



IAS PARLIAMENT

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A Shankar IAS Academy Initiative

TARGET 2019

APRIL 2019 ALL TOPICS

Shankar IAS Academy

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TARGET 2019 **APRIL 2019 ALL TOPICS**

1. GEOGRAPHY

1.1 Waterspouts

- A waterspout is an intense columnar vortex (usually appearing as a funnel-shaped cloud) that occurs over a body of water.
- They fall into two categories
 1. Fair weather waterspouts - usually form along the dark flat base of a line of developing cumulus clouds.
 - This type of waterspout is generally not associated with thunderstorms.
 - It develops on the surface of the water and works its way upward.
 - By the time the funnel is visible, a fair weather waterspout is near maturity.
 - They dissipate rapidly when they make landfall, and rarely penetrate far inland.
 2. Tornadoic waterspouts - These are tornadoes that form over water, or move from land to water.
 - They have the same characteristics as a land tornado and are associated with severe thunderstorms, and are often accompanied by high winds and seas, large hail, and frequent dangerous lightning.
 - Tornadoic waterspouts develop downward in a thunderstorm.
 - If this waterspout moves onshore they may cause significant damage and injuries to people.

1.2 Western Disturbances

- Western Disturbance is an extratropical storm originating in the Mediterranean region that brings sudden winter rain to the north-western parts of the Indian sub-continent.
- It is a non-monsoonal precipitation pattern driven by the westerlies.
- Extratropical storms are a global phenomenon with moisture usually carried in the upper atmosphere, unlike their tropical counterparts where the moisture is carried in the lower atmosphere.
- Western disturbances bring moderate to heavy rain in low-lying areas and heavy snow to mountainous areas of the Indian Subcontinent.
- Precipitation has great importance in agriculture, particularly for the Rabi crops. Wheat among them is one of the most important crops, which helps to meet India's food security.

1.3 Banganga River

- Ministry of Road Transport & Highways has accorded in principle approval for inter-state high level bridge on the Banganga river.
- Banganga River originates from the Aravalli hills, near Bairath in Jaipur and drains into Yamuna.
- Ramgarh dam has been constructed across the river in Jaipur.
- The main tributaries are Gumti Nalla and Suri River, joining the river on its right bank, and Sanwan and Palasan Rivers, meeting the river on its left bank.
- Its basin extends over parts of Alwar, Jaipur, Dausa, Sawai Madhopur and Bharatpur Districts.
- Its eastern edge borders the Yamuna River Basin in Uttar





Pradesh.

- The inter-state high level bridge is proposed on the Sakdi-Dangorali route in Balaghat district of Madhya Pradesh.

1.4 Bansagar Canal Project

- Bansagar canal project was recently inaugurated in Mirzapur in Uttar Pradesh.
- The project is a joint venture between Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.
- It is a multipurpose river valley project on Son River.
- It aims to bring boost to irrigation in the region.
- Son River originates near Amarkantak in Madhya Pradesh.
- It is one of the tributary of Ganges from Central India.
- It is the second largest of the southern tributaries of Ganga. Yamuna is the largest tributary.

1.5 Idukki Dam

- Idukki dam in Kerala is constructed across the Periyar river, the longest river in Kerala.
- It is one of the highest arch dams in the continent, measuring 550ft in height.
- It was commissioned in the year 1973 with financial aid from Canada.
- It is built between two granite hills such as Kuravanmala and Kuravathimala.
- It is owned by the Kerala State Electricity Board.
- It supports a hydroelectric power station in Moolamattom.
- The hydel project is receiving water from two other dams at Cheruthoni and Kulamavu.
- The water levels in the reservoir are rising at an alarming rate as a result of the record high rains Kerala has received this monsoon.
- It has prompted authorities in Kerala to issue an "Orange Alert" - a precautionary messages to the public in light of possibility of water release from the reservoir.
- The dam is going to be reopened after 26 years. Previous opening was in 1981 and 1992.

1.6 Lombok

- It is a part of Indonesian group of Islands and located to the east of Bali.
- An earthquake of 6.4 magnitude has recently struck the island and triggered landslides in a volcano Mt. Rinjani.
- The volcano, which rises 3,726m (12,224ft) above sea level and is the second-highest one in Indonesia.
- Indonesia is prone to earthquakes because it lies on the "Ring of Fire".
- Ring of Fire is the line of frequent quakes and volcanic eruptions that circles virtually the entire Pacific rim.



1.7 Turbidity Currents

- Turbidity currents are fast-moving currents that sweep down submarine canyons, carrying sand and mud into the deep sea.
- However, there is more to them than just sediment-laden seawater flowing over the sea floor, and they also involve large-scale movements of the sea floor itself.
- This discovery could help ocean engineers avoid damage to pipelines, communications cables, and other sea floor structures.
- Turbidity currents are threat, as people place more and more cables, pipelines, and other structures on the sea floor.
- Turbidity currents are also important to petroleum geologists because they leave behind layers of sediment that comprise some of the world's largest oil reserves.

1.8 Dal-Nageen Lake

- J&K administration has appointed an official for conducting a comprehensive bathymetric survey (study of underwater depth of lake or ocean floors) of the Dal-Nageen lake.
- The Nageen lake in Srinagar is a deep blue water offshoot of the Dal lake that is interconnected by a thin causeway.
- The lake is located to the east of the city of Srinagar, at the foothill of the Zabarwan Mountain.
- The Nageen lake is surrounded by a large number of willow and poplar trees. Hence, it has been referred as a "nageena", which means "the jewel in the ring".

1.9 Baishui Glacier

- The glacier is in China and it is one of the world's fastest melting glaciers.
- It is located in the Third Pole of the Earth, a region in Central Asia with the world's third largest store of ice after Antarctica and Greenland.
- Third Pole glaciers are vital to billions of people from Vietnam to Afghanistan.
- Asia's 10 largest rivers, including the Yangtze, Yellow, Mekong, and Ganges are fed by seasonal melting third pole glaciers.
- The melting of this glacier attracts large number of tourists.
- Scientists have already warned that the effects of glacier melting on water resources are gradually becoming increasingly serious for China.

1.10 Hope Island

- Greater Flamingoes have recently been spotted on the coast of Hope island after a long period.
- Hope island is a part of the Coringa Wildlife Sanctuary, off the coast of Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh.
- It is relatively a young island, formed from the sediment outflow carried by the waters of the Koringa River, a tributary of the Godavari.
- It acts as natural barrier for storm surges and provides tranquility to the ships anchored in Kakinada Bay which makes Kakinada Port one of the safest natural ports in the Eastern Coast of India.
- The northern tip of the island is called "Godavari Point", which overlooks the entry point into the Kakinada Bay and the Kakinada harbour.

1.11 Third Pole

- It is in the region which is to the north of India and to the south of China.
- The Third Pole region spreads across the Himalaya-Hindu Kush mountain ranges and the Tibetan Plateau.
- It is called the Third Pole because it contains the third largest expanse of frozen water on earth.
- It is much smaller in area than the north or the south pole, but is still enormous, covers 100,000 square kilometres and has around 45,000 glaciers.
- Ten of Asia's largest rivers begin in the third pole.
- These include the Yellow river and Yangtze river in China, the Irrawaddy river in Myanmar, the Ganges which flows through India and Bangladesh, and the Mekong river that flows through several countries.
- It has the largest reserve of fresh water outside the two major polar regions and its waters sustain life over many thousands of miles.

1.12 Vaduvor Bird Sanctuary

- Vaduvor Bird sanctuary is situated in Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu.
- Vaduvor lake is home to thousands of avian visitors every year from different continents.
- The lake is surrounded by fertile wetlands and offers a perfect spot for the birds for food, shelter and reproduction.
- It is a ideal spot when the temperature drops in their home countries in Europe, the Americas and sometimes Russia.
- The entire sanctuary is declared a protected area and the lake is periodically desilted.
- Ruff, spot billed duck, pin tailed duck, cotton teal and black headed ibis are the common visitors.

1.13 Ratoon Cropping

- It is a form of cultivation in which a second crop is allowed to grow from the remains of one already harvested.
- It is also called stubble cropping as the new plants grow from the stubble of the harvested crop.
- Sugarcane, pineapple and banana are crops in which this method is practiced.
- Ratooning cannot be used endlessly as the yield and quality decrease after each cycle.
- In sugarcane, for example, two or three ratooning crops are possible, after which fresh planting has to be done.

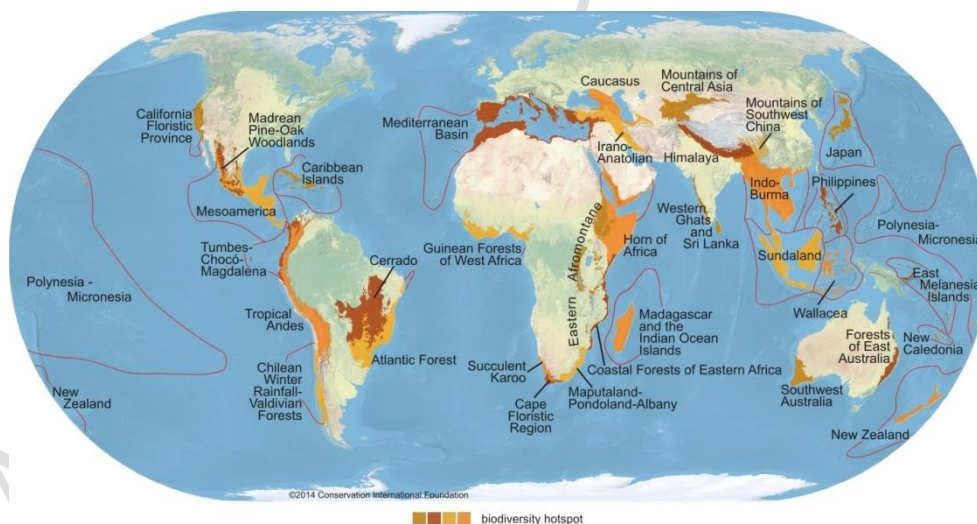
1.14 660 km Boundary

- Usually p & s waves of earthquake are used to study the earth's inner layers.
- Earthquakes that are of magnitude 7.0 or higher send out shockwaves in all directions that can travel through the core to the other side of the planet.

- Just as light waves can reflect off a mirror or refract when passing through a prism, earthquake waves travel straight through homogenous rocks but reflect or refract when they encounter any boundary or roughness.
- Thus the scattering waves carry the information about the inner layer's roughness.
- Scientists used such data from a magnitude 8.2 earthquake that happened in bolivia to find mountains and other topography that separates the upper and lower mantle around 660 km straight down.
- Lacking a formal name it is simply called “the 660-km boundary” for now.
- The layer is found to be rougher than the surface layer that we all live on i.e stronger topography than the rocky/appalachians is present at the 660-km boundary.
- These mountains could also be bigger than anything on the surface of the earth.
- Also, just like the presence of both the smooth ocean floors and massive mountains in the crust, the 660-km boundary has rough areas and smooth patches.
- The boundary will have significant implications on our understanding of how our planet was formed and evolved.

1.15 Bio Diversity Hotspot

- British environmentalist and conservationist Norman Myers coined the term “biodiversity hotspot”.
- It refers to an area with a vast array of life-forms found nowhere else in the world and is threatened by various factors.
- To classify a region as a biodiversity hotspot two criteria must be met:
 1. It should have a minimum of 1,500 species of vascular plants found solely in that region
 2. It should have lost at least 70 % of its native vegetation.
- Globally 34 biodiversity hotspots have been identified.



- India is one of the world's 17 mega-diverse countries.
- It has biodiversity hotspots in the Western Ghats, the Himalayas, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

1.16 Marine Heat-waves

- The number of marine heat-wave days has increased by more than 50% since the mid-20th century.
- Marine heat-waves have damaged ecosystems across the globe and are poised to become even more destructive.
- It is becoming more frequent and prolonged.
- For instance a 10-week marine heat-wave near Western Australia in 2011 shattered an entire ecosystem and permanently pushed commercial fish species into colder waters.



1.17 Mt Makalu

- Makalu is the fifth highest mountain in the world at 8,485 meters (27,838 ft), whose shape is a four-sided pyramid.
- It is located in the Mahalangur Himalayas 19 km (12 mi) southeast of Mount Everest, on the border between Nepal and Tibet, China.
- Mt Makalu is considered amongst the most dangerous peaks and summiting the peak is considered extremely challenging due to inclement weather conditions and freezing temperatures.
- Recently Indian Army took an expedition to Mt. Makalu

1.18 Blue Hole

- Blue holes are roughly circular marine cavern or sinkhole, which is open to the surface.
- It has developed in a bank or island composed of a carbonate bedrock (limestone or coral reef).
- The deep blue color is caused by the high transparency of water and bright white carbonate sand.
- Their water circulation is poor and they are commonly anoxic below a certain depth, this environment is unfavorable for most sea life, but nonetheless can support large numbers of bacteria.
- Some of the significant blue holes are
 1. Dragon Hole - South China Sea
 2. Great Blue Hole - Belize
 3. Dean's Blue Hole – Bahamas
- Blue holes are distinguished from cenotes in that the latter are inland voids usually containing fresh groundwater rather than seawater.

2. ACTS & POLICIES

2.1 Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016

Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016, was recently passed in Lok Sabha (Pending in Rajya Sabha)

- The Bill amends the Citizenship Act, 1955.
- It makes illegal immigrants who are **Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis & Christians** from **Afghanistan, Bangladesh & Pakistan**, eligible for citizenship.
- A person is an "illegal immigrant" if he/she has entered India without travel documents or has overstayed the date specified in the documents.
- Under the 1955 Act, one of the requirements for citizenship by naturalization is that the applicant must have resided in India during the last 12 months, and for 11 of the previous 14 years.
- The Bill relaxes this 11 year requirement to **6 years** for persons belonging to the same 6 religions and 3 countries.
- It also states that the registration of OCI cardholders may be cancelled if they violate **any law**.

2.2 Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Act, 2018

Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Act was recently enacted.

Overseas Citizenship of India

- Earlier, the External Affairs Ministry was running a separate scheme for Person of Indian Origin (PIO).
- In 2015 it was merged, and all PIOs were converted to OCI status.
- OCI facilitates visa-free travel to India, rights of residency and participation in business and educational activities in the country.
- The spouse of an Indian-origin person is also eligible for OCI.
- But a person with OCI status is not an Indian citizen.
- They do not have voting rights in India, nor can contest elections or hold any constitutional office.
- He or she cannot buy agricultural land but can inherit ancestral property.
- NRI is an Indian citizen living in another country for at **least 6 months**.
- The classification of NRI is used only for calculating income tax.

- The bill amends the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988.
- It attempted to bring the Act in line with **UN Convention against Corruption 2005**, which was ratified by India in 2011.
- It seeks to punish bribe-givers and bribe-takers.
- The bill provides for jail terms of three to seven years, besides fine, to those convicted of taking or giving bribes to public officials.
- The bill introduces powers and procedures for the attachment and forfeiture of property of public servants accused of corruption.

Provisions	Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988	Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Act, 2018
Definition	Accepting any reward other than a salary for performing one's official act.	Accepting any undue advantage other than legal remuneration.
Bribe giver	Bribe giver is charged with abetment	It makes specific provisions related to giving a bribe to a public servant, and giving a bribe by a commercial organisation.
Criminal Misconduct by a public servant	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fraudulent misappropriation of property 2. Possession of disproportionate assets 3. Habitually taking a bribe 4. Obtaining a reward illegally 5. Abuse of position to obtain a reward 6. Obtaining reward without public interest 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fraudulent misappropriation of entrusted property 2. Intentional enrichment by illicit means
Prior Approval for investigation	No provisions	Police officer cannot begin probe without prior approval of of Lokpal/lokayukta except when caught red-handed.
Prior Sanction for prosecution	Sanction was required for serving officers only	Sanction needed for prosecuting former officials for offences done while in office.
Time period	No time period	Maximum 4 years. After 2 years reasons for delay should be recorded for every months

2.3 Right to Information Act

The central government has recently informed that **NRI cannot file RTI applications** to seek governance-related information from the Central government departments.

- RTI act was enacted in 2005 which mandates timely response to citizen requests for government information by public authorities as well as union and state governments.
- Public authority as defined by the act under Section 2(h) includes,
 1. Any authority which is established by constitution or by any law made by the parliament or state legislature.
 2. Any authority created by notification issued or order made by the Central Government or a State Government.

3. Bodies owned, controlled or substantially financed by the Central Government or a State Government.
 4. Non-Government organisations substantially financed directly or indirectly by the Central Government or a State Government.
- RTI specifies information is required to be published **within 120 days** of the notification of the Act in respect of the items listed therein.
 - The government has proposed amendments to RTI act, 2005.
 - Recently, RTI activist has sought information about those proposed amendments to the act, but it was denied by the government citing Section 8(i) (i) of the RTI act.
 - Generally, **Section 8** of the RTI Act exempts 'information, disclosure of which would prejudicially affect the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security, strategic, scientific or economic interests of the State, relation with foreign State or lead to incitement of an offence'.
 - Sec 8(i)(i) exempts the government from giving information about Cabinet papers, including records of deliberations of the Council of Ministers, Secretaries and other officers.

2.4 Dam Safety Bill 2018

Tamil Nadu Assembly recently passed a resolution demanding that the Centre keeps the Dam Safety Bill 2018 in abeyance (temporary pause)

- Most dams in India are constructed and maintained by the states.
- Some of the bigger ones are managed by autonomous bodies.
- So the objective of the bill is to help all states and Union Territories adopt uniform dam safety procedures.
- The Bill provides for constitution of a **National Committee on Dam Safety** which shall evolve dam safety policies and recommend necessary regulations as may be required for the purpose.
- It also provides for establishment of **National Dam Safety Authority** as a regulatory body which shall discharge functions to implement the policy, guidelines and standards.
- The Bill is to address all issues concerning dam safety including
 - i. regular inspection of dams
 - ii. emergency action plan
 - iii. comprehensive dam safety review
 - iv. adequate repair and maintenance funds for dam safety
 - v. Instrumentation and Safety Manuals
- The Bill allows the NDSA to inspect dams situated across intra-state rivers.
- This is being viewed by Tamilnadu government as an attempt to encroach on the state's powers and rights.
- This is especially with respect to Dams constructed by the State Government in the neighbouring State.
- It is said to cause various problems in their maintenance and operation.
- It wants the Centre to arrive at a consensus with the states.
- Till then, it asks the Centre to keep in abeyance the process of legislating on the Bill.



2.5 NCBC Bill

102nd Constitutional Amendment Act was recently enacted to provide Constitutional status to the National Commission for Backward Classes.

- NCBC is a body set up under the National Commission for Backward Classes Act, 1993.



- It has the power to examine complaints regarding inclusion or exclusion of groups within the list of backward classes, and advise the central government in this regard.
- The central and state governments will be required to consult with the NCBC on all major policy matters affecting the socially and educationally backward classes.
- The Act seeks to grant the National Commission on Backward Classes (NCBC) constitutional status meaning that
 1. In future it cannot be amended by a simple majority in Parliament.
 2. The earlier provision says 'The President may appoint' whereas now there would be no choice and hence it will be a permanent commission similar to the SC and ST Commissions
- This makes it par with the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) and the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes.
- NCSC used to have the power to look into complaints and welfare measures with regard to Scheduled Castes, backward classes and Anglo-Indians.
- The Act removes the power of the NCSC to examine matters related to backward classes.
- It provides NCBC with the authority to examine complaints and welfare measures regarding socially and educationally backward classes.
- It states that the President may specify the socially and educationally backward classes in the various states and union territories.
- He may do this in consultation with the Governor of the concerned state, however a law of Parliament will be required if the list of backward classes is to be amended.
- The NCBC will comprise of 5 members appointed by the President, their **tenure** and conditions of service will also be decided by the **President through rules**.
- The duties of the NCBC will include:
 1. Investigating and monitoring how safeguards provided to the backward classes under the Constitution and other laws are being implemented.
 2. Inquiring into specific complaints regarding violation of rights.
 3. Advising and making recommendations on socio-economic development of such classes.
- NCBC will have the powers of a civil court while investigating or inquiring into any complaints.
- It includes summoning people and examining them on oath, requiring production of any document or public record and receiving evidence.

2.6 Commercial Courts (Amendment) Act

Commercial Courts, Commercial Division and Commercial Appellate Division of High Courts (Amendment) Act, 2018 was recently enacted.

- The Commercial Courts Act, 2015 provides for commercial courts and commercial divisions of high courts to adjudicate commercial disputes with a value of at least Rs.1 crore.
- The Amendment Act reduces this limit to three lakh rupees.
- It allows state governments to establish **commercial courts** at the district level in the territories where high courts have ordinary original civil jurisdiction
- In areas where High courts do not have original jurisdiction, it allows state governments to set up **Commercial appellate courts** to consider appeals from commercial courts below the level of a district judge.
- The above amendments were aimed at improving the ease of doing business in India.

2.7 Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill

Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2018 was recently enacted.

- It will amend relevant Sections of the IPC, CrPC and also POCSO Act.
- The Act amends the IPC, 1860 to increase the minimum punishment for rape of women from 7 years to 10 years. However, punishment for rape of boys has remained unchanged.
- Rape and gang rape of girls below the age of 12 years will carry minimum imprisonment of 20 years and is extendable to life imprisonment or death.
- Rape of girls below the age of 16 years is punishable with imprisonment of 2 years or life imprisonment.

2.8 Restoration of SC/ST (PoA) Act Provisions

Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Amendment Act, 2018 recently came into force as a response to an earlier verdict of Supreme Court on the Act.

- The Supreme Court in a recent verdict had struck down some original provisions of the Act.
- The 1989 Act penalises casteist insults and even denies anticipatory bail to the suspected offenders.
- New guidelines were for police officers on how to ensure that innocent persons, especially public officials, are protected from false complaints.
- It said a Deputy Superintendent of Police should hold a preliminary inquiry into complaints to rule out their being false or motivated ones before filing an FIR.
- The ruling also said public servants should not be arrested under the Act without the permission of their appointing authority.
- Other private citizens should not be arrested without the approval of the District Senior Superintendent of Police.
- But the **Amendment Act reinstated** the original provisions.
- It states that the investigating officer will not require the approval of any authority for the arrest of an accused.
- Further, it provides that a preliminary enquiry will not be required for the registration of a FIR against a person accused under the Act.
- The 1989 Act states that persons accused of committing an offence under the Act **cannot apply for anticipatory bail**. The Amendment clarifies that this provision will apply despite any judgements or orders of a court that provide otherwise.

2.9 HIV and AIDS (Prevention and Control) Act

Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (Prevention and Control) Act came into force recently.

- India is a signatory to the Declaration of Commitment on Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (2001).
- The Declaration aims to secure a global commitment to enhancing coordination and intensification of national, regional and international efforts to combat it in a comprehensive manner.
- The act makes it a legal obligation to protect the privacy of persons with HIV and AIDS.
- **Prohibition** - The Act lists various grounds on which discrimination against persons with HIV is prohibited.
- These include the denial or discontinuation with regard to employment, educational establishments, health-care services, standing for public or private office and insurance.
- It removes HIV testing as a **pre-requisite** for obtaining employment or accessing health care or education.
- **Right to reside** - It prohibits isolation or segregation of an HIV +ve person.
- Every HIV +ve person, especially minors, has the right to reside in a shared household and use facilities in a non-discriminatory manner.
- It also bars individuals from publishing information or advocating feelings of hatred against HIV positive persons and those living with them.

- **Consent** - No HIV-affected person can be subject to medical treatment, medical interventions or research without informed consent.
- However, informed consent does not include screening by licensed blood banks and medical research that are not meant to determine the said person's HIV status.
- No HIV positive woman, who is pregnant, can be subjected to sterilisation or abortion without her consent.
- **Disclosure** - No person is compelled to disclose his HIV status except by an order of the court.
- A breach of violation attracts a jail sentence of up to two years or a fine of up to Rs 1 lakh, or both.
- **Obligation** - Every establishment is obligated to keep HIV-related information protected.
- The state and Centre must make anti-retroviral therapy and opportunistic infection management available to all HIV-infected people, and ensure wide dissemination of the same.
- Every HIV-positive person is compelled to take reasonable precautions to prevent the transmission of HIV to other persons.
- **Enquiry** - Every state has to appoint one or more Ombudsmen to inquire into violations of the provisions of the Act.
- Failing to comply with the orders of the Ombudsman attracts a penalty of up to Rs 10,000.
- Also, any court cases involving an individual affected with HIV/AIDS is subject to strict protection of individual identity.
- This includes restricting cameras in courtrooms if needed.

2.10 Indian Medical Council (Amendment) Ordinance, 2019

The Indian Medical Council (Amendment) Ordinance, 2018 was propulgated recently

- It amends the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956 which set up the MCI that regulates medical education and practice.
- The Ordinance provides for the supersession of the MCI for a period of 1 year.
- In the interim period, the central government will constitute a 7-member Board of Governors (BoG).
- The powers of the Council have been vested in the BoG led by NITI Aayog Member Dr. V.K. Paul.
- The BoG will continue to perform till an alternative comes into place as per the legal provisions in one year time.
- Indian Medical Council (Amendment) Bill 2018 was passed by Lok Sabha in December 2018 and is currently pending in Rajya Sabha.

3. SCHEMES

3.1 Gramin Agriculture Markets (GrAM) Programme

- Under the programme, the Centre has identified 1,878 rural haats for modernisation and development of infrastructure through MGNREGA .
- These haats will be placed outside the ambit of Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) acts to get the Central grant.
- With the grant, the existing rural haats would get facilities like proper trading platforms, toilets for men and women, parking facilities for trucks and vehicles, loading and unloading facilities, small storage, office blocks etc.
- There is a plan to link all of them through rural roads in PMGSY-3(Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana) and add them to the e-NaM network once the re-development and modernisation is complete.

3.2 Sakaar

- Sakaar, short for Sakshatkaar, is an Augmented Reality App launched by **ISRO** for cell phone users.
- It shows the live camera view on the user's device to represent the physical world.
- On this live camera view, virtual objects are superimposed and together the live camera view and the virtual objects appear to be tightly coupled in on the device's screen
- The virtual objects consist of 3D models, videos and anaglyph images
- The app also consists of 3D models of Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM), RISAT, indigenous rockets such as PSLV, GSLV Mk-III etc. Providing videos of INSAT 3D-predicting cyclones, MOM launch and orbit insertion videos it gives a 360 degree animated view of MOM, GSLV D5/Cryo and Anaglyph of Mars surface

3.3 Samarth

- **Scheme For Capacity Building In Textile Sector (Samarth)** is a flagship skill development scheme under **Ministry of Textile**, approved in continuation to the Integrated Skill Development Scheme.
- The objectives of the scheme are to provide demand-driven, placement oriented skilling programme to incentivize the efforts of the industry in creating jobs in the organized textile and related sectors.
- The Scheme would target to train 10 lakh persons over a period of 3 years.

3.4 Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers

- It is a Central Sector Scheme of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment under which identified manual scavengers and their dependents are provided the following rehabilitation benefits:
 - i. Onetime cash assistance of Rs.40000/-.
 - ii. Loans upto Rs. 15.00 lacs at concessional rate of interest.
 - iii. Credit linked back end capital subsidy upto Rs. 3,25,000/-.
 - iv. Skill Development Training upto two years with stipend of Rs.3000/- per month.
- Ministry is also implementing a Scheme titled "Pre-Matric Scholarship scheme to the Children of those engaged in occupations involving cleaning and prone to health hazards".
- Children of manual scavengers are also eligible for this scholarship.

3.5 National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme

- It is a new scheme of **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship** to promote apprenticeship. It consists of Basic Training and On-the-Job Training/Practical Training at workplace in the industry.
- The main objective is to promote apprenticeship training and to increase the engagement of apprentices.
- It provides 25% of the prescribed stipend, subject to a maximum of INR 1,500 per month per apprentice per month to the employer
- It also shares the cost of basic training with Basic Training Providers (BTP); up to INR 7,500 for 3 months/ 500 hours

3.6 Smart Freight Operation Optimisation & Real Time Information Application

- In a initiative by **Ministry of Railways** to help plan the traffic flows and optimize freight operations, have launched Smart Freight Operation Optimisation & Real Time Information (SFOORTI) App.
- With this application, movement of freight trains on Geographic Information System (GIS) view can be tracked.
- Both passenger and freight trains can be tracked over Zones/Divisions/ Sections in single GIS View.



3.7 Atal Jyoti Yojana

- It is a sub scheme under off –grid and decentralized solar application scheme of **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy**.
- The objective of this scheme is to provide ‘Solar Street Lighting Systems’ for public use, for demonstration and replication, which will help in popularizing solar energy in a big way.
- The Scheme will cover rural, semi urban and urban areas.
- It is proposed to involve MPs from the Lok Sabha in the first phase of the scheme to use their understanding of the needs and aspirations of the local people, their guidance in implementation will be very useful and to request to part fund the scheme through their MPLADS.
- 75% of the cost of Solar Street Lighting System through MNRE budget, and the remaining 25% should be provided from MPLADS Funds, Panchayat Funds or Municipalities and other Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) Funds.
- **Energy Efficiency Services Limited** (A Joint Venture Company of PSUs of Ministry of Power, Govt. of India) has been appointed as implementing agency for the scheme in above States.

3.8 National Child Labour Project Scheme

- It is a Central Sector Scheme under **Ministry of Labour & Employment** for the rehabilitation of child labour.
- The Scheme seeks to adopt a sequential approach with focus on rehabilitation of children working in hazardous occupations & processes in the first instance.
- Under the Scheme, survey of child labour engaged in hazardous occupations & processes has been conducted.
- The identified children are to be withdrawn from these occupations & processes and then put into special schools in order to enable them to be mainstreamed into formal schooling system.
 1. The special schools/Rehabilitation Centres provide: Non-formal/bridge education
 2. Skilled/vocational training
 3. Mid Day Meal
 4. Stipend @ Rs.150/- per child per month.
 5. Health care facilities through a doctor appointed for a group of 20 schools.

3.9 MeghRaj

- It is an initiative by **Ministry of Electronic & IT**.
- The aim is to utilise and harness the benefits of Cloud Computing.
- The focus is to accelerate delivery of e-services in the country while optimizing ICT spending of the Government.

3.10 Monsoon Mission

- It is an initiative by the **Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology**, Pune, Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), Hyderabad and National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF), NOIDA.
- The aim is to build a state-of-the-art coupled ocean atmospheric model for
 1. improved prediction of monsoon rainfall on extended range to seasonal time scale (16 days to one season) and
 2. improved prediction of temperature, rainfall and extreme weather events on short to medium range time scale (up to 15 days) so that forecast skill gets quantitatively improved further for operational services of IMD.
- IMD in collaboration with Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) provides district level agro meteorological advisories to farmers through 130 agromet field units.



3.11 Wild Animals attack coverage under PMFBY

- The Centre has allowed Telangana government to provide add-on risk covered under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) due to two wild animals attack i.e wild boar and monkey attacks which is perceived to be substantial and identifiable.
- The risk coverage would be on the same as in case of regular crop insurance i.e the loss of yield against the notified indemnity level of the threshold yield.
- The indemnity level fixed for the State is 80%.
- The threshold yield is calculated based on the average yield of past seven years excluding a maximum of two calamity years as notified by the State Government.
- The risk cover for wild animal attack on crops would insure the farmers against income loss, save costs for measures such as electric-fencing for the standing crop and prevents accidents of electrocution due to such fencing.

3.12 Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi

- The 2019 budget announced the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN), **under Ministry of Agriculture**, guaranteeing direct income support for farmers.
- Under the Scheme, Rs 6,000 will be given per year to small and marginal farmer families having combined land holding/ownership of upto 2 hectares.
- The amount will be given in three installments of Rs.2000 each.
- The amount will be transferred directly to the bank account of beneficiaries through Direct Benefit Transfer. DBT will ensure transparency in the entire process and will save time for the farmers.
- This is to help them meet farm input and other costs during the crop season.
- The programme would be made effective retrospectively from December 1, 2018.
- It is a Central Sector scheme with 100% funding from Government of India.
- The interim Budget provides Rs. 75,000 crore for the present and the next year.
- State Government and UT Administration will identify the farmer families which are eligible for support as per scheme guidelines.
- The Ministry of Agriculture has written to State governments to prepare a database of all eligible beneficiaries along with their Aadhaar numbers, and update land records "expeditiously".
- It also states that changes in land records after February 1, 2019 shall not be considered for this scheme.

3.13 Pradhan Mantri Shram-Yogi Maandhan

- The Interim Budget 2019 announced Pradhan Mantri Shram-Yogi Maandhan (PMSYM) under the **Ministry of Labour and Employment**.
- It is a pension scheme for the unorganised sector workers with monthly income of up to Rs 15,000.
- It promises to provide assured pension of Rs 3,000 per month from the age of 60 years, in return for making a monthly contribution of a nominal sum during the working age.
- The scheme will cover 10 crore workers in the unorganised sector in the first 5 years, making it one of the largest pension schemes in the world.
- **Salient Features** - Each subscriber shall receive minimum assured pension of Rs 3000/- per month after attaining the age of 60 years.
- **Family Pension** - During the receipt of pension, if the subscriber dies, the spouse of the beneficiary shall be entitled to receive 50% of the pension received by the beneficiary as family pension. Family pension is applicable only to spouse.
- If a beneficiary has given regular contribution and died due to any cause (before age of 60 years), his/her spouse will be entitled to join and continue the scheme subsequently by payment of regular contribution or exit the scheme as per provisions of exit and withdrawal.

- **Contribution by the Subscriber** - The subscriber's contributions to PM-SYM shall be made through 'auto-debit' facility from his/ her savings bank account/ Jan- Dhan account.
- The subscriber is required to contribute the prescribed contribution amount from the age of joining PM-SYM till the age of 60 years.

3.14 Atal Pension Yojana and PMSYM

- The benefits and the design spelt out in PMSYM are much in line with the Atal Pension Yojana (APY).
- The Atal Pension Yojana (APY), under **Ministry of Finance**, launched in 2015 also targets the unorganised sector.
- The government's estimate that the scheme would cover 2 crore workers in a year is uncertain, given the similar target group and similar design as APY.
- The five-year projections on coverage are less likely to be materialised as even APY had only about 1.34 crore subscribers in the 3 years (a mere 3.2% of the total unorganised sector workforce).
- APY has not been attractive for the unorganised sector -
 - due to its contributory nature
 - the inflation-adjusted future benefits are too small to meaningfully serve any purpose in the old age
- By fixing Rs 3,000 per month, PMSYM has limited the options for a worker to choose the level of benefits as is currently possible under APY.

3.15 59-minute Loan Scheme

- The government announced the '59 minute' loan scheme for MSME sector in 2018.
- The scheme promises loans of up to Rs. 1 crore from public sector banks (PSBs) through an online lending marketplace called 'psbloanin59minutes'.
- This portal approves a loan in 59 minutes and connects the borrower to the bank branch for sanction and disbursement.

3.16 Developments in Swadesh Darshan Scheme

Tribal Circuit: Peren-Kohima-Wokha

- The project of development of Tribal Circuit "Peren-Kohima-Wokha" was recently sanctioned by the Ministry of Tourism under Swadesh Darshan Project.
- This is the first project to be implemented in the State of Nagaland under Swadesh Darshan.

First Swadesh Darshan project in Meghalaya

- Development of North East Circuit: Umiam (Lake View) - U Lum Sohpetbneng- Mawdiangdiang - Orchid Lake Resort was recently inaugurated.
- Lake Umiam is a part of a dam, constructed as a first Hydel Power Project in this North-East Indian State.
- U Lum Sohpetbneng is a legendary mountain peak which symbolizes the deep rooted spiritual belief of the Hynniewtrep – the seven huts people.
- The Seven Huts people are predominating in the West Khasi Hills, East Khasi Hills, Ri-Bhoi and Jaintia Hills districts of East Meghalaya.

Gandhi Circuit

- The Government commemorated centenary of Champaran Satyagrah during the period for April, 2017 to April, 2018.
- As a part of this, a project for "Development of Gandhi Circuit: Bhitiharwa-Chandrahia-Turkaulia under Rural Circuit theme of Swadesh Darshan Scheme" has been sanctioned in Bihar with central financial assistance.
- The most famous Gandhian site in Champaran, Bihar is Bhitiharwa.

- It is a place where Gandhi set up a school and ashram in 1917.
- Recently government has erected an ashram complex which includes a museum.

Development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups

- It is implemented by the **Ministry of Tribal Affairs** for the welfare of PVTGs.
- It strives to retain the culture and heritage of the community by adopting habitat development approach.
- This is a **demand driven** scheme. i.e Conservation-cum-Development (CCD)/Annual Plans are prepared by each State/UT **based on their need assessment**, which are then appraised and approved by the Project Appraisal Committee of the Tribal Affairs Ministry.
- Activities under the scheme include housing, land distribution, land development, agricultural development, animal husbandry, and construction of link roads etc.
- Tribal communities generally have specific signs such as primitive traits, distinctive culture, geographical isolation, shyness to contact with the community at large and backwardness.
- But some tribal groups have some specific features such as dependency on hunting, gathering for food, having pre-agriculture level of technology, zero or negative growth of population and extremely low level of literacy.
- Due to this factor, these groups are more vulnerable and need more focussed approach for their development.
- So, a separate categorization called PVTG was formed.
- Categorization of tribal groups as PVTGs is done by Ministry of Home Affairs.

3.17 Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme

- It is a Central Sector Scheme implemented by **Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities** under MoSJ.
- The objectives of the scheme are
 1. To create an enabling environment to ensure equal opportunities, equity, social justice and empowerment of PwDs.
 2. To encourage voluntary action for ensuring effective implementation of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016.
- It is being implemented since 1999 for providing financial assistance to NGOs working for education and rehabilitation of PwDs and was revised in 2018.
- According to Census 2011, there were about 2.68 crore persons with disabilities in India, constituting 2.21% of the total population.

3.18 Menstrual Hygiene for Adolescent Girls Scheme

- It is a scheme under **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**
- It aims to address the need of menstrual hygiene among adolescent girls residing primarily in rural areas.
- Funds are provided to States/UTs through National Health Mission.
- The funds are for decentralized procurement of sanitary napkins packs for provision primarily to rural adolescent girls.
- The napkins packs are provided at subsidized rates as per proposals received from the States and UTs.
- ASHAs across the country are trained and play a significant role in promotion of use and distribution of the sanitary napkins.
- It also a part of **Rashtriya Kishor SwasthyaKaryakram** that aims to achieve adolescent participation, leadership, Gender Equity and inclusion.

7.1 Cyber Crime prevention against Women and Children Scheme

- It is a scheme under the **Ministry of Home Affairs**.

- It aims to have an effective mechanism to handle cybercrimes against women and children in the country.
- The main features of the scheme are given below:
 - a. Online cybercrime reporting platform
 - b. One national level cyber forensic laboratory
 - c. Training of Police officers, judges & prosecutors
 - d. Cybercrime awareness activities
 - e. Research & Development
- 'Police' and 'Public' are State subject as per the Constitution of India
- So, States are primarily responsible for prevention, detection and investigation of crime through their Law Enforcement Agencies.
- The Agencies take legal action as per the relevant sections of the IPC and the IT Act, 2000.
- The online cybercrime reporting portal www.cybercrime.gov.in has been operationalized.

3.19 National Mission on Libraries

- National Mission on Libraries i.e High Level Committee has been set up by **Ministry of Culture**, Government of India on 2012.
- It was in pursuance of National Knowledge Commission recommendations for sustained attention for development of Libraries and Information Science Sector.
- National Mission on Libraries set up four working groups and after deliberating on the recommendations of the working groups formulated the scheme "National Mission on Libraries (NML) - up gradation of libraries providing service to the public".
- The scheme consists of four components.
 1. Creation of National Virtual Library of India (NVLI)
 2. Setting up of NML Model Libraries,
 3. Quantitative & Qualitative Survey of Libraries
 4. Capacity Building
- The purpose of National Virtual Library of India is to facilitate a comprehensive database on digital resources on information about India and on information generated in India, in an open access environment.
- The Quantitative & Qualitative Survey of Libraries would be undertaken to prepare a baseline data of libraries in India through a survey of 5000 Libraries.
- The Capacity Building would be undertaken to enhance the professional competence of library personnel.

3.20 Rajiv Gandhi Khel Abhiyan

- It is centrally sponsored scheme which being implemented by ministry of youth affairs and sports.
- the scheme aims to construct block level sports complexes and conduct annual rural sports competitions.
- following sports competitions at block, district, state and national levels are conducted under rajivgandhikhelabhiyan:
 1. rural sports competitions
 2. sports competitions exclusively for women

3.21 Transport and Marketing Assistance Scheme

- It was notified by Department of Commerce of the **Ministry of Commerce & Industry**.
- The scheme is for Specified Agriculture Products.
- It aims to provide assistance for the international component of freight and marketing of agricultural produce.

- It is likely to mitigate disadvantage of higher cost of transportation of export of specified agriculture products due to trans-shipment.
- It would be suitably included in the Foreign Trade Policy (2015-20).

3.22 Scheme for Higher Education Youth in Apprenticeship and Skills

- It was launched by the **Minister of Human Resource and Development**.
- It is to provide industry apprenticeship opportunities to graduates in non-technical fields, passing out from the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS).
- The objective is to enhance the employability of Indian youth by providing 'on-job work exposure' and stipend.
- It is a program basket comprising the initiatives of three Central Ministries,
- Ministry of Human Resource Development- introduction of BA/BSc/BCom (Professional) courses in the higher educational institutions
- Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship - National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS)
- Ministry of Labor & Employment- National Career Service (NCS)
- The primary scheme will be operated in conjunction with National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS).
- The scheme will be implemented by the Sector Skill Councils (SSCs).
- The SHREYAS portal will enable educational institutions to log in and provide their respective demand and supply of apprenticeship.

3.23 Umbrella scheme for "Family Welfare and Other Health Interventions"

- Cabinet committee on Economic Affairs has given its approval for continuation of five schemes under the "Umbrella Scheme for Family Welfare and Other Health Interventions" during the 14th Finance Commission period 2017-18 to 2019-20.
- All the five schemes are Central Sector Schemes with 100% funding from Central Government.
- SwasthaNagrik Abhiyan (SNA) - For dissemination of information on health issues to create awareness and appropriately influence their health seeking behavior to encourage healthy lifestyles and empower the citizens.
- Population Research Centres (PRCs) - For third party evaluation of the scheme on PRCs and specially of those centres which are being considered for continuation will be carried out.
- Other Schemes are Free supply of contraceptives, Health Surveys and Health Research and Social Marketing of Contraceptives.

3.24 National Productivity Council

- NPC is a mission-oriented apex, autonomous and not for profit organization.
- It is established by the Ministry of Industry, Govt. of India in 1958.
- Its objective is to promote the cause of productivity in all sectors of the Indian economy.
- NPC is a constituent of the Tokyo-based Asian Productivity Organization (APO), an Inter Governmental Body, of which the Government of India is a founder member.
- It celebrates National Productivity Week from February 12-18.
- This year's theme is "Circular Economy for Productivity & Sustainability" which represents a unique opportunity for circular business models for Make - Use - Return.

3.25 Khadi Gramodyog Vikas Yojana

- 8 different schemes of Khadi & Village Industries are now merged under 2 umbrella heads i.e. 'Khadi Vikas Yojana' and 'Gramodyog Vikas Yojana':



- i. Khadi Vikas Yojana [Market Promotion & Development Assistance (MPDA), Interest Subsidy Eligibility Certificate (ISEC), Workshed, Strengthening Weak Infra, AamAadmiBima Yojana, Khadi Grant]
 - ii. Gramodyog Vikas Yojanaa [Village Industries Grant].
- Cabinet committee has recently approved to bring in a new component of 'RozgarYukt Gaon'.
 - It is to introduce enterprise-based operation in the Khadi sector and to create employment opportunities for thousands of new artisans in the current and next financial year (2018-19 and 2019-20).

3.26 UNNATEE

- Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) has developed a national strategy document for accelerating energy efficiency in India.
- The strategy document titled UNNATEE (Unlocking NATional Energy Efficiency potential) describes a plain framework and implementation strategy to establish a clear linkage between energy supply-demand scenarios and energy efficiency opportunities.
- It offers a comprehensive roadmap to address India's environmental and climate change mitigation action through energy efficiency measures.
- It has now been released for larger public consultation and seeking comments/ valuable inputs from all the stakeholders.

3.27 e-Dharti App

- **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs** has launched the e-Dharti app and e-Dharti Geo Portal to make Land & Development Office (L&DO) payment system completely digitized.
- The 3 main modules related to L&DO – Conversion of property from leasehold to freehold, Substitution of names of legal heirs and Mutation in the name of purchaser have been made online through e-Dharti app.
- e-Dharti Geo Portal is GIS based mapping of each and every government property under L&DO (both allotted and still lying vacant).

3.28 Women Entrepreneurship Platform

- The upgraded portal of Women Entrepreneurship Platform was recently launched by NITI Aayog.
- The platform is a one-stop resource centre for future and budding women entrepreneurs.
- It acts as a medium for various stakeholders and offer integrated services such as Incubator Support, Mentorship, Funding venues, Compliance etc.
- It seeks to transform the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the country.

3.29 Integrated Government Online Training Programme (iGOT)

- Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions has recently launched iGOT to augment existing training mechanism for civil servants with online based module.
- This will make training inputs available to government servant on site and on flexitime basis.
- The initiative aims at "Competent Civil Services for Good Governance".
- It would be a platform to bring together the numerous Government and other training institutions for providing a single point of access to the repository of training resources.

3.30 BIMS

- Bidder Information Management System (BIMS) was launched by **Ministry of Road Transport & Highways**.
- It is aimed at streamlining the process of prequalification of bidders for EPC Mode of contracts for National Highway works with enhanced transparency and objectivity.

- The portal will work as a database of information about bidders, covering basic details, civil works experience, cash accruals and network, annual turnover etc.
- BIMS portal will significantly reduce the procurement time for projects through an objective and transparent online evaluation system thereby leading to accelerated project implementation.

3.31 Bhoomi Rashi

- It is a portal developed by **Ministry of Road Transport and Highways** and NIC, comprises the entire revenue data of the country, right down to 6.4 lakh villages.
- The entire process flow for land acquisition from issuing notifications for land acquisition, submission of draft notification by the State Government to its approval will be carried out by the portal.
- BhoomiRashi portal has been instrumental in reducing the time taken for approval and publication of notifications pertaining to land acquisition.

3.32 Ideate for India

- It is a national challenge to students of classes 6 - 12 across the country to give them a platform to become solution creators for the problems.
- It will help inculcate innovation skills in youth and equip all students to utilise technology for the betterment of their communities and the society at large.
- It is designed and launched by the National e-Governance Division, Ministry of Electronics & IT in collaboration with Intel India, with the support of Ministry of Human Resource Development.

3.33 Partners' Forum

- It is a global health partnership launched in 2005 to accelerate efforts to reduce child and maternal mortality, improve adolescent, child, newborn and maternal health.
- It is an alliance of academic & research institutions, health care professionals, NGOs, global financing mechanisms and the private sector.
- India has recently hosted the forum this year.
- It is co-hosted by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Partnership of Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH).
- The previous chapters were held in Johannesburg, South Africa (2014), New Delhi, India (2010) and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (2007).
- This is the second time India is hosting the Partners' Forum.
- Union Health Minister has inaugurated the "Marketplace" at the Forum which is showcasing some of India's best practices and innovations in reproductive maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health (RMNCH+A).

3.34 Agriculture Export Policy

- Union Cabinet has recently approved the Agriculture Export Policy, 2018.
- The policy aimed at doubling the agricultural exports and integrating Indian farmers and agricultural products with the global value chains.
- Its objectives are
 - i. Doubling agriculture exports from present \$30 billion to \$60 billion by 2022.
 - ii. Diversify export basket, destination and boost high value added agricultural exports.
 - iii. Promoting novel, indigenous, organic, ethnic, traditional and non-traditional Agri products exports.
 - iv. Providing an institutional mechanism for pursuing market access, tackling barriers and deal with sanitary and phyto-sanitary issues.
 - v. Striving to double India's share in world agri exports by integrating with global value chain at the earliest.

- vi. Enabling farmers to get benefit of export opportunities in overseas market.

3.35 Ensure Portal

- **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare** has recently launched a portal "Ensure" to connect with Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)
- It is developed by NABARD and operated under the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries.
- The National Livestock Mission consists of a component called Entrepreneurship Development and Employment Generation (EDEG).
- Under this component, subsidy payment for activities related to poultry, small ruminants, pigs etc. through DBT goes directly to the beneficiary's account.
- Ensure online portal was launched to make the DBT better, simpler and transparent.

3.36 Swachh Shakti

- It is a nationwide annual convention of women sarpanches which aims to bring in to focus the leadership role played by rural women in Swachh Bharat Mission.
- Women Swachhagrahis and women champions from other walks of life from across the country were recognized for their outstanding contribution towards making a Swachh Bharat during the event.
- Swachh Shakti event was first held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, the second event was held at Lucknow, UP and the third event has been recently held at Kurushetra, Haryana.

3.37 NICRA

- National Innovations on Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA) is a network project of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) launched in, 2011.
- The project aims to enhance resilience of Indian agriculture to climate change and climate vulnerability through strategic research and technology demonstration.
- The research on adaptation and mitigation covers crops, livestock, fisheries and natural resource management.
- The project consists of four components viz.
 - a. Strategic Research.
 - b. Technology Demonstration.
 - c. Capacity Building.
 - d. Sponsored/Competitive Grants.

3.38 Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog

- The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal for establishment of Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog for Conservation protection and development of cows and their progeny.
- It is in pursuance of the announcement of setting up of the Aayog in the Union Budget 2019-20.
- Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog will provide the policy framework and direction for the cow conservation and development programs in the country.
- It is for ensuring proper implementation of laws with respect to the welfare of cows.
- It will result in increased growth of livestock sector, which is more inclusive, benefitting women, and small and marginal farmers.

3.39 YUVIKA

- ISRO has launched a special programme residential training program for School Children called "Young Scientist Programme" "YUvaVIgyaniKAryakram."



- The Program is primarily aimed at imparting basic knowledge on Space Technology, Space Science and Space Applications to the younger ones with the intent of arousing their interest in the emerging areas of Space activities.
- The programme will be of around two weeks duration during summer holidays and it is proposed to select 3 students each from each State/ Union Territory to participate in this programme covering state, CBSE, and ICSE syllabus.
- Those who have just finished 9th standard (in the academic year 2018-19) and waiting to join or in 10th standard will be eligible for the programme.
- The selection will be based on the 8th std marks (academic performance and extracurricular activities).

3.40 Uttarakhand Disaster Recovery Project

- India signed a loan agreement with the World Bank for 96 Million US dollars for additional financing of Uttarakhand Disaster Recovery Project.
- The world bank, through the Uttarakhand Disaster Recovery project has been supporting the state government since 2014.
- The project helps to restore housing and rural connectivity, and to build resilience of communities.
- The funding will help in further reconstruction of bridges, road and river banks protection works.
- It will also help to increase the technical capacity of the state entities to respond promptly.

3.41 UNNATI

- UNISpace Nano-satellite Assembly and Training by ISRO (UNNATI) programme is a capacity building programme on nanosatellite development.
- The UNNATI Programme is to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the first United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE+50).
- The programme will be conducted for 3 years in 3 batches and will target to benefit 90 officials from 45 countries.
- The primary objectives of the programme are:
 1. To offer a simplified and increased exposure to satellite fabrication technologies, as part of the UNISPACE initiative.
 2. To provide theoretical course on satellite technology.
 3. To provide hands-on training to assemble, integrate and test a low cost, modular Nano satellite.

3.42 Indian Science, Technology and Engineering Facilities Map

- The government green signaled the project Indian Science, Technology and Engineering Facilities Map (I-STEM).
- It is a national portal that will facilitate college, institution and research organizations to check, reserve and have easy access to even expensive research equipment and facilities anywhere in India.
- The Centre for Nano Science and Engineering (CeNSE) at the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru created the portal.
- It is in the process of collating information about scientific and research equipment and facilities available at academic institutions and research organizations across the country.
- The institutions and organizations that have the equipment and facilities will provide access to researchers for both academic and non-academic work through an online reservation system.
- The centre is trying to replicate the Indian Nano electronic Users Programme (INUP) model at CeNSE and IIT Bombay that has been in operation since 2008.



3.43 UNaTI

- The Ministry of Science and Technology has announced key missions at the 33rd foundation day ceremony of Department of Biotechnology, including Atal JaiAnusandhan Biotech Mission - Undertaking Nationally Relevant Technology Innovation (UNaTI).
- It is expected to transform Health, Agriculture and Energy sectors during the next 5 years.
- This mission includes -
 - i. GARBH-ini – A Mission to promote Maternal and Child Health and develop prediction tools for pre-term berth.
 - ii. IndCEPI – A Mission to develop affordable vaccines for endemic diseases, Development of Bio-fortified and Protein Rich wheat - contributing to POSHAN Abhiyan.
 - iii. Mission on Anti-Microbial Resistance for Affordable Diagnostics and Therapeutics.
 - iv. Clean Energy Mission – Innovative Technology interventions for Swachh Bharat.

State Schemes

3.44 KALIA Scheme – Odisha

- The Odisha government recently launched the Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation (KALIA) scheme.
- The scheme involves payments to encourage cultivation and associated activities.
- The scheme will benefit 92% of the cultivators in the state and include every category from big farmers to landless cultivators.
- Under the scheme, all farmers in the state will be provided Rs 10,000 per family as assistance for cultivation.
- Each family will get Rs 5,000 separately in the kharif and rabi seasons, for five cropping seasons between 2018-19 and 2021-22.
- Since the scheme is not linked to the amount of land owned, it will greatly benefit sharecroppers and cultivators, most of whom own little or no land.
- It targets 10 lakh landless households, and specifically SC and ST families.
- They will be supported with a unit cost of Rs 12,500 for activities like goat rearing, mushroom cultivation, beekeeping, poultry farming and fishery.
- The beneficiary is encouraged to choose an activity with which he is familiar because these trades require some skill and network.
- The idea behind this is to identify an existing capacity of a beneficiary and build on it.
- The government is also working on a skilling component to be added to this form of assistance.
- Additionally, the scheme will assist the elderly, sick and differently-abled population who are unable to take up cultivation, by providing Rs 10,000 per household per year. This is meant to be used for sustenance.
- However, this component will not be implemented immediately, as Odisha already offers free healthcare and disburses old-age pensions.
- It also includes a life insurance cover of Rs 2 lakh and additional personal accident coverage of the same amount for 57 lakh households.

3.45 Bhasha Sangam

- It is a unique initiative under Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat to introduce school students to 22 Indian languages.
- It is a programme for schools and educational institutions to provide multilingual exposure to students in Indian languages.
- It is to enhance linguistic tolerance and respect and promote national integration.



- The Department of School Education & Literacy under Ministry of Human Resource and Development has initiated this.
- Language and Primary Education - The National Curriculum Framework (NCF), 2005 emphasises the importance of imparting primary education in the mother tongue of the child.
- Since education is in the Concurrent List, States have the liberty to decide the medium of instruction in schools.
- The NCF also states that the 'Three Language Formula' is an attempt to address the challenges and opportunities of the linguistic situation in India.
- As per the 'Three Language Formula' the first language to be studied, must be the mother tongue or the regional language.
- In non-Hindi – speaking States, children learn Hindi. In the case of Hindi speaking States, children learn a language not spoken in their area. Sanskrit may also be studied as a modern Indian language in addition to these languages.

3.46 One Family, One Job Scheme

- Sikkim government has launched this scheme which envisions employment to a member of every family which does not have a government job in the state.
- Under this scheme, all loan debts in the farming and agriculture sector would be revoked.
- At present recruitments are being made for Group C and Group D posts in 12 government departments.

3.47 Jiban Sampark

- Odisha government has launched "Jiban Sampark" project in partnership with UNICEF India.
- It is to generate awareness about the development and welfare initiatives of state government among the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups of the state.
- Its focus areas will include skill development, empowering communities, cooperation and innovation among the groups of 75 tribal communities in the country, 13 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups residing in remote and far off areas of 12 district in Odisha.

3.48 Mukhyamantri Yuva Swabhiman Yojana

- The scheme was launched by Madhya Pradesh that guarantees 100 days of employment every year to urban youth from economically weaker sections.
- Under the new scheme, they will get ₹4,000 stipend per month during 100 days of period.
- During this period, they would be given skill development training, so that they become independent.
- The scheme defines Economically weaker sections as those whose family's annual income is less than Rs 2 lakh and the scheme is limited to youth in the age group 21-30 years.

4. ECONOMY

4.1 RBI & NBFC

- RBI has recently ended the special dispensations granted earlier for NBFCs owned by the government.
- It is to ensure that both government and privately owned NBFCs stand on an equal footing on compliance with specific RBI rule.
- It has specified a roadmap, stretching till 2021-22, for government owned NBFC lenders to meet the norms on capital adequacy, provisioning and corporate governance.
- They are required to maintain a minimum Capital to Risk Assets Ratio (CRAR) of 15%, with Tier-1 capital at 10% by 2022.

- Further, to maintain a minimum of 15% of their outstanding deposits, in compliance with RBI's existing statutory provisions.
- Among the entities affected are IFCI, Power Finance Corporation, India Infrastructure Finance Company, Indian Railway Finance Corporation, Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency and Housing & Urban Development Corporation.

4.2 Harmonisation of NBFC

- RBI has recently decided to merge the 3 categories of NBFCs viz. Asset Finance Companies (AFC), Loan Companies (LCs) and Investment Companies (ICs) into a new category called NBFC - Investment and Credit Company (NBFC-ICC).
- This is to provide NBFCs with greater operational flexibility and differential regulations pertaining to 3 NBFCs are harmonised.
- It shall be carried out based on the principle of regulation by activity rather than regulation by entity.

4.3 Urban Cooperative Banks

- RBI has notified a scheme for voluntary transition of Urban Cooperative Banks (UCB) to Small Finance Banks (SFB).
- UCB with a minimum net worth of ₹50 crore and a CRAR of 9% and above are eligible for this transition.
- Upon commencement, the converted entity must have a minimum net worth of ₹100 crore, and the promoters should hold at least 26% of the paid-up equity capital.
- The converted entities also need to maintain a CRAR of 15% on a continuous basis.
- In addition to it, it also required to comply with all SFB guidelines.

4.4 Small Finance Banks

- The objective is to further financial inclusion by supply of credit to small business units; small and marginal farmers; micro and small industries; and other unorganised sector entities, through high technology-low cost operations.
- **Eligible promoters** - Resident individuals/professionals with 10 years of experience in banking and finance; Companies and societies owned and controlled by residents will be eligible to set up small finance banks;
- Existing Non-Banking Finance Companies (NBFCs), Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs), and Local Area Banks (LABs) that are owned and controlled by residents can also opt for conversion into small finance banks.
- **Capital requirement** - The minimum paid-up equity capital for small finance banks shall be Rs. 100 crore.
- **Norms and regulations** – SFBs are subjected to all prudential norms and regulations of RBI as applicable to existing commercial banks including requirement of maintenance of Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) and Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR).
- It will be required to extend 75% of its Adjusted Net Bank Credit (ANBC) to priority sector lending (PSL) and 50% of the loan portfolio constitutes loans up to ₹25 lakh.
- If SFB aspires to transit into a universal bank, such transition would be subject to fulfilling minimum paid-up capital / net worth requirement as applicable to universal banks.

4.5 Regulatory Regime of SFB and UCB

- Both SFBs and UCBs comply with the same CRR (cash reserve ratio) and SLR (statutory liquidity ratio) norms as scheduled commercial banks (SCBs);
- However, while UCBs are subjected to Basel-I norms, SFBs and UCBs transiting into SFBs need to be Basel-III compliant, maintaining a liquidity coverage ratio and a net stable funding ratio in line with SCBs.

4.6 Independent Payment Regulatory Board

- An Inter-Ministerial Committee for finalization of amendments to the Payment & Settlement Systems Act, 2007 was formed by the Government.
- It is headed by Economic Affairs Secretary Subhash Chandra Garg. RBI was represented in the Committee.
- The Committee has suggested setting up of an independent Payment Regulatory Board (PRB) with significant RBI representation in the board.
- **Proposed Composition**—PRB to be headed by the RBI governor as ex-officio chairperson.
- There were three positions with RBI and three with the central government. All the members were nominated or independent.
- **RBI representation** – Deputy governor of RBI in-charge of the Payment & Settlement systems ex-officio. One officer of the RBI, to be nominated by the central board of RBI, ex-officio.
- RBI in a dissenting note, said that the Watal committee recommended the establishment of the PRB within the overall structure of the RBI.
- RBI had suggested that the PRB should be with the RBI and the Chairperson of the PRB should be from the RBI and have a casting vote.

4.7 Partial Credit Enhancement to NBFC

- RBI has allowed banks to provide partial credit enhancement (PCE) to bonds issued by NBFCs.
- **Eligible NBFCs** - Systemically important non-deposit taking NBFC (NBFC-ND-SIs) registered with the RBI and Housing Finance Companies (HFCs) registered with National Housing Bank.
- It is expected that it would ease the fund-raising concerns of NBFCs currently struggling to garner money in the debt market.
- A credit enhancement is a kind of support behind any bond sale, which helps improve investor sentiment.
- With support from banks, it would be easier for relatively smaller companies to raise money from investors. This could well help increase credit ratings.
- The facility can only be availed when NBFCs sell bonds with maturities not less than 3 years.
- Proceeds from the bonds backed by bank credit enhancements should only be utilized for refinancing the existing debt of NBFCs or HFCs.

4.8 Capital Conservation Buffer

- Capital Conservation Buffer (CCB) concept was introduced under the International Basel III norms.
- The concept says that during good times, banks must build up a capital buffer that can be drawn from when there is stress.
- It was aimed to cover for their losses on risky investments.



- The Basel Committee on Banking Supervision released its capital buffer norms wherein two kinds of structures were introduced - one, the CCB, and the other was countercyclical capital buffers.
- India follows the international Basel III norms, and the CCB is an integral part of those norms. The RBI has decided to implement both.
- In India, the minimum capital requirement is 9 per cent.
- The CCB would be 2.5 percentage points over and above the minimum capital requirement.
- Since it is a buffer, or extra capital, banks' minimum capital is not violated.
- It is being implemented in a phased manner of 0.625 per cent per year from January 1, 2016. The final phase is now delayed by a year, till March 31, 2020.
- Basel norms are a standard set of rules, and it is left to the individual country to implement the norms at a pace that is suitable to it.
- However, there won't be any penalty for not attaining CCB norms.
- **Reason for Delay** - As banks are struggling to preserve their capital and the government is finding it difficult to provide adequate funds implementation of, CCB's implementation is delayed.
- Delaying the CCB frees up capital for the banks and gives the government time to mobilize resources.
- That apart, higher capital would also mean that banks will now be able to lend more.
- More the amount of capital with banks, the more they can leverage it and lend.
- According to estimates, the delay in implementing the final phase of CCB would free up as much as Rs 3 trillion in additional capitals for Indian lenders till the end of the next financial year.
- The saving for the government on this count is expected to be around Rs 350 billion in the current financial year.

4.9 National Financial Reporting Authority

- Union cabinet has approved the creation of National Financial Reporting Authority and accordingly the rules were recently notified.
- NFRA is to be an independent regulator overseeing the auditing profession.
- It take away the powers of the Chartered Accountants of India's monitoring and disciplinary powers over auditors of listed entities and large unlisted companies besides banks and insurance companies.
- It will have a chairman, three full-time members, and one secretary.
- It can recommend formulation of accounting and auditing standards and policies which to be adopted by companies and auditors.
- It can monitor and enforce such standards and policies to oversee quality of services of the professions.
- It would cover all listed companies and large unlisted companies with paid-up capital of not less than ₹500 crore or annual turnover of over ₹1,000 crore or those having aggregate loans, debentures or deposits of not less than ₹500 crore as of March 31 of the preceding financial year.
- It will also have oversight over auditors of banks, insurers, electricity firms and those body corporates referred to it by the Centre.
- It has mandated time-bound disposal (90 days) of the show cause notice through a summary procedure.

4.10 Ombudsman Scheme for Digital Transactions

- RBI has launched ombudsman scheme for digital transactions (OSDT) for redressal of complaints against system participants.
- It will provide free-of-cost redressal mechanism to grievances raised by customers for digital transactions undertaken by them through non-banking channels, like mobile wallets or tech-enabled payment companies using UPI for settlements
- Transactions undertaken through the banking channels will continue to be managed by the banking ombudsman.
- The new ombudsman will start working from the 21 existing offices of the banking ombudsman and work within the existing territorial jurisdictions.

4.11 Recapitalisation of EXIM Bank

- Union Cabinet has approved the recapitalization of EXIM Bank and also an increase in the authorised capital from Rs. 10,000 crore to Rs. 20,000 crore.
- Exim bank was established in 1982 under an Act of Parliament as the apex financial institution for financing, facilitating and promoting India's international trade.
- It is the principal export credit agency for India.
- It primarily lends for exports from India including supporting overseas buyers and Indian suppliers for export of developmental and infrastructure projects, equipment, goods and services from India.
- It is regulated by RBI.
- The infusion of capital will be done through recapitalisation bonds which will be issued on the same lines with public sector banks.

4.12 Linking Loan Rates

- RBI has recently deferred its plan to link the interest loan with an external benchmark.
- The proposed four external benchmarks are,
 - i. Reserve Bank of India policy repo rate;
 - ii. Government of India 91 days Treasury Bill yield produced by the Financial Benchmarks India Private Ltd (FBIL);
 - iii. Government of India 182 days Treasury Bill yield produced by the FBIL; or
 - iv. Any other benchmark market interest rate produced by the FBIL.
- Currently, the pricing of loans is based on the internal benchmarks, i.e., base rate, benchmark prime lending rate (BPLR) and marginal cost of funds-based lending rate (MCLR).

4.13 National Housing Bank

- NHB is an All India Financial Institution, set up in 1988, under the National Housing Bank Act, 1987.
- It is an apex agency established to operate as a principal agency to promote housing finance institutions both at local and regional levels and to provide financial and other support incidental to such institutions.
- Up till now, the authorized capital of NHB stands at Rs. 2,000 crore of which Rs. 1,450 crore has been subscribed by RBI.

- Union cabinet has recently approved amendments to the NHB Act, 1987 in 2018.
- Accordingly, the subscribed capital of RBI (Rs.1,450) in NHB was transferred back to RBI.
- Subsequent to this payment, subscribed capital of NHB shall stand transferred to and vested in the Central Government.
- The change in ownership from RBI to GoI will also segregate RBI's role as banking regulator and as owner of NHB.

4.14 SEBI Regulation for large Corporates

- SEBI came out with a proposal that will require large corporates to raise 25% borrowings through this route from next financial year.
- This is to reduce reliance on banks for financing corporates and simultaneously developing a liquid and vibrant corporate bond market.
- **Eligible Firms** - Firms need to have an outstanding long term borrowing of at least Rs 1 billion; a credit rating of "AA and above" and target to finance themselves with long-term borrowings (above 1 year).
- The proposal is in accordance with the suggestion made in the budget for 2018-19, mandating large corporates to meet 1/4th of their financial needs from bond market.

4.15 Debenture Redemption Reserve

- The finance ministry has rejected SEBI's proposal to do away with the requirement of the debenture redemption reserve (DRR).
- The DRR mechanism under the Companies Act was created to protect investors against the possibility of default by a company.
- It mandates both listed and unlisted companies to set aside 25 per cent of their profits for protection of bond investors in case of a default.
- Financial institutions such as banks and non-banking financial companies are, however, exempted from this requirement if funds are raised through a private placement.

NOT ON THE SAME PAGE

SEBI TO FINMIN

- Review the debenture reserve norms
- Existing mechanism not favourable to corporate bond market, raising cost of issuance by 18% for companies
- No level playing field due

to exemption given to financial institutions

- Cites study, which reveals 70% issuances come via private placement route
- Both listed/non-listed firms to set aside 25% of their profits for this reserve

MINISTRY'S VIEW

- Debenture reserve not adding any cost to the issuing company
- Sebi needs to relook the cost as it's not as high as appears
- No negative implication,

except 25% cannot be used for dividend payment

- For shareholders, distribution of dividend is not the driving factor
- Such reserves are required for investor protection in terms of redemptions

4.16 Bali Fintech Agenda

- The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank jointly launched the Bali Fintech Agenda recently.
- It is a set of 12 policy elements established to help member countries harness the benefits and opportunities of rapid advances in financial technology (fintech), while at the same time also managing the risks that arise.

4.17 GAFA Tax

- France has recently unveiled its plan to tax global digital giants called "GAFA Tax", an acronym for the US companies it targets – Google, Apple, Facebook and Amazon.

- It proposed a levy of 3% revenue tax on digital companies with global revenues above €750 million and above €25 million in France.
- It is to ensure that the global giants pay a fair share of taxes on their massive business operations in Europe.

4.18 Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP)

- It is a free trade agreement between Canada and 10 other countries in the Asia-Pacific region - Australia, Brunei, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam.
- It entered into force among the first 7 countries to ratify the agreement – Canada, Australia, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, and Singapore, Vietnam.
- It incorporates the tariff outcomes contained in the original TPP Agreement.
- It provides comprehensive tariff elimination across all sectors. Once fully implemented, 99% of tariff lines among CPTPP parties will be duty-free.

4.19 Share Swap

- When a company pays for an acquisition by issuing its own shares to the shareholders of the target company, this is known as a share swap.
- The number of shares to be issued in lieu of their existing holdings in the target company is called the swap ratio.
- The ratio is determined by valuing the target company after looking into metrics such as its revenues and profits, as well as its market price.
- If the target company is listed, the market value of its shares is often a key consideration to arrive at the right price to be paid.
- Paying a premium to the market usually indicates healthy prospects and high potential, while a discount could indicate a distress sale.
- In case of a share swap, when shareholders of the acquired company are given shares of the acquirer company as part of the deal, this is not considered a transfer of shares.
- Hence, capital gains tax will not arise in the hands of the shareholders (including minority shareholders) of the acquired company. The tax liability will arise only when the shares of the merged entity are sold.
- **Advantage** – In a share swap, there is no cash outgo involved for the acquirer, saving the acquirer borrowing costs.
- **Disadvantage** - Issuing fresh shares could lead to reduction in promoter holding and dilution in earnings for shareholders of the acquiring company.
- However, the acquiring company can benefit from lower taxes, if there is goodwill created out of the merger which it writes off over the years.

4.20 IFSC Regulator

- Union Cabinet has approved establishment of a unified authority for regulating all financial services in International Financial Services Centres (IFSCs) in India through International Financial Services Centres Authority Bill, 2019.



- The first IFSC in India has been set up at GIFT City, Gandhinagar, Gujarat.
- An IFSC enables bringing back the financial services and transactions that are currently carried out in offshore financial centers by Indian corporate entities and overseas branches / subsidiaries of financial institutions (FIs) to India.
- Currently, the banking, capital markets and insurance sectors in IFSC are regulated by multiple regulators, i.e. RBI, SEBI and IRDAI.
- The unified authority shall regulate all such financial services, financial products and FIs in an IFSC which has already been permitted by the Financial Sector Regulators for IFSCs.

4.21 Erode Turmeric

- Recently Erode's unique slender turmeric received a GI tag for its distinctive fragrance and color.
- Erode's turmeric is smaller and more slender when compared with other varieties, and it has a high curcumin content of around 3.9%.
- The loamy red and black soil of the Erode region is believed to be the reason behind the distinctive brilliant yellow color, as well as its characteristic sweet taste and aroma.
- Due to these distinctive features, Erode turmeric is the preferred choice of commercial curry powder manufacturers in India and abroad.

4.22 Kandhamal Haldi

- Odisha's Kandhamal Haldi (turmeric) has recently received GI tag.
- The spice, named after the district where it is produced, has been cultivated since time immemorial and is known for its medicinal value, cosmetic and domestic purposes.
- Turmeric is the main cash crop of tribal people in Kandhamal.
- About 50% of Kandhamal population are engaged in growing the variety.
- Few other important GI items of Odisha are Kotpad's handloom fabric, Konark stone work, Sambalpur Bandhasaree.

4.23 Consumer Price Index

- Consumer Price Index measures changes in the price level of market basket of consumer goods and services purchased by households.
- The CPI is a statistical estimate constructed using the prices of a sample of representative items whose prices are collected periodically.
- The annual percentage change in a CPI is used as a measure of inflation.
- The Central Statistics Office (CSO) under Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation releases CPI.
- Recently the Base Year of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) has been revised from 2010 to 2012.



Geographical Indications	State
From April 2017- March 2018	
Banaganapalle Mangoes	Telangana & Andhra Pradesh
Pochampally Ikat (Logo)	Telangana
Gobindobhog Rice	West Bengal
Durgi Stone Carvings	Andhra Pradesh
Etikoppaka Toys	Andhra Pradesh
Tulapanji Rice	West Bengal
Chakshesang Shawl	Nagaland
Mahabalipuram Stone Sculpture	Tamil Nadu
BanglarRasogolla	West Bengal
Nilambur Teak	Kerala
Bankura Panchmura Terracotta craft	West Bengal
Pokaran Pottery	Rajasthan
Adilabad Dokra	Telangana
Warangal Durries	Telangana
Allagadda Stone Carving	Andhra Pradesh
BhagalpuriZardalu	Bihar
Katarni Rice	Bihar
Magahi Paan	Bihar
Ghazipur Wall-hanging	Uttar Pradesh
Varanasi Soft Stone Jali Work	Uttar Pradesh
Purulia Chau Mask	West Bengal
Wooden Mask ofKushmandi	West Bengal



Madurkathi	West Bengal
From April 2018- March 2019	
Kadaknath Black Chicken Meat	Madhya Pradesh
BokaChaul	Assam
Alphonso	Maharashtra
RajKotPatola	Gujarat
Shahi Litchi	Bihar
Sangli Turmeric	Maharashtra
Pethapur Printing Blocks	Gujarat
Kolhapuri Chappal	Karnataka and Maharashtra
Silao Khaja	Bihar
Coorg Arabica Coffee	Karnataka
Wayanaad Robusta Coffee	Kerala
Chikmagalur Arabica Coffee	Karnataka
Araku Valley Arabica Coffee	Andhra Pradesh & Odisha
Bababudangiris Arabica Coffee	Karnataka
Sirsi Supari	Karnataka
Himachali Kala Zeera HimachaliChulli Oil	Himachal Pradesh
ChunarBaluaPatthar	Uttar Pradesh
Erode Manjal (Erode Turmeric)	Tamil Nadu
Marayoor Jaggery	Kerala
Thirubuvanam Silk Sarees	Tamil Nadu
Jeeraphool	Chhattisgarh

Karnataka and Maharashtra has overtaken Tamilnadu as the states with the highest number of Geographical Indications, with Karnataka having the highest.



5. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

5.1 COMCASA Agreement

- India has signed the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) agreement with the U.S.
- The agreement will providing a legal basis for the U.S. to transfer secure communication equipment to India, increasing military equipment interoperability and real time data sharing.
- COMCASA is an India-specific version of the Communication and Information on Security Memorandum of Agreement (CISMOA).
- Few other agreements signed by India with US are General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) and Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) in 2016.
- India is yet to sign Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement for Geo-spatial Cooperation (BECA) with USA.

5.2 International Finance Corporation

- The International Finance Corporation (IFC) is an international financial institution that offers investment, advisory, and asset management services to encourage private sector development in developing countries.
- It is a member of the World Bank Group and is headquartered in Washington, D.C., United States.
- It offers an array of debt and equity financing services and helps companies face their risk exposures, while refraining from participating in a management capacity.
- It advises governments on building infrastructure and partnerships to further support private sector development.
- Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, robotics, nano-technology, bio-technology and issues relating to intellectual property rights.

5.3 Arab League

- Arab league is a regional organization of Arab countries in and around North Africa, the Horn of Africa and Arabia.
- Kingdom of Egypt, Kingdom of Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and Syria are the founding members of the league.
- Since 2011, Syria's participation has been suspended after the Syrian Civil War.

6. ENVIRONMENT

6.1 State of Global Air Report

- The State of Global Air report 2019, prepared by the Boston-based Health Effects Institute (HEI).
- According to the report China and India together were responsible for half the total global attributable deaths from air pollution in 2017.
- Long-term exposure to outdoor and indoor air pollution is estimated to have contributed to 4.9 million deaths in 2017, of which China and India accounted for 1.2 million deaths each, states.
- The report conclude that air pollution collectively reduced life expectancy by 1 year, 8 months on average worldwide, matching the effect of smoking.

- The report found that long-term exposure to ambient PM_{2.5} contributed to 2.9 million deaths in 2017, making PM_{2.5} exposure responsible for 5.2% of all global deaths.

6.2 Global Cooling Coalition

- The Global Cool Coalition is a unified front that links action across the Kigali Amendment, Paris Agreement and Sustainable Development Goals.
- The cooling coalition includes government officials from Chile, Rwanda, Denmark as well as leaders from civil society, research and academia.
- The cooling coalition is expected to inspire ambition, identify solutions and mobilize action to accelerate progress towards clean and efficient cooling.
- It is supported by the UN, the Climate and Clean Air Coalition, the Kigali Cooling Efficiency Program and Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL).

6.3 Central Monitoring Committee on Pollution

- National Green Tribunal (NGT) has formed a Central Monitoring Committee to prepare and enforce a national plan to make over 350 river stretches across the country pollution free.
- The Chairman of Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) will be the nodal authority for coordination.
- The Chief Secretaries of the states will act as the nodal agency at the state level.
- The committee has been composed to monitor pollution of rivers, as it has caused serious threat to the safety of water and environment.
- Besides checking river pollution, the central monitoring committee will coordinate with the River Rejuvenation Committees of the states and oversee the execution of the action plans.

7. SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

7.2 PSLV C45

- ISRO's workhorse PSLV-C45 has successfully places EMISAT and AMSAT along with 28 other satellite in orbit using PS4 engines.
- Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) is the third generation launch vehicle of India.
- It is the first Indian launch vehicle to be equipped with liquid stages.
- The vehicle has successfully launched two spacecraft – Chandrayaan-1 in 2008 and Mars Orbiter Spacecraft in 2013 – that later traveled to Moon and Mars respectively.
- The PSLV C45 rocket has four stages, each one was self-contained, with its own propulsion system, thereby capable of functioning independently.
- The first and third stages used composite solid propellants, while the second stage used earth-storable liquid propellant and fourth one fitted with Solar Panels.
- EMISAT - It is a satellite developed by DRDO which is meant to provide intelligence to the armed forces.
- AMSAT – ForRadio Amateur Satellite Corporation, India, has sent a payload called the Automatic Packet Repeating System.
- This is expected to help amateur radio operators to get improved locational accuracy in their tracking and monitoring activity.



7.3 LUC L-56

- The Indian Navy has received a warship with landing craft utility (LCU), L-56.
- The warship was built and designed by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Limited (GRSE), Kolkata.
- The LCU was GRSE's 100th warship, the ship can accommodate 216 personnel and is equipped with two indigenous CRN 91 guns.
- The ship is fitted with the state-of-the-art equipment and advanced systems such as Integrated Bridge System (IBS) and Integrated Platform Management System.

7.4 MH 60R Multi Mission Helicopters

- The United States Department of State has approved the sale of 24 MH-60R multi-mission helicopters to India under its Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program.
- MH 60R helicopters will provide India the capability to undertake anti-surface and anti-submarine warfare missions.
- These helicopters will also provide India the ability to perform secondary missions, including vertical replenishment, search and rescue, and communications relay.
- It is to be noted that India was granted with USA's unique Major Defense Partner (MDP) designation in 2016, a step towards India accessing U.S. military technology at a level on a par with those of the U.S.'s closest allies.
- In 2018 India was then given Strategic Trade Authorisation-1 (STA-1) status by the U.S and became the third Asian country after South Korea and Japan (and 37th country globally) to acquire it.

7.5 Mosquirix

- Mosquirix is the world's first vaccine against a parasitic disease, Malaria.
- Malaria is caused by the infectious Plasmodium female anophelesmosquitoes deposit parasite sporozoites into the skin of a human host.
- Each year there are 430,000 malaria-related deaths worldwide according to the World Health Organization (WHO).
- Mosquirix vaccine has been recommended by WHO for pilot introduction in selected areas of 3 African countries- Ghana, Kenya and Malawi.
- African Nation, Malawi will be undertaking large scale pilot tests for this world's most advanced experimental malaria vaccine in a bid to prevent the disease.

7.6 Zinc Deficiency

- According to recent research it is found that inadequate zinc intake has been rising in India for decades, causing tens of millions of people to become newly deficient in it.
- Rising carbon dioxide levels can accelerate zinc deficiency in crops and thus in human consumption.
- The highest rate of inadequate zinc intake was concentrated mainly in the southern and northeastern States with rice-dominated diets: Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Manipur and Meghalaya.

7.7 Pseudomonas putida CSV86

- It is a unique strain of bacterium which can selectively remove the environment toxic, aromatic pollutants such as benzoate (sodium benzoate is used as a food preservative), benzyl alcohol and naphthalene, from soil.
- The bacterial strain has preference for aromatic compounds and organic acid as a food source even when glucose is available.
- The strain can degrade aromatics and organic acids simultaneously.
- The bacterial strain is a very good candidate for bioremediation or waste-water treatment.



7.8 Even Horizon Telescope

- The Event Horizon Telescope is an international collaboration aiming to capture the first image of a black hole by creating a virtual Earth-sized telescope.
- Instead of constructing a giant telescope EHT links radio dishes across the globe to create an Earth-sized interferometer to measure the size of black holes.
- The EHT project includes theoretical and simulation studies that are framing questions rooted at the black hole boundary.
- The following are two massive blackholes photographed by EHT
 1. **Sagittarius A*** - It is at the center of Milky Way galaxy which has four million times the mass of sun.
 2. **Monster black hole** - It is in an elliptical galaxy known as M87, and it is 1500 times more massive than Sag A*.

7.9 Candida Auris Fungus

- Candida auris is a multiple drug resistance fungus that presents a serious global health threat to humans.
- C. auris spread in hospitals, targeting people with weakened immune systems, and it is difficult to identify with standard lab methods.
- Symptoms may not be noticeable, because patients infected with C. auris are often patients in the hospital with another serious illness or condition.
- It can spread from one patient to another in healthcare settings through contact with contaminated environmental surfaces or equipment.