FreshersLive's Current Affairs

Monthly Edition - January 2019

Freshers LIVE

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BANKING & FINANCE

Axis Bank MD & CEO Shikha Sharma retires; Amitabh Chaudhry takes charge

- Amitabh Chaudhry, the former MD and CEO of **HDFC Standard Life Insurance** Company, was in September named the MD and CEO of **Axis Bank** for a period of three years.
- In July 2017, the board of Axis Bank had approved the reappointment of Sharma, who was to start her **fourth term** as MD and CEO from June 2018.
- However, in April this year, Sharma wanted her new term to be reduced to seven months from a three-year tenure without citing any reasons.

Cabinet clears merger of Dena Bank and Vijaya Bank with Bank of Baroda

- With the merger, **Bank of Baroda** (BoB) will become the countrys **third-largest bank** after State Bank of India and ICICI Bank.
- This marks the **first-ever three way amalgamation** in the country's banking sector.
- The merger will come into force on **April 1, 2019**.
- As per the scheme of amalgamation, Bank of Baroda will be the **transferee bank** while the other two public sector banks will be **transferor banks**.
- **About Bank of Baroda:**
- Headquarters: Alkapuri, Vadodara
- CEO: P. S. Jayakumar
- Founded: 20 July 1908, Vadodara
- Tagline: India's International Bank
- **About Dena Bank:**
- Headquarters: Mumbai
- CEO: Shri Karnam Sekar
- Founded: 26 May 1938
- Tagline: Your Trusted Family Bank
- **About Vijaya Bank:**
- Headquarters: Bengaluru
- CEO: R. A. Sankara Narayanan

- Founded: 23 October 1931
- Tagline: A friend you can bank on

RBL Bank appointed Pankaj Sharma as its chief operations officer

- Private sector lender **RBL Bank** appointed Pankaj Sharma as its chief operations officer (COO).
- Prior to this, Sharma was heading retail operations of Axis Bank.
- Under his leadership, the ATM channel, phone banking and branch automation and digital initiatives at Axis Bank took shape.

HDFC Mutual Fund becomes the largest Asset Management Company in India

- HDFC Mutual Fund has surpassed **ICICI Prudential MF** to regain top position after two years as the largest asset management company (AMC).
- While HDFC MF looks after assets worth **Rs 3.35 lakh crore**, ICICI Prudential MF manages Rs 3.08 lakh crore.
- With AUM of Rs 2.64 lakh crore, **SBI MF** stands at the **third** slot.
- Aditya Birla and Reliance MF follow next with Rs 2.42 lakh crore and Rs 2.36 lakh crore, respectively.

Jana Small Finance Bank Launches Current Account with Unique Auto-Sweep Facility

- **Jana Small Finance Bank** launched **Current Account with Auto-Sweep facility.**
- The facility will enable bank's existing and potential new customers to auto sweep-in and sweep-out the idle funds in the current account to Sweep Fixed Deposit and earn high interest.
- For a tenor of 365 days on sweep deposit, the customers will be able to earn interest of 8.5 percent.

BUSINESS & ECONOMY

NCC Limited bagged order worth Rs.2,890.7 crore

- **NCC Limited**, formerly Nagarjuna Construction Company Ltd, an infrastructure firm, received four new orders totalling to **Rs. 2,890.7 crore** (exclusive of GST) in December 2018 from government agencies.
- One of them for **Rs.680.3 crore** pertains to **water and environment division**, while two orders totalling **Rs.2,126.8 crore** pertain to **roads division**. The fourth order for **Rs.83.7 crore pertains to building division**. Shares of NCC were trading 3.12% up at Rs 74.40 apiece on the BSE. The Company has a cluster of regional offices in Delhi, Ahmedabad, Bhubaneshwar, Kolkata, Mumbai, Bhopal, Lucknow, Hyderabad, Chennai, and Bangalore. Also, NCC has a presence in international level through offices in Dubai (UAE) and Muscat (Sultanate of Oman).

Vivek Bhatia appointed as MD & CEO of Thyssenkrupp Industries India

- **Thyssenkrupp**, the German industrial giant, appointed **Vivek Bhatia** as the **Managing Director** (MD) & **Chief Executive Officer** (CEO) of **Thyssenkrupp Industries India**. Mr.Bhatia was earlier the CEO - Asia Pacific at Thyssenkrupp AG, driving group activities for all Thyssenkrupp companies in the region. Prior to joining Thyssenkrupp, Mr. Bhatia was earlier with Boston Consulting Group, India.

PayU India CEO Amrish Rau joined parent company Naspers as head of financial technology

- PayU Indias CEO **Amrish Rau** joined as the head of financial technology partnerships and investments for Naspers fin tech business.
- Nasper is South African parent of PayU.
- Rau will continue to report to Laurent le Moal the chief executive of PayU, which is headquartered in the Netherlands.

Amazon overtakes Microsoft to become world's most valuable company

- Amazon was valued at **$810 billion** as compared to Microsoft at $789 billion.

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- Amazon was founded by **Jeff Bezos** in **1994**.
- Amazon achieved its record market capitalisation of **$1 trillion** in September last year.
- Following Amazon as the most valuable company in the world are Microsoft, **Alphabet Inc**, and **Apple**.

Boeing worlds largest planemaker for 7th straight year

- **US-based Boeing** has retained its position as the world's largest **planemaker** for the seventh year in a row, delivering a record **806 aircraft** in 2018.
- Overall, the company saw 893 net orders valued at $143.7 billion.
- Boeing was followed by its European rival **Airbus** which delivered 800 aircraft last year.

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INTERNATIONAL

US Adventurer Completes 1st Unaided Solo Trek Across Antarctica

- A 33-year-old man Colin OBrady from the **United States** become the first person to complete a solo trek across Antarctica without any assistance.
- He finished the **1,500km** journey across the frozen continent in 54 days, lugging his supplies on a sled as he skied in bone-chilling temperatures from north to south.

Bangladesh ODI captain Mortaza becomes MP, wins election by 2,66,412 votes

- Bangladesh ODI captain **Mashrafe Mortaza** has become a member of parliament after winning from the **Narail 2** constituency in the country's 11th general elections.
- The 35-year-old, who contested on a ticket from Sheikh Hasina-led **Awami League party**, received 2,74,418 votes, while his nearest competitor got 8,006 votes.
- With this, he became the **first active cricketer** to become a Member of Parliament and the second national cricket team captain, after **Naimur Rahman Durjoy**, to enter the Parliament.

Israel and US officially withdraw from UNESCO over 'anti-Israel' bias

- The US had notified UNESCO of its decision to quit the organisation in **October 2017** and had called for its "**fundamental reform**". Israel followed the US in quitting UNESCO.
- The Paris-based organisation has previously criticised Israel's occupation of **East Jerusalem** and granted **full membership** to **Palestine** in **2011**.
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was **co-founded** by the **US** after World War II with the mission of seeking to build peace through international cooperation in Education, the Sciences and Culture.
- UNESCO is best known for its work to **preserve heritage**, including maintaining a list of World Heritage sites, and programmes to promote education in developing countries.
- The US has pulled out of UNESCO before. The Reagan administration did so in **1984** because it viewed the agency as mismanaged, corrupt, and used to advance Soviet interests. The US **rejoined** in **2003**.

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France Introduced GAFA Tax On Global Internet, Technology Firm

- **France** will introduce its own tax on large internet and technology companies from January 1, finance minister Bruno Le Maire said Monday amid difficulties in finalizing a new EU-wide levy.
- France has been pushing hard for a new so-called **GAFA tax** named after Google, Apple, Facebook and Amazon to ensure the global giants pay a fair share of taxes on their massive business operations in Europe.

Jair Bolsonaro takes Oath As New President of Brazil

- Mr. Bolsonaro, 63 won the presidential election by a wide margin against Fernando Haddad of the left-wing Workers Party.
- **Brazil:**
- **Capital:** Brasilia.
- **Currency**: Brazilian real.

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INDIAN AFFAIRS

AAAR okays GST on inter-state office services

- K**arnataka Appellate Authority for Advance Rulings (AAAR)**upheld the levy of goods and services tax on services rendered by one office branch to other branches of the same company located in different states.
- In its ruling which will affect the companies with a presence in multiple states, the AAAR said that in-house service functions such as human resources and payrolls, if carried out from a centre in one state for offices in other states, will attract GST for which it will have to issue an invoice.
- The decision will add the transaction costs and compliance burden for the companies with offices in many states, even though the tax paid can be adjusted against their final GST liability.
- The companies that deal in goods or services that are exempt from GST such as healthcare and education, and petroleum and liquor companies, which are out of the ambit of the tax will not have the option of adjusting the tax paid on in-house transfers.

Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan launched Ujjwala sanitary napkin initiative in Odisha

- Union Petroleum Minister **Dharmendra Pradhan** launched the Ujjwala Sanitary Napkin initiative in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.
- The main aim is to provide access to hygiene products and employment to opportunities in every district of the state.
- The cost of setting up each manufacturing unit is expected to be Rs 2.94 crores.
- Around 100 local manufacturing units will be set up by oil marketing companies at Common Service Centres (CSCs) across 93 blocks in all 30 districts of Odisha in the first phase.
- The sanitary napkins will be priced at Rs 42 per pack of eight pads.
- Each manufacturing unit will employ five or six Ujjwala beneficiaries and will thus employ nearly 600 women across all districts.

Madhya Pradesh government to create an Adhyatmik Vibhag(spiritual

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department)

- Congress-led **Madhya Pradesh** Government announced that it is going to create an Adhyatmik Vibhag (spiritual department) by merging several existing department.
- The Congress had promised to form such a department before the last months Assembly elections.
- The proposed **Adhyatmik Vibhag** (Spiritual Department) going to be formed by merging Dharmik Nyas Evam Dharmasv Department (Religious Trust and Endowment Department), Anand Vibhag (Happiness Department) in addition to the Directorate of Religious Trust and Endowment, Madhya Pradesh Teerth Evam Mela Pradhikaran and Rajya Anand Sansthan.

TB Radhakrishnan sworn-in as 1st Chief Justice of Telangana High Court

- Justice **Thottathil Bhaskaran Nair Radhakrishnan** had been serving as the Chief Justice of the combined high court of the two Telugu states since July last year.
- Telangana High Court came into existence on **January 1, 2019** after the bifurcation of the High Court at Hyderabad.
- Justice **Praveen Kumar** was sworn in as the acting Chief Justice of Andhra Pradesh HC, which also came into existence the same day.

India cuts tax on palm oil imports from ASEAN countries

- The duty on **crude palm oil** from Malaysia, Indonesia and other members of the **Association of South East Asian Nations** (ASEAN) was cut to **40%** from **44%**, while the tax on refined palm oil was cut to **45%** from **54%** if imported from Malaysia and to **50%**, if purchased from Indonesia or other member-nations of Asean.
- In March 2018, India had raised import tax on crude palm oil to 44 percent from 30 percent and lifted the tax on refined palm oil to 54 percent from 40 percent.

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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

ISRO Planning to Launch 32 Space Missions in 2019

- The missions include the second lunar mission **Chandrayaan-2** (800-crore mission) to land on the moon with lander and rover.
- India's maiden **human space mission** in 2021-22, **Gaganyaan**, will also be pursued this year.
- Among the ISRO's achievements in 2018 were launch of the heaviest satellite **GSAT-29** (3,423 kg) on November 14 and building the heaviest communication satellite **GSAT-11** (5,854 kg), launched on December 5 onboard the Arianespace space agency's rocket from French Guiana on the north Atlantic coast of South America.
- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) chairman - **K. Sivan**

Kaiga Atomic power station sets new world record

- **Karnatakas Kaiga Atomic power station** created a world record for the **longest uninterrupted operation for 962 days** on December 10. It had earlier set a record of 941 days. The earlier record of **940 days by Heysham-2 unit 2was setby the United Kingdom.**
- **Generating Station-1 (KGS-1) at Kaiga in Uttara Kannada, Karnataka** has now been shut down for maintenance after 962 days of operation. It will be commissioned again after the maintenance activities.
- Nuclear Power Corporation of India (NPCIL) said that during its continuous operation of 962 days KGS-1 had produced **5 billion units of electricity at a plant load factor of 99.3%.** Kaiga has four indigenously developed Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors of 220 MW each fuelled by domestic fuel. Of them, KGS-2 has been operating since the last 661 days.

PM stressed the State universities to focus on research

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** said that **research should expand beyond the Central institutes** of national importance such as the IITs and the IISERs and **branch out into the State universities** across the country at the **106th edition of the Indian Science Congress,** Punjab. The theme is **FUTURE INDIA Science**

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and Technology.

- In India, 95% of our students go to State universities and colleges and hence it is necessary to have a strong research ecosystem in these places.
- Mr. Modi while addressing called on the **Prime Ministers Science, Technology and Innovation Advisory Council** to formulate a plan to implement such a scheme. He also added that more technology is needed as the majority of farmers possess less than 2 hectares of land.

CM N.Chandrababu Naidu launched Prana Raksha app of police

- **Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu** launched the **Prana Raksha web application** developed by the Chittoor police at Kuppam, Andhra Pradesh. The app has been designed **to save the lives of road accident victims and reach out to women in distress.**
- The Prana Raksha app, which works on the **SoS and panic button features**, would enable users to immediately contact the police.
- Keeping in mind the 8 national highways and 26 State highways connected to the neighbouring Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, while thousands of inter-State pilgrims reach Tirumala daily, the app has been designed **to view the alarming rate of accidents on these roads.**

Indian Railways to launch WiFi facilities at a minimum of 2,000 stations

- **Railway Minister Piyush Goyal** instructed officials to provide **WiFi facilities at a minimum of 2,000 stations** as soon as possible. He also called for setting up a single helpline number for all non-security railway complaints by the end of January.
- Additionally, Point of Sale (PoS) machines will be distributed in all trains to each catering staffer by March 31 to address complaints related to overcharging by the caterer. The government will also replace conventional coaches with **modern Linke Hofmann Busch (LHB) design** coaches in all long distance trains.

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DEFENCE

Centre eased Defence manufacturing rules

- The **Centre** issued a notification to simplify the **process for the approval of manufacturing of a range of defence** and aerospace equipment and components **by private industry**. This will bring the industries under the licensing authority of the **Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP)** which is under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.The items are listed in three categories: defence aircraft, warships of all kinds, and allied items of defence equipment.
- **Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM)** said that the most significant aspect is that warships of all kinds, surface and sub-surface, have been included in the listing. It would accrue benefits towards Tier-I/Tier-II vendors giving a boost to the small and medium enterprises (SMEs).
- This move is also expected to help foreign **Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM)** looking for partnerships with the private sector.

Tamil Nadu defence industrial corridor to be launched on 20 January

- The **Tamil Nadu defence industrial corridor** is set to be launched as part of the **Centres efforts** to build an indigenous **defence production ecosystem**. One of the reasons for Tamil Nadu being chosen for the corridor is that it is already a major manufacturing State and has a major auto components hub.
- The corridor will be formally launched by **Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman** at Tiruchirappalli on January 20. Two defence corridors, one in Tamil Nadu and the other in Uttar Pradesh, were announced in the last budget.
- The Uttar Pradesh corridor was launched at Aligarh in August 2018 and saw investment announcements to the tune of Rs.3,732 crore were made.

India to buy $5 billion oil, gas from USA & spend $18 billion in defence

- **India** committed to purchase USD 5 billion worth of oil and gas from the US per annum and USD 18 billion worth of defence equipment that are under implementation, a top Indian diplomat here said, highlighting the growing bilateral trade cooperation.

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Centre ordered ITBP to Leh in Jammu and Kashmir

- The **Centre** has ordered moving a strategic **Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)** command from its current base in Chandigarh to the border of **Leh in Jammu and Kashmir**, despite the growing concerns over the **Chinese military** build-up along the **eastern flank of the country.**
- The **North West (NW) frontier** of the ITBP has been ordered to move by the end of March. The Leh district in the mountains of Jammu and Kashmir is the base for **14 Corps of the Army** and the proposed shift will allow better interaction between the two forces for strategic and defence planning.

Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated the Diffo Bridge over Chipu River in Arunachal Pradesh

- Defence Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** inaugurated the 426 metres long Diffo Bridge over Chipu River in Lower Dibang Valley District of Arunachal Pradesh.
- **Border Roads Organization (BRO)**constructed the bridge along Indo-China border. The construction of the bridge began in 2011.
- The total cost to build the bridge was Rs 4,847.83 lakh and was funded by the Union ministry of road transport and highways.

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AWARDS AND HONOURS

Manoj Das was awarded the Kabi Samrat Upendra Bhanja National Award

- **Manoj Das**, an eminent English and Odia writer, received the **Kabi Samrat Upendra Bhanja National Award for Lifetime Achievement** in Literature. This ceremony was instituted by the Berhampur University, Odisha.
- During the 53rd foundation day ceremony, the university also honoured noted folk dance guru Nabaghana Parida with Dakshin Odisha Loksanakruti Samman.

DRDO receives Exhibitor of the Year Award

- The **Defence Research and Development Organisation** (DRDO) pavilion received **Exhibitor of the Year Award** at 106th Indian Science Congress held at Lovely Professional University (LPU), Phagwara, **Punjab**.
- DRDOs outdoor exhibits included surface-to-air missile system - Akash, model of BrahMos missile, remotely operated vehicle - Daksh, heavy weight torpedo - Varunastra, Laser Ordnance Disposal System (LORDS) and Vehicle Mounted Dazzler etc.
- DRDO Headquarters: New Delhi
- Founded: 1958
- Motto: "Strength's Origin is in Science"
- Minister responsible: Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister of Defence
- **Chairman** - Satheesh Reddy
- Role - DRDO is responsible for the ongoing Light Combat Aircraft.

Namita Gokhale wins Sushila Devi Literature Award

- Namita Gokhale was awarded in the **Best Book of Fiction** Written by a Woman Author category at the inaugural edition of Bhopal Literature and Art Festival (BLF) .
- She has won the Sushila Devi Literature Award for her novel **Things to Leave Behind.**
- The shortlist books:
- Brothers (Manju Kapur)
- The Glass Bead Curtain (Lakshmi Kannan)

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- The Untitled (Gayathri Prabhu,)
- Son of the Thundercloud (Easterine Kire)
- Things to Leave Behind (Namita Gokhale)

Lifetime Achievement Award given to Filmmaker Buddhadeb Dasgupta by WBFJA in the third Cinemar Samabartan ceremony held in Kolkata

- National award-winning filmmaker Buddhadeb Dasgupta was conferred the Lifetime Achievement Award, in the name of late Satyajit Ray, by the West Bengal Film Journalists Association (WBFJA) in Kolkata.
- It was given in the third edition of the Cinemar Samabartan ceremony.
- As a director, he has won the National Film Award for Best Direction twice, for Uttara (2000) and Swapner Din (2005).

Adi Godrej Conferred ICSI Lifetime Award

- Industrialist and Godrej Group Chairman Adi Godrej has conferred the ICSIs Lifetime Achievement Award for **Translating Excellence in Corporate Governance into Reality.**
- The awards were instituted by The Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI), which is celebrating its golden jubilee.

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SPORTS

Pujara faces 1258 balls in Australia series, breaks Dravids record

- 30 years old Indian Batsman, Cheteshwar Pujara faced 1258 balls in the ongoing test series so far against Australia to become the batsman who had faced highest deliveries in a test series in Australia beating Indias Former Captain, Rahul Dravids record of 1203 balls.

Sydney and Brisbane chosen to host $15 million 24 team ATP Cup in 2020

- **Australian cities Sydney and Brisbane** have been announced as the first two host locations for the newest team event in mens tennis for the multi-million dollar ATP Cup from 2020.
- The third Australian city for the tournament is yet to be determined.

USA Cricket becomes ICC's 105th member

- The International Cricket Council (ICC) approved **USA Cricket** as its **105th** member, which is expected to open the door for T20 Internationals to be played in **Florida**, which has a large base of West Indies supporters.
- The USA Cricket Association had previously been an associate member of the ICC, but was suspended over governance issues for a third time in **2015** before being expelled in June 2017.

India's Mary Kom becomes world's top woman boxer

- **Mary Kom**, who had become the first ever woman boxer to win **six world championship** titles in November last year, has been ranked number one by the International Boxing Association (AIBA) in the light fly (**45-48kg**) category.
- The 35-year-old tops her weight division with 1700 points.
- Ukraine's 22-year-old boxer **Hanna Okhota** is ranked **second**, with 1100 points.

Novak Djokovic and Simona Halep were named top seeds for Australian Open

- The Serbian tennis player, **Novak Djokovic** and **Simona Halep**, the Romanian tennis player, were named top seeds for next weeks **Australian Open**.

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- Djokovic heads Rafael Nadal and defending champion Roger Federer. Halep takes the top seeding among the women courtesy of her world number one ranking, but she enters the tournament with only one match in four months under her belt after an injury lay-off

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OBITUARY

Jnanpith Winning Hindi Writer Krishna Sobti Passes Away

- Eminent Hindi author and essayist **Krishna Sobti** passed away in Delhi.
- She was 93. She was a recipient of many coveted awards like Sahitya Akademi, Jnanpith awards and was also offered Padma Bhushan, which she had declined.
- Some of her celebrated works include Daar Se Bichhudi, Mitro Marjani, Zindaginama, Dil-o-Danish, Badalom ke Ghere, Ai Ladki and Gujarat Pakistan Se Gujarat Hindustan.

Former Union Minister George Fernandes passed away

- **George Mathew Fernandes**, former Union Minister, passed away. He was an Indian trade unionist, politician, journalist, freethinker, and member of Rajya Sabha from Bihar.He was a key member of the **Janata Dal** and the founder of the **Samata Party.**He held ministerial portfolios including c**ommunications, industry, railways, and defence.**

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SUMMITS & CONFERENCE

Ninth International Micro Irrigation Conference Held in Aurangabad

- Ministry of Water resources and River development has organized 9th International Micro irrigation conference in Aurangabad, Maharashtra.
- The conference focused on the theme of **Micro Irrigation and Modern Agriculture.**

T.N. government signed 304 MoUs at the second edition of Global Investors Meet

- The **second edition of Global Investors Meet (GIM) 2019** was held at Chennai, Tamil Nadu. The T.N. government signed **304 Memoranda of Understanding** and agreements entailing investments to the tune of over **Rs.3,00,431 crore at GIM-2.**
- **About Global Investors Meet (GIM):**
- The first edition happened on 2015 at Chennai, Tamil Nadu
- The Second edition was held at Chennai
- This summit is to showcase the competitive strengths and opportunities in Tamil Nadu
- GIM 2019 provides an ideal platform for understanding Tamil Nadu as a preferred Investors Choice

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SCHEMES

Odisha CM announced interest-free loans for women self-help groups

- As part of the **Mission Shakti** scheme, Odisha Chief Minister **Naveen Patnaik** announced interest-free loans of up to **Rs 3 lakh** for the **women** self-help groups (WSHGs) in the state.
- There are around six lakh WSHGs in Odisha.
- He also distributed financial assistance of **Rs 3,000** each to six lakh WSHGs as part the state government's efforts to digitally empower women.
- He also announced seed money worth **15,000** for **new** SHGs and **3,000** to purchase **smartphones** for digital empowerment.
- He further announced a sum of **25 lakh** for the existing 338 Block Level Federations.

Farmers under KALIA scheme will get money by January 26

- Farmerswho have enrolled under Odishas **Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation (KALIA)** scheme in the first phase will receive monetary assistance by **January 26**. Around **12.4 lakh small and marginal farmers will get Rs.5,000** each for one crop as per the provisions of the scheme.
- Odishas Cooperation Minister **S.N.Patro** said that the financial assistance will be directly deposited in the bank accounts of the beneficiary farmers. He also added that farmers applying for enrolment in the scheme during the extended deadline till January 15 will be verified before the money is disbursed.

Tamil Nadu Cm inaugrated various project in the State

- Tamil Nadu **Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami** inaugurated a slew of **welfare schemes** through video conference from the Secretariat. The schemes included those to be implemented by the Municipal Administration Department, the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department and the Rural Development Department.
- He also inaugurated drinking water schemes catering to various parts of the State at a total cost of **Rs.169.72 crore**. While a scheme costing **Rs.70.50 crore** was inaugurated for the Dindigul Corporation, six such schemes for Kancheepuram,

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Ramanathapuram, Thanjavur and Theni were inaugurated at a cost of Rs. 79.13 crore. The Chief Minister also laid the foundation stone for the District Rural Development Agency in Kajamalai in Tiruchi district.

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APPOINTMENTS / RESIGN

Vinod Kumar Yadav appointed as Railway Board Chairman

- General Manager of South Central Railway, **Vinod Kumar Yadav**, has been appointed as **Chairman of Railway Board** and **ex-officio Principal Secretary** to Government of India.
- His appointment came after **Ashwani Lohani**s superannuation on Monday (31 December).
- Vinod Kumar Yadav belongs to the 1980 batch of Indian Railway Service of Electrical Engineers (IRSEE).

Axis Bank MD & CEO Shikha Sharma retires; Amitabh Chaudhry takes charge

- Amitabh Chaudhry, the former MD and CEO of **HDFC Standard Life Insurance** Company, was in September named the MD and CEO of **Axis Bank** for a period of three years.
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- Justice **Praveen Kumar** was sworn in as the acting Chief Justice of Andhra Pradesh HC, which also came into existence the same day.

Vivek Bhatia appointed as MD & CEO of Thyssenkrupp Industries India

- **Thyssenkrupp**, the German industrial giant, appointed **Vivek Bhatia** as the **Managing Director** (MD) & **Chief Executive Officer** (CEO) of

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Thyssenkrupp Industries India. Mr.Bhatia was earlier the CEO - Asia Pacific at Thyssenkrupp AG, driving group activities for all Thyssenkrupp companies in the region. Prior to joining Thyssenkrupp, Mr. Bhatia was earlier with Boston Consulting Group, India.

Sheikh Hasina sworn in as Bangladesh PM for 3rd consecutive term

- Sheikh Hasinas Awami League-led alliance won 288 of the 298 seats in the December 30 election.
- President **Abdul Hamid** administered the oath of office to 71-year-old Hasina at the Bangabhaban.
- This is Hasina's **fourth term** in office overall.
- Hasina will lead a Cabinet of 24 ministers, 19 ministers of state and three state ministers.
- Hasina was first elected prime minister in **1996** and then again in **2008** and **2014**.

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BOOKS & AUTHORS

Malala Yousafzai has written a new book titled We are Displaced

- **Malala Yousafzai,** the **Nobel Peace Prize winner** and Pakistani activist, has written a new book, titled **We are Displaced,** charting her experiences travelling the world and visiting refugee camps. Publishers Weidenfeld & Nicolson and Hachette India said that her travels through the refugee camps led her to reconsider her own displacement.
- In We are Displaced, Malala not only explores her own story of **adjusting to a new life while longing for home**, but she also shares the personal stories of some of the incredible girls she has met on her various journeys, girls who have lost their community, relatives and often the only world theyve ever known.

Nari-Shakti is the Oxford Dictionaries Hindi Word of the year for 2018

- The **Oxford Dictionaries** announced that the word Nari Shakti which is derived from Sanskrit has been chosen as the Hindi Word of the year for 2018.
- The Announcement was made during a session at Jaipur Literature Festival which is being held at Diggi Palace in Jaipur, Rajasthan.

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AGREEMENTS, MOU

Tamil Nadus PWD signed with Cornwell University

- The **Irrigated Agriculture Modernisation and Water-Bodies Restoration and Management (IAMWARM)** of Tamil Nadu signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Cornell University**. The MoU was signed by IAMWARM project director **Vibhu Nair** and executive dean John Pfeffer of the Cornell University in the presence of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami.
- The project will be implemented by the **Public Works Department**. The project is aimed at introducing **innovative approaches in water management.** Another aspect of the project is the introduction of high technology in horticulture

India and Mongolia Sign a Powerful MoU at ICMEI

- The **Embassy of Mongolia and International Chamber of Media and Entertainment Industry (ICMEI),** India have further strengthened the relationship between India and Mongolia by signing a MoU in the field of art and culture.
- The MoU was signed in the presence of H.E. Gonchig Ganbold Ambassador of Mongolia to India and Dr. Sandeep Marwah, President ICMEI.
- The MoU will enable the two countries to work together on different segments including print, radio, television, cinema, animation, Performing and Fine Arts, tourism, hospitality, education, environment, solar energy, skill development, PR events and advertising, Fashion and Design, and Journalism.
- During the event, the deserving students from Mongolia were handed over the first scholarship of a short-term course of Asian Academy of Film and Television which also includes boarding and lodging for three months.

Omega Healthcare inks MoU with IIIT-Bangalore

- **Omega Healthcare Management Services** signed a pact with IIIT-Bangalore for advanced use of latest technology in providing healthcare solutions.
- This MoU was signed to build industry-grade AI engines that can be embedded as part of Omegas business solutions to solve healthcare business challenges.

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VISITS BY PM / PRESIDENT

President of India Presents Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar

- **Shri Ram Nath Kovind**, the President of India, presented the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar 2019 at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi.
- The awards were presented in the presence of Smt Maneka Sanjay Gandhi, Union Minister for Women and Child Development and other dignitaries.
- The Awards were given in two categories- Bal Shakti Puraskar (erstwhile known as National Child Award) for which 26 children were shortlisted and Bal Kalyan Puraskar (erstwhile known as National Child Welfare Award) for which 2 individuals and 3 institutions were awarded.
- The Bal Shakti Puraskar award which is given in the field of Innovation, Social Service, Scholastic, Sports, Art & Culture and Bravery carries a cash prize of Rs. one lakh, book vouchers worth Rs. ten thousand, a certificate and a citation.
- The **Bal Kalyan Puraskar** which is given in the category of individual and institution consists of a cash prize of Rs. one lakh, a medal, a citation and a certificate for individual and consists of a cash prize of Rs. five lakh for the institution.

President Ram Nath Kovind to address nation on 70th Republic Day

- President **Ram Nath Kovind** will address the nation today on the eve of the 70th Republic Day.
- The address will be broadcast from 7 PM on the entire national network of All India Radio and telecast over all channels of Doordarshan in Hindi followed by the English version.
- AIR will broadcast regional language versions from 9:30 PM onwards on its respective regional networks.

Sahitya Akademi Award Winning Bengali Writer Atin Bandyopadhyay Passes Away

- Sahitya Akademi award winning Bengali writer Atin Bandyopadhyay passed away of brain stroke. Bandyopadhyay, who was 85was born in Dhaka in then undivided Bengal and had taken up various jobs as a sailor, school teacher, factory manager,

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journalist to finally became a writer.

- Winner of 2001 Sahitya Akademi award for his compilation of short stories Panchayati Galpo, Bandyopadhyay had also penned popular fiction pieces like Nilkantha Pakhir Khonje, Aloukik Jaljaan, Nil Timi, Ekti Jaler Rekha in his illustrious career spanning over decades.

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QUIZ CORNER

1) Who becomes first Indian wicket-keeper to claim 20 catches in Test series?

A.Rishabh Pant
B.Ajinkya Rahane
C.Naman Ojha
D.Dinesh Karthik

Answer A

2) Which of the following section of Indian Penal Code (IPC) can be used by transgenders to register complaints of sexual harassment?

A.Section 354C
B.Section 354D
C.Section 354A
D.Section 354B

Answer C

3) Which small finance Bank gets RBI nod to operate as scheduled bank?

A.ESAF small finance bank
B.Equitas Small Finance Bank
C.Dena Small Finance Bank
D.Finotech Small Finance bank

Answer A

4) AAAR okays ----- on inter-state office services?

A.GST
B.NHPCL
C.HPCL
D.RSPL

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Answer A

5) ------ promotes 2019 as year of investment in backdrop of wider business with India

A.Uzbekistan
B.Saudi Arabia
C.Denmark
D.Indonesia

Answer A

6) Which state government to create an Adhyatmik Vibhag(spiritual department) ?

A.Madhya Pradesh
B.Andhra Pradesh
C.Tamil Nadu
D.Kerala

Answer A

7) National Nritya Shiromani Award 2019 for -------?

A.Shweta
B.Vidhya
C.Anitha
D.Anindita

Answer D

8) Which cricket player equals Gangulys record with 11th away test win as captain?

A.Virat kohli
B.Rahul Dravid
C.Sourav Ganguly

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D.Ravichandran Ashwin

Answer A

9) Who won the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Award for the ICC Womens Cricketer of the Year?

A.Sophie Devine
B.Suzie Bates
C.Smriti Mandhana
D.Harmanpreet Kaur

Answer C

10) Who has been appointed as Chairman of Railway Board?

A.Ratan Lal
B.Lalit Chandra Trivedi
C.Ashwani Lohani
D.Vinod Kumar Yadav

Answer D

11) Which Indian airline gets Indias first A321Neo plane?

A.Air India
B.IndiGo
C.SpiceJet
D.Vistara

Answer B

12) Which state women form 620-km-long wall to uphold gender equality against Sabarimala protests?

A.Kerala
B.Andhra Pradesh
C.Bihar

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D.Himachal Pradesh

Answer A

13) Who launches Samwad with students to engage them on space science ?

A.Indian Space Research organisation (ISRO)
B.Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC)
C.Satish Dhawan Space Centre
D.North Eastern Space Centre

Answer A

14) Who is the head of the RBI's MSME (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises) panel?

A.Vikram Limaye
B.U.K. Sinha
C.Ajay Tyagi
D.Sethurathnam Ravi

Answer B

15) Which country Introduced GAFA Tax On Global Internet, Technology Firm?

A.France
B.Pakistan
C.India
D.saudi Arabia

Answer A

16) The merger of Dena Bank and Vijaya Bank with BoB will come into force on _____.

A.April 1, 2019
B.March 1, 2019

C.April 30, 2019
D.March 31, 2019

Answer A

17) What is the Tagline of Bank of Baroda?

A.A tradition of trust
B.Relationships beyond Banking
C.Your Trusted Family Bank
D.India's International Bank

Answer D

18) Which of the following has the most volcanic body in the solar system?

A.Io, Jupiter's moon
B.Phobos, Mars' moon
C.Titan, Saturn's moon
D.Deimos, Mars' moon

Answer A

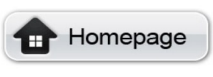
19) NCC Limited, an infrastructure firm, bagged order worth _____ from government agencies for water and environment division, roads division and building division?

A.Rs.1,590 crore
B.Rs.8,670.7 crore
C.Rs.2,890.7 crore
D.Rs.6,230.4 crore

Answer C

20) Veer Savarkar International Airport in --------- declared as an authorized Immigration Check post?

A.Port Blair



B.Sri Lanka
C.Pakistan
D.Indonesia

Answer A

21) Which cricketer fastest to 19000 international runs, breaks Sachins record?

A.Virat Kohli
B.Naresh Kumar
C.Sachin Tendulkar
D.Ravindran Ashwin

Answer A

22) Which of the following Atomic Power Station set world record for longest uninterrupted operation?

A.Kudankulam Atomic Power Station
B.Kakrapar Atomic Power Station
C.Kaiga Atomic Power Station
D.Narora Atomic Power Station

Answer C

23) Who has been appointed as the new Chief Justice of Pakistan?

A.Mushir Alam
B.Gulzar Ahmed
C.Saqib Nisar
D.Asif Saeed Khosa

Answer D

24) What type of improved aircraft did the Indian Air Force (IAF) ask Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) to make after getting clearance from

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military airworthiness certifier CEMILAC?

A.Light Combat Aircraft
B.Su-30MKI Aircraft
C.MiG-29 fighter aircraft
D.HA-31 Basant aircraft

Answer A

25) What is the theme of the 106th edition of the Indian Science Congress where PM stressed the State universities to focus on research in his speech?

A.Innovative Policies Science governance
B.Futute India Science and Technology
C.Sustainable Development: From vision to transition
D.Science, Management, and Innovation

Answer B

26) Where was the 106th edition of the Indian Science Congress held?

A.Haryana
B.Rajasthan
C.New Delhi
D.Punjab

Answer D

27) Who has been conferred with the National Geospatial Award for Excellence-2017 (Lifetime Achievement Award) by Indian Society for Remote Sensing?

A.Jayanta Kumar Ghosh
B.Debabrata Basu
C.K.R. Parthasarathy
D.Rajendra Bhatia

Answer A

28) Who won National Boxing Championships and moves to quarter finals?

A.Lovlina Borgohain
B.Mary kom
C.Suresh kumar
D.Nitish rajan

Answer A

29) Govt launches Green-Ag, GEF-assisted project, in partnership with ----------?

A.Food and Agriculture Organization
B.Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited
C.National Health mission
D.All India Institute of Medical Science

Answer A

30) Rishabh Pant 1st ever Indian wicketkeeper to slam Test ton in ---------?

A.Australia
B.New zealand
C.Pakistan
D.Kenya

Answer A

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