach Satellite Communicator he was carrying.



Supreme Court issues notice to Centre on PIL against notification under IT Act

The Supreme Court on Monday issued notice to the Centre on a plea challenging the notification authorising 10 central agencies to intercept, monitor and decrypt any computer system and sought a response within six weeks. The PIL challenging the government's December 20 notification came up before a bench headed by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi. According to the notification, 10 central probe and snoop agencies are empowered under the Information Technology (IT) Act for computer interception and analysis.

Sakhi Centres

Saranya (name changed) wife of a political leader had no other option but to sit in dharna a few months ago in front of her husband's house for over 50 days after she was thrown out of her house by her husband as he married another woman. With the husband and in-laws absconding and no serious action from the police, Saranya decided to go on fast unto death. Finally, it was Ranga Reddy district Sakhi Centre that took up the case suo-motu and got her a 'Right to residence' order from the court.

Atal Tinkering Lab Handbook Released

NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) released the 'Atal Tinkering Lab Handbook - Naye Dishayen, Naye Nirman, Naya Bharat' on the eve of the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, also celebrated as the National Youth Day, to hail and take forward the spirit of Tinkering and Innovation across the country. Apart from this, they also announced a ten-month Student Entrepreneurship Programme, which is a fully-funded initiative to help the top six innovations of the Atal Tinkering Marathon 2017 to transform their innovative prototypes into functioning.

Pravasi Bhartiya Divas 2019

PM Modi to launch Pravasi Bhartiya Divas in Varanasi today: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said that India is today in a position to lead the world in several subjects. Inaugurating the 15th edition of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) in Varanasi, Modi mentioned about the International Solar Alliance (ISA) to say "through this medium, we want to take the world towards One World, One Sun, One Grid".

Political Parties Oppose Footing Bill for ads on criminal record

New Delhi: Ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, Congress and BJP have both questioned the Election Commission's diktat that a candidate should foot the bill to publicise his criminal record, especially since it eats into his poll expenditure limit. Candidates from both the national political parties are learnt to have written to the EC red-flagging their concerns over the decision initiated by a Supreme Court order in September last year.

Collegium Recommends names of Justice Dinesh Maheshwari and Justice Sanjiv Khanna for appointment as Judges of the Supreme Court

The Union government on Wednesday cleared the names of two judges for elevation to the Supreme Court even as the higher judiciary plunged deeper into controversy with former members of the apex court's collegium questioning its decisions and asking for more transparency in the selection process. The five-member body is under scrutiny after it emerged that it reversed a December decision to elevate two high court chief justices to the apex court and instead picked two others in January.

Fair Value for Innovation launched at Raisina Dialogue

The United States Chamber of Commerce's Global Innovation Policy Center (GIPC) launched a new innovation initiative at the Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi. The initiative, titled "Fair Value for Innovation", will examine economic underpinnings that would enable breakthrough innovation, and explore how policymakers can harness innovation capital in India and around the globe through research, advocacy, partnerships, and programs.

West Bengal exits Ayushman Bharat scheme

Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday likened Narendra Modi's decisions to those of "Mussolini and Hitler" while accusing the Prime Minister of "destroying" the country's federal structure. This decision will shrink the job prospects of the general category. He is doing whatever he likes. This is more dangerous than Genghis Khan, Mussolini and Hitler," Mamata said at a meeting in Krishnagar, referring to the Centre's 10 per cent reservation for the economically weak sections.

RBI tweaks Gold Monetisation Scheme

The Reserve Bank of India has amended the regulations which relate to the eligibility criteria for making deposits under the gold monetisation scheme. In a notification on Wednesday, the central bank said that the Gold Monetization Scheme, 2015 has been amended immediate effect. "Persons eligible to make a deposit - Resident Indians [Individuals, HUFs, Proprietorship & Partnership firms, Trusts including Mutual Funds/Exchange Traded Funds registered under SEBI (Mutual Fund) Regulations.

Union Cabinet approves setting up of 3 New AIIMS

With an aim to expand the outreach of quality health care to the remote corners of the nation, the Union Cabinet gave its nod to the proposal for establishing three new All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) including one each for Jammu and Kashmir region and one at Gujarat. The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Thursday gave its approval for establishing AIIMS at Vijaynagar.

SC sets up panel for to suggest reforms for holding competitive exams

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Thursday favoured setting up of a three-member high-powered committee comprising Nandan Nilekani, a co-founder of tech giant Infosys, and renowned computer scientist Vijay P Bhatkar to suggest reforms for conducting of competitive examinations fairly by government bodies. The top court said it would not vacate the stay on the declaration of result of SSC combined graduate level (CGL).

Web- Wonder Women Campaign

The Union Ministry of Women and Child Development on January 9, 2018 launched an online campaign, 'Web - Wonder Women' also known as '#www'. The Campaign aims to discover and celebrate the exceptional achievements of women, who have been driving positive agenda of social change through the social media itself. The Ministry partnered with the Breakthrough and Twitter India for '#www: WebWonderWomen' campaign.

Chhattisgarh withdraws general consent accorded to the CBI to probe cases in the state

Two months after the Chandrababu Naidu-led government in Andhra Pradesh withdrew general consent accorded to the CBI to probe cases in the state, the Congress government in Chhattisgarh took a similar decision on Thursday. When contacted, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel said: "The first thing is that under the NDA government at the Centre, the credibility of the CBI is at peril. Therefore, it does not seem right that we allow the CBI to act as it pleases in our state."

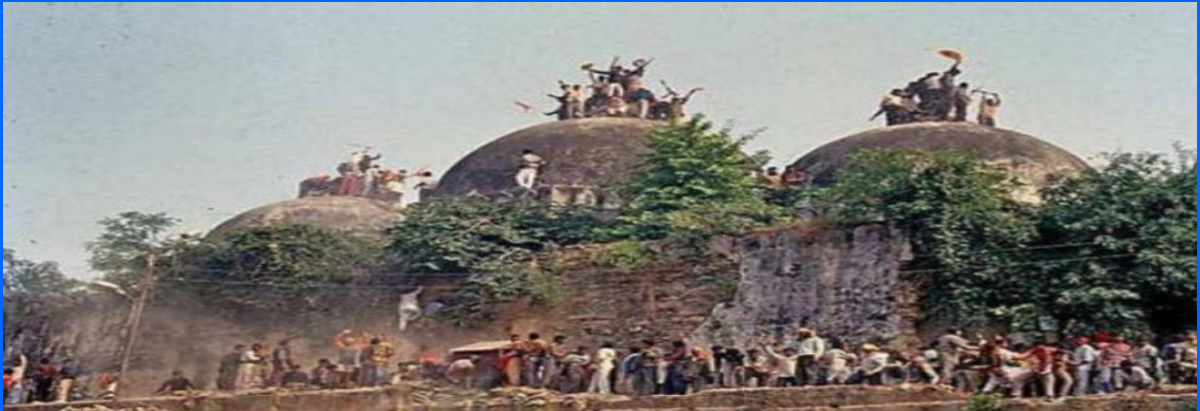
January 10: World Hindi Day

World Hindi Day is observed every year on January 10 to promote the greatness of the Hindi language. Hindi is India's official language and is spoken by more than 250 million people across the World. On World Hindi Day, the Ministry of External Affairs conducts events through its missions worldwide to spread the greatness of the Hindi language. The Department of Official Language – Rajbhasha also organises several special programmes to mark the day.



5-Judge Constitution Bench to hear Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid Case

A five-judge Constitution bench of the Supreme Court will hear the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid title dispute, or the Ayodhya case. The bench will comprise of Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi and Justices SA Bobde, NV Ramana, UU Lalit and DY Chandrachud. The five-judge bench will commence hearings on the matter from January 10.



UGC approves journals for Consortium for Academic and Research Ethics (CARE)

Credibility of Research Publications is extremely important because it has a direct impact upon the individual, institutional and National image. UGC has constituted a Committee under the Chairmanship of Prof. P. Balram, to review its quality mandate relating to the promotion of Research and to review the existing M.Phil/ Ph.D Regulations. With an aim to refine and strengthen the University Grants Commission (UGC).

Government approves around 5000 additional seats in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas

Union HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar on Monday approved an increase of 5,000 seats at Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas across the country. In the last four years there has been an addition of 9,000 seats in the residential schools for talented rural children. With the Human Resource Development (HRD) Ministry approving the addition of 5,000 more seats, the number of seats has increased from 46,600 to 51,000 at the Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas (JNVs). The admission to the additional seats will start in the 2019-20 academic session.

Indian Forest Service to be renamed as Indian Forest and Tribal Service

NEW DELHI: Ahead of parliamentary elections, the Centre has proposed another pro-tribal measure – renaming of the Indian Forest Service as Indian Forest and Tribal Service. The Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) has initiated an inter-ministerial consultation note to rename the service and also train its cadre to be more receptive towards tribals and forest dwellers. The move follows a directive from the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) to this effect,

Airports Authority of India bans single-use plastic items

NEW DELHI: The Airports Authority of India (AAI) on Monday imposed a ban on single-use plastic items at its 129 airports across the country. Single-use plastic items are used only once and then thrown in the trash. "Various steps have been undertaken to eliminate single-use plastic items at passenger terminals and city side. These steps include banning of single-use plastic items like straws, plastic cutlery, plastic plates etc," the AAI said in a statement.

National Policy for Domestic Workers

In a bid to give recognition to domestic workers besides making them eligible for minimum wages, social security and safe working conditions, labour ministry is drafting the national policy on domestic workers which will benefit nearly 40 lakh domestic workers. "The ministry of labour & employment is considering formulate a National Policy on Domestic Workers which is in the draft stage," labour minister Santosh Gangwar said in Parliament on Monday. The policy could benefit government if it comes before the general elections.

Reservation for Economically Weaker Sections

Dubbing the anti-BJP grand alliance as an "failed experiment", Prime Minister Narendra Modi said Saturday the opposition parties are coming together as they want to form a 'majboor' (helpless) government to promote nepotism and corruption, whereas the BJP wants a strong dispensation for all-round development. Modi also attacked the Congress over the Ram Temple issue, saying it doesn't want a solution to the Ayodhya dispute and is creating hurdles through its lawyers.

70-Point Grading Index to Assess Quality of School Education in the States

The Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD) has introduced a 70-point grading index to assess the quality of school education offered by states. "We have decided that a state performance grading will be done wherein the states will be marked out of 1,000 scores on 70 parameters," HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar told reporters here. This will give the correct picture of where every state stands. There will be a fair competition to improve each other's performances, he said.

Indian Railways to replace the conventional coaches with modern LHB coaches

Indian Railways eyes modern coaches for all trains! Soon, you will be able to enjoy several modern benefits while travelling in Indian Railways trains, with plans to replace ageing ICF coaches with modern Linke Hofmann Busch (LHB) ones. Recently, Railway Minister Piyush Goyal announced in Rajya Sabha that his ministry is planning to replace all conventional coaches with modern LHB design coaches in all trains that cover long distances.

Women's wall for Gender Equality in Kerala

Lakhs of women assembled under the aegis of the Left Democratic Front (LDF) on Tuesday to create an almost unbroken human wall that stretched 620 km from Kasaragod in north Kerala to Thiruvananthapuram in the south. Perhaps, the only jarring gap in the wall of women was at Chettukundu in Kasaragod where suspected Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) workers unleashed violence against those who tried to line up on the road.



RBI launches SRPHi

Mumbai: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will capture payment habits of individuals in six cities, including four metropolitan towns. For the purpose, the central bank has launched a 'Survey on Retail Payment Habits of Individuals (SRPHi)'. The survey will cover a sample of 6,000 individuals from various socio-economic backgrounds across six cities -- Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru and Guwahati, the RBI said in a release on Wednesday. "The survey seeks qualitative responses from individuals on their payment habits," it said. The findings may provide some idea about awareness and usage habits of digital payment products, it added.

Startup India-WhatsApp Grand Challenge

WhatsApp on Thursday launched the microsite launch of "Startup India – WhatsApp Grand Challenge". Announced last October, the Facebook-owned company in partnership with Invest India will award the top five winners a total grant of \$250,000. Interested startups can now start registering for the WhatsApp Startup challenge through the microsite. Registrations will be available till March 10, after which the entries will be evaluated by a Startup India and results will be announced later on May 24. WhatsApp lists healthcare, rural economy, financial and digital inclusion, education and citizen safety as the themes for the startup challenge.

India to participate in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2021

India will participate in the International Student Assessment (PISA), which tests the learning levels of 15-year-old students, in 2021. The HRD Ministry signed an agreement with the OECD, which conducts PISA every three years, on Monday, confirming India's participation in the triennial international survey that assesses students in reading, mathematics, science and collaborative problem-solving. Participation in PISA allows benchmarking performance against a wide range of countries. PISA uses test items aligned with international benchmarks. Test items are adapted to the local context and language, pilot tested and validated.

Nari Shakti: Hindi Word of the Year 2018

On January 26, the Oxford Dictionaries announced 'Nari Shakti' as the Hindi Word of the Year. The Hindi Word of the Year chosen every year, in many ways, reflects the conversations, ethos of a particular year. The word this year, Nari Shakti, has been derived from Sanskrit and when broken down, the word 'nari' means women and 'shakti' means power. In 2018, the word initiated a lot of conversations mainly because of the identification of this term by Hindi speakers across the nation due to several efforts and initiatives undertaken by the government, civil society, NGOs, and universities in order to empower women. According to a report in PTI, the word was selected by the Oxford Dictionaries (India).

Vande Bharat Express

Vande Bharat Express schedule and route: Indian Railways' fastest engine-less train – the Vande Bharat Express – also known as Train 18, is all set to be flagged off in the coming days by PM Narendra Modi on the Delhi-Varanasi route.



Kulhads to be reintroduced in the Railway Stations

NEW DELHI: Having been elbowed out by the more utilitarian plastic and paper cups over the years at railway stations, 'kulhads' which were introduced by former railway minister Lalu Prasad 15 years ago are all set to make a comeback at catering units. Railway Minister Piyush Goyal has instructed caterers at Varanasi and Rae Bareilly stations to use terracotta-made 'kulhads', glasses and plates, according to a circular issued by the board to the chief commercial managers of Northern Railway and the North Eastern Railway.

Microsoft launches e-platform under Project ReWeave to help Handloom weavers

Microsoft India has launched a new e-commerce platform re-weave.in for handloom weavers under its Project ReWeave, part of its philanthropic initiatives. This e-commerce platform will help connect artisans to buyers directly, enabling them to expand to newer customers and markets. The new e-commerce website hosts signature collections created by weaver communities and showcases traditional designs and products created from natural dyes.

Exclusive Satellite to help in securing Pakistan and Bangladesh borders

NEW DELHI: A satellite will be launched by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) exclusively for the Home Ministry to help it further strengthen its frontiers with Pakistan and Bangladesh among others, according to an official statement issued Thursday. The move is part of recommendations made by a task force on the use of space technology in improving border management which have been accepted by Home Minister Rajnath Singh. To execute the project in a time bound manner, a short, medium and long-term plan has been proposed for implementation.

National Museum of Indian Cinema Inaugurated

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the National Museum of Indian Cinema in Mumbai on Saturday. The inauguration ceremony was attended by a host of Bollywood stars including veteran actor Manoj Kumar, Aamir Khan, Kangana Ranaut, filmmaker Karan Johar, Simmba director Rohit Shetty and Zero director Aanand L Rai.



IIT Hyderabad launches B.Tech course in Artificial Intelligence

The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Hyderabad will launch a full-fledged B Tech program in Artificial Intelligence (AI) from the coming academic year (2019-2020). Admissions to the course will be accepted based on the JEE Advanced score. With this, the institute claims it has become the first Indian educational institution to offer a full-fledged B Tech programme in AI. IIT-Hyderabad is also the third institute globally after US-based Carnegie Mellon University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

Sanjay Jain, K M Nataraj appointed as Additional Solicitor Generals

NEW DELHI: President Ram Nath Kovind has appointed senior advocates Sanjay Jain and K M Nataraj as Additional Solicitor Generals of India for the Supreme Court. "The president is pleased to appoint Sanjay Jain, senior advocate, as Additional Solicitor General of India for the Supreme Court with effect from the date of assumption of charge of the office till June 30, 2020, or until further orders, whichever is earlier," according to an official notification issued on January 15.

Times Higher Education Emerging Economies University Rankings 2019

KOLKATA: India has increased its representation in the Times Higher Education (THE) Emerging Economies University Rankings, up to 49 universities from 42. That includes 25 in the top 200, a rise from 17 last year. The overall 2019 ranking comprises nearly 450 universities – expanded from 378 last year – from 43 countries, across four continents. However, while the 2019 table sees several new entrants and high risers for India, there are also several institutions that drop back.

INTERNATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

Bangladesh Elections: PM's Awami League registers landslide victor

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina cruised to victory for a third consecutive term in Bangladesh's general election on Sunday, following a tense vote that saw at least 17 people killed in poll-related violence and demands of a fresh election by the opposition, according to media reports. According to media reports, the ruling Awami League-led coalition won over 260 seats in the 300-member House. Private DBC TV aired results of 299 seats out of 300. The ruling Awami League-led grand alliance bagged 266 seats and its ally Jatiya Party secured 21,

Australian Open 2019

Melbourne is hosting the world's best for the 107th edition of the Australian Open, which will be the richest yet, boasting a total prize pool of \$62.5 million. The tournament comprises men's and women's singles; men's, women's and mixed doubles and junior's championships; as well as wheelchair, legends and exhibition events. Just four players remain in contention for the singles titles, with Petra Kvitova and Naomi Osaka playing the women's final on Saturday, January 26 before Novak Djokovic and Rafael Nadal play the men's final on Sunday, January 27/

Pakistan to issue Panda Bonds to raise capital in China

Pakistan's cabinet has approved the issuance of first-ever renminbi-denominated bonds to raise loans from China's capital markets, as the country moved a step forward to give the Chinese currency a status at par with the US dollar. The 'Panda Bonds' was approved in a Cabinet meeting, led by Prime Minister Imran Khan, on Thursday, The Express Tribune reported.

Japan to Withdraw from the International Whaling Commission

Japan is to withdraw from the International Whaling Commission (IWC) and resume commercial whaling from July, it announced on Wednesday, abandoning a decades-old campaign to persuade the commission to allow it to hunt whales commercially. Japan's commercial whaling will be limited to its own territorial waters and its exclusive economic zone, said Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga, who made the announcement at a news conference after a cabinet decision on Tuesday.

President Trump signs 'Asia Reassurance Initiative Act' into law

TAIPEI (Taiwan News) – In Washington D.C., just before ushering in the New Year on Dec. 31, U.S. President Donald Trump signed the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act (ARIA) into law along with 12 other bills. The ARIA Act calls for increased U.S. engagement in the Indo-Pacific region and strengthened support, including arms sales, for U.S. allies like Taiwan and others. The act was designed to counter the encroaching influence and growing threat from China, and to reinvigorate U.S. leadership in the region.

Pakistan withdraws on-arrival visa facility for Afghan Nationals

Pakistan on Thursday abolished the long-standing facility of on-arrival visas for Afghan nationals, authorities said, citing security risks amid a spike in terror attacks. Earlier, Afghan nationals were granted a 30-day visa on arrival at the entry points but now they will be required to apply for a visa from Pakistani missions in Afghanistan, Federal Investigation Agency's Director Immigration Ismatullah Junejo was quoted as saying by the Express Tribune.

Pakistan's Provincial Government declares Panj Tirath Hindu religious site as national heritage

PESHAWAR: The provincial Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government in northwest Pakistan has declared the ancient Hindu religious site of Panj Tirath in Peshawar as national heritage. Panj Tirath, which got its name from the five pools of water present there, also contains a temple and a lawn with date palm trees. The five pools of the heritage site now come under the ambit of Chacha Yunus Park and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

UN observes First-Ever World Braille Day

Recognized henceforth each 4 January, the Day was proclaimed by the General Assembly last November, as a means of realizing fully the human rights of visually-impaired and partially-sighted people, and bringing written language to the forefront as a critical prerequisite for promoting fundamental freedoms. The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that people who are visually impaired are more likely than those with full sight to experience higher rates of poverty and disadvantages which can amount to a lifetime of inequality.

China passes law to make Islam compatible with socialism

China has passed a new law that seeks to "Sinicize" Islam within the next five years, the latest move by Beijing to rewrite how the religion is practised. China's main English newspaper, Global Times, reported on Saturday that after a meeting with representatives from eight Islamic associations, government officials "agreed to guide Islam to be compatible with socialism and implement measures to Sinicize the religion.

Yellow Vests Protests

France's gross domestic product (GDP) rose 0.3% in the final three months of 2018, according to official figures, after a jump in exports made up for a drop in consumer spending. Europe's second largest economy had been expected to report fourth quarter growth of 0.1%. However, exports grew by 2.5% between October which outpaced imports which increased by 1.6%. Household spending, which is traditionally the engine room of the French economy.

Macedonia renamed as the Republic of Northern Macedonia

It has taken more than 25 years, divided two nations and been cause for protests great and small, but on Tuesday Greece and Macedonia finally declared peace. After countless rounds of UN-mediated talks, the two Balkan neighbours announced that they had agreed to end the row over what to call the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The tiny state will henceforth be known neither by its acronym, FYROM, nor simply as Macedonia but as the Republic of North Macedonia.

World Dynamic City 2019

With a robust technology and innovation ecosystem in place, Bengaluru has emerged as the world's most dynamic city, a recent survey said. According to a survey by property consultant JLL, following Bengaluru is Hyderabad that is ranked second with Delhi at fourth, Pune at fifth, Chennai at seventh and Kolkata at fifteenth position featuring in top 20 cities. With 19 of the top 20 cities from Asia Pacific, the rankings highlight and showcase the region's continued rapid urbanisation.

First human rights TV channel Launched

The world's first television channel dedicated to human rights was launched in London with a promise to deliver hidden stories ignored by mainstream media into people's living rooms. The International Observatory of Human Rights (IOHR) said its web-based channel would bring human rights issues to audiences in over 20 countries across Europe, Latin America and the Middle East.

Palestine takes over chairmanship of G77

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres welcomed the "historic leadership" of Palestine which assumed the chairmanship of G77, the global body's largest intergovernmental organisation of developing countries including India. Egypt was the previous Chair of the Group of 77 (G77), a coalition of 134 members, along with China which aligns itself with the bloc. India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Syed Akbaruddin Tuesday wished Palestine success.

Volcano erupts on Kuchinoerabu island of Japan

A volcano has erupted on a remote island in southern Japan, spewing ash and smoke into the air over the sparsely-populated area but causing no damage or injuries. The Japan Meteorological Agency said Shindake volcano on Kuchinoerabu island, some 1,000km southwest of the capital, Tokyo, erupted at around 9:20am (00:20 GMT). About 80 residents initially took refuge at a shelter on the island but have since started to return home after an evacuation advisory was lifted.

Rio de Janeiro recognised as World Capital of Architecture 2020

UNITED NATIONS: The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) has recognised Rio de Janeiro as the 'World Capital of Architecture' for 2020. "Through the range and quality of its activities, the World Capital of Architecture in Rio de Janeiro will demonstrate the crucial role of architecture and culture in sustainable urban development," UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for Culture .

WHO list of 10 global health threats

The world is facing multiple health challenges. These range from outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases like measles and diphtheria, increasing reports of drug-resistant pathogens, growing rates of obesity and physical inactivity to the health impacts of environmental pollution and climate change and multiple humanitarian crises. To address these and other threats, 2019 sees the start of the World Health Organization's new 5-year strategic plan – the 13th General Programme of Work.

75 years since WWII siege of Leningrad

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia — The Russian city of St. Petersburg marked the 75th anniversary of the end of the devastating World War II siege by Nazi forces with a large military parade Sunday in the city's sprawling Palace Square. Russian President Vladimir Putin later laid flowers at a monument in Piskarevskoye Cemetery, where hundreds of thousands of siege victims are buried. The siege of the city, then called Leningrad, lasted nearly 2½ years until the Soviet Army drove the Nazis away on Jan. 27, 1944.

Africa Centre for Climate and Sustainable Development

Rome, Jan 28 – Italy's Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte cut the ribbon for the new 'Africa Centre for Climate and Sustainable Development' in Rome today. This Centre will provide a fast-track, demand-driven mechanism for African countries to access grant resources that

support policies, initiatives, and best practices on climate change.



Digital currency: Aber

The central banks of the UAE and Saudi Arabia have revealed further details about a joint digital currency project, plans for which were first unveiled last year. The common digital currency called 'Aber' will be used in financial settlements between the two countries through blockchains and distributed ledgers technologies, a statement from the Saudi Arabian Monetary Authority (SAMA) and the UAE Central Bank said.



Indonesia Masters Badminton Tournament 2019

JAKARTA, Jan. 21 (Xinhua) -- Indonesias capital city was scheduled to host 2019 Indonesia Masters international badminton tournament this week, participated by 267 badminton players from 20 countries, the tournament chief organizer said here on Monday. The tournament that part of Badminton World Federation (BWF) World Tour Super 500 is now offering total prize of 350,000 U.S. Dollars, to be held from Jan

International Year of the Period Table of Chemical Elements

The International Year of the Periodic Table of Chemical Elements will be launched today at UNESCO's Headquarters, Paris. According to a statement from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), events and activities will be held throughout the year to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the organisation of the periodic table by Russian scientist Dmitri Mendeleev, one of the fathers of modern chemistry.

Periodic Table of Elements																	
IA																	
1 H	2 He																
3 Li	4 Be															5 B	6 C
11 Na	12 Mg	13 Al	14 Si	15 P	16 S	17 Cl	18 Ar										
19 K	20 Ca	21 Sc	22 Ti	23 V	24 Cr	25 Mn	26 Fe	27 Co	28 Ni	29 Cu	30 Zn	31 Ga	32 Ge	33 As	34 Se	35 Br	36 Kr
37 Rb	38 Sr	39 Y	40 Zr	41 Nb	42 Mo	43 Tc	44 Ru	45 Rh	46 Pd	47 Ag	48 Cd	49 In	50 Sn	51 Sb	52 Te	53 I	54 Xe
55 Cs	56 Ba	57 La*	58 Ce	59 Pr	60 Nd	61 Pm	62 Sm	63 Eu	64 Gd	65 Tb	66 Dy	67 Ho	68 Er	69 Tm	70 Yb	71 Lu	72 Hf
87 Fr	88 Ra	89 Ac*	90 Th	91 Pa	92 U	93 Np	94 Pu	95 Am	96 Cm	97 Bk	98 Cf	99 Es	100 Fm	101 Md	102 No	103 Lr	104 Rf

* Lanthanide Series
* Actinide Series

Image credit: nobelprize.org

NASA's New Horizon spacecraft flew past Ultima Thule

Nasa scientists are celebrating after a spacecraft "phoned home" to confirm it had successfully performed the most distant space flyby in history in the early hours of New Year's Day.



China's Chang'e 4 probe makes historic touchdown

A Chinese spacecraft has become the first to land on the far side of the moon in a historic moment for human space exploration. The successful touch down was hailed as a major technical feat and is seen as a important step towards China's wider ambitions in space. The robotic probe Chang'e 4 landed in the unexplored South Pole-Aitken basin, the biggest known impact structure in the solar system, at about 2.30am GMT on Thursday.

SpaceX-CRS-16 Dragon craft departed from the International Space Station

A SpaceX cargo craft departed after a successful mission to deliver scientific equipment and other supplies. The SpaceX-CRS-16 Dragon transported more than 2,500 kilograms (5,600 pounds) of cargo to the space station and orbited Earth for five weeks.



Facebook to set up an Institute for Ethics in Artificial Intelligence

San Francisco, Jan 20 (IANS) Facebook on Sunday said it will create an independent Institute for Ethics in Artificial Intelligence (AI) with an initial grant of \$7.5 million. In collaboration with the Technical University of Munich (TUM) in Germany, the institute will help advance the growing field of ethical research on new technology and will explore fundamental issues affecting the use and impact of AI.

