

Abhyaas Newsboard...

For the quintessential test prep student

Persons in News

1. Former SC Judge KS Radhakrishnan appointed as Member of Commonwealth Secretariat Arbitral Tribunal, London. He will serve 4-year term from till May 2023. Commonwealth Secretariat Arbitral Tribunal resolves disputes of the Commonwealth organisations.
2. Chief Economic Advisor (CEA) to Central government, Krishnamurthy Subramanian is appointed as 12th member of Advisory Council of 15th Finance Commission. First FC was constituted under K.C. Neogy on 6th April, 1952. 15th Finance Commission was constituted in November 2017, to be active between April 2020 - March 2025. It is chaired by N. K. Singh. 14th Finance Commission is headed by Y V Reddy.
3. Former Sri Lanka Cricketer Kumar Sangakkara appointed as President of Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) in England. He became first non-British to head the Club. Archery Association of India (AAI) named Sunil Sharma as its acting president, to start election process of New President. It was followed after resignation of BVP Rao as President of AAI.
4. "Flipkart-owned fashion e-commerce platform Myntra appointed Virat Kohli and Anushka Sharma as its first ever official brand ambassadors. Merchant service and UPI payments app BharatPe appointed Bollywood actor Salman Khan as its brand ambassador. ""
5. Naruhito became Japan's new Emperor after historic abdication of his father Akihito (First Abdication in over 200 years). It marks end of Heisei Era and Beginning of Reiwa Era. Naruhito is Japan's 126th emperor. Term "Reiwa" means "Beautiful Harmony".
6. Serbia's Dragan Mihailovic has been appointed as new head coach of the Indian Men's Volleyball team by Volleyball Federation of India (VFI). Igor Stimac (Croatia) has been appointed as the coach of the Indian men's football team.
7. Thailand crowned its new King Maha Vajiralongkorn, marking first ascension of a new monarch in seven decades. King Vajiralongkorn is tenth monarch of Chakri dynasty, which has reigned since 1782. Last coronation was held in 1950 for king's father Bhumibol Adulyadej.
8. Canadian Rapper Drake has set a record with most wins ever, after winning 12 honours at Billboard Music Awards. He surpassed Taylor Swift's record of 23 awards, to become top award recipient in Billboard Music Awards history.
9. "Former ISRO chairman A S Kiran Kumar has been conferred with France's highest civilian honour, Chevalier de l'Ordre national de la Legion d'Honneur, for his contribution to India-France space cooperation.""
10. Indian-origin journalist in South Africa, G D Robert Govender has been honoured with V K Krishna Menon Award 2019 in United Kingdom for his contribution as pioneer of decolonised journalism. He is the first person to be honoured with this award posthumously.
11. India's Jagjit Pavadia was on May 7, 2019 re-elected for another term to the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB). The 60-year-old won the election of the narcotics control board with the highest number of votes at 44. The announcement of her victory was made by India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Syed Akbaruddin after the election results were announced.
12. Former Supreme Court judge, Justice (Retired) KS Radhakrishnan was appointed as the Member of the Commonwealth Secretariat Arbitral Tribunal of London. He will serve a 4-year term.
13. Indian actress Dia Mirza and Alibaba chief Jack Ma have been appointed by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres as the new advocates for the UN's ambitious Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They will be among the new class of 'SDG Advocates', which includes 17 influential public figures.
14. India backs Nigerian Ambassador to the United Nations, Tijjani Muhammad-Bande as the next President of the United Nations General Assembly. The election to the post of UNGA's President will be held in June 2019.

15. Retired Supreme Court Justice Madan Bhimrao Lokur has been appointed to the Supreme Court of Fiji's non-resident panel for the duration of three years. Justice Lokur received the appointment letter for the same on December 31, 2018, a day after he retired from the Supreme Court of India.
16. RBI appoints former deputy governor R Gandhi on board of Yes Bank. It is rare for the RBI to make a special board appointment.
17. UPI payments app BharatPe appointed Bollywood actor Salman Khan as its brand ambassador. The campaign will be focused towards educating merchants and users about UPI payments.
18. Pakistan appointed Mueenul Haq as the High Commissioner to India. Haq succeeds Sohail Mehmood. Haq, a career diplomat, is currently serving as Ambassador to France
19. South African President Cyril Ramaphosa has been re-elected to the Presidential position by the lawmakers of the nation. The Members of Parliament from the African National Congress chose the head of state in the parliament's first post-election sitting. The African National Congress party won the ballot with 57.5 per cent of the vote, its thinnest majority since the end of apartheid.
20. Scott Morrison has been sworn in as the Australia's Prime Minister, 11 days after retaining the position in the country's general election. He was sworn in by Queen Elizabeth's official representative in Australia, Governor-General Sir Peter Cosgrove, at a ceremony in Canberra. Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack was also sworn in.
21. President Muhammadu Buhari has been sworn-in for his second term as President of Nigeria in a ceremony at the Eagle Square in Abuja. He won 56% of the votes to defeat his main rival Atiku Abubakar of the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) in the 2019 February election.
22. On 30 May 2019, James Marape has been nominated, elected, and sworn-in as the 8th Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea (PNG). He is a former finance minister and critic of a major global gas development deal. His appointment comes after the outgoing leader Peter O'Neill resigned recently. Papua New Guinea is a South Pacific nation of 7.3 million people.
23. Admiral Karambir Singh has taken charge as the 24th Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS) from Adm. Sunil Lanba, who stepped down upon retirement. He is the first helicopter pilot of the Navy to become the CNS. Prior to this post, Adm. Singh was the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief (FOC-in-C) of the Eastern Naval Command, headquartered in Visakhapatnam.
24. Joko Widodo has been officially re-elected to a second term as President of Indonesia. His win is a victory for stability and continuity in Indonesia, Southeast Asia's largest country and a geopolitical anchor for the region. Widodo and his vice-presidential running mate Ma'ruf Amin won the election by a 55.5% to 44.5% margin over rival Prabowo Subianto and Sandiaga Uno.
25. Flight Lieutenant Bhawana Kanth, who belongs to Darbhanga (Bihar), has created history by becoming the India's first female fighter of the Indian Air Force (IAF) to qualify to undertake combat missions for day operations on a fighter aircraft. This comes after she completed her day operational training as a fighter pilot on the MiG-21 Bison aircraft.
26. The 1267 Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee of the United Nations Security Council on May 1, 2019 designated Pakistan's Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) chief Masood Azhar as a Global Terrorist. With the addition of Azhar to the Al-Qaida Sanctions List, he will be subject to the assets freeze, travel ban and arms embargo. The Sanctions List currently contains the names of 262 individuals and 83 entities.
27. Former US President Barack Obama is the world's most followed politician with a total following of 182.7 million, as per the report released by digital marketing platform SEMrush on May 7, 2019. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the second most followed politician globally.
28. Father of modern legal education in India, NR Madhava Menon passed away recently. He was 84. Menon conceptualised 5-year integrated LLB course, replacing the earlier 3-year course.
29. Article 'Coalgate 2.0', authored by Nileena M. S. and published in March 2018 issue of 'The Caravan' magazine, won Asian College of Journalism's Award for Investigative Journalism, 2018.
30. Pakistani Cricketer Shahid Afridi's autobiography titled, 'Game Changer' has been released.

Places in News

1. Indonesia on April 29, 2019 announced its plans to move its capital away from Jakarta. President Joko Widodo's government plans to establish a new Capital out of the crowded Java Island to ensure more equitable development of the country amid environmental concerns and overcrowding issues.
2. Singapore's Parliament has passed a new law, the Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Bill, to fight the menace of fake news. The new legislation will enable the ruling government to order social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter to put up warnings next to posts that are deemed to be false or get them taken down in extreme cases.
3. Ireland has become the second nation after Britain to declare a climate emergency. The Irish Parliament accepted an amendment to a parliamentary report declaring a "climate emergency" and calling on parliament to examine how the Irish government can improve its response to the issue of biodiversity loss without a vote on May 9.
4. Vietnam announced that it will mobilise its military and police forces to help combat the outbreak of African swine fever. The virus has already resulted in the culling of about four per cent of the country's pig herd.
5. Alabama's Senate has approved a stringent abortion law, which would make performing an abortion at any stage of pregnancy a crime punishable by up to 99 years or life in prison.
6. Taiwan's parliament has become the first in Asia to legalise same-sex marriage. The move marks a huge victory for the LGBT community of the island nation.
7. Chhattisgarh police for first time inducted women commandos in District Reserve Guard (DRG), its frontline anti-Naxal force, with 30 women troops.

Events of Significance

1. The Supreme Court of India in a landmark judgement on April 30, 2019, ruled that any relative of a woman, who is undergoing cruelty and dowry harassment by her husband or in laws, can file a complaint against them.
2. The MANAV: Human Atlas Initiative was launched recently by the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) working under Ministry Of Science and Technology. This human tissue mapping project has been launched to improve understanding on human physiology.
3. The Delhi High Court has ruled that the United Nations (UN) is not a State under Article 12 of the Constitution of India and is not amenable to its jurisdiction under Article 226 of the Constitution. The judgment was passed by a single-judge Bench of Justice Suresh Kumar Kait in a petition concerning the immunity enjoyed by the UNO under the United Nations (Privileges and Immunities) Act, 1947. The petition was filed by a former UNO employee.
4. Central government asked to make it mandatory for all Electric Vehicles (EVs) to use the green number plates, irrespective of year of buying. It will help provide preferential treatment to vehicles with no carbon emissions, including parking, free entry in congested areas and concession high tolls.
5. The 2019 Indian general election was held in seven phases from 11 April to 19 May 2019 to constitute the 17th Lok Sabha. The counting of votes took place on 23 May. The Bharatiya Janata Party won 303 seats, further increasing its substantial majority and the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance won 353 seats. The Indian National Congress party won 52 seats, and the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance won 91. Narendra Modi was sworn in for his second term as the Prime Minister of India, on 30th May 2019.
6. The United States is deploying the USS Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group and a bomber task force to the Middle East in response to a "number of troubling and escalatory indications and warnings" from Iran, US national security adviser John Bolton announced on May 5, 2019.
7. On May 7, 2019, India was re-elected as an Observer to the Arctic Council. India first got the Observer status to the Council in the year 2013 during the Kiruna Ministerial meeting held in Sweden.
8. US President Donald Trump has imposed stricter sanctions on Iran's iron, copper, steel and aluminium industry. The move aims to stop Iran acquiring a nuclear weapon and intercontinental ballistic missiles.

9. The United States recently removed India from its currency monitoring watchlist. The US placed India, China, Japan, Germany, Switzerland and South Korea in the bi-annual currency watch list in October 2018.
10. The Prime Minister of United Arab Emirates (UAE), Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum has launched the permanent residency system "Golden Card" for expats investors, entrepreneurs, specialized talents and researchers to be a part of the UAE's success story. The move is expected to attract more Indian professionals and businessmen to the Gulf nation. The new permanent visa will generate foreign investment, encourage entrepreneurship, and attract top engineers, scientists and students.
11. The Indian Navy on May 6, 2019 launched the fourth Scorpene class Submarine of Project 75 'INS Vela' at the Kanhoji Angre Wet Basin of Mazagon Dock Limited at Mumbai, Maharashtra. The submarine will now undergo rigorous trials and tests in both harbour and sea phases before induction into the Indian Navy.
12. The ISIS has claimed to have established its new province in India's Jammu and Kashmir, called "Wilayah of Hind". The first of its kind announcement comes after clashes between militants and security forces in Kashmir on May 10.
13. The Indian Army is commemorating 2019 as the 'Year of Next of Kin' and plans to reach out to the next of kin of battle casualties.
14. The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully flight tested the High-speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT), ABHYAS. The flight test was conducted from the Interim Test Range, Chandipur, Odisha.
15. Indian Naval ships INS Kolkata and INS Shakti would participate in annual bilateral naval exercise between India and Singapore – SIMBEX-2019. Along with INS Kolkata and INS Shakti, Indian long range maritime patrol aircraft Poseidon-8I (P8I) will also participate in SIMBEX-19. This naval exercise is scheduled from May 16 to May 22, 2019.
16. Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) recently announced for its upcoming mission over next 10 years. Apart from much awaited and ambitious Chandrayaan-2 some other mega missions will be conducted. Among these seven mega missions ISRO has defined XPoSat and Aditya-L1 missions only.
17. The Indo-Myanmar coordinated patrol (IMCOR) began on May 20, 2019 at Andaman and Nicobar Command. For this purpose, Myanmar Navy Ship UMS King TabinShweHtee (773) and UMS Inlay (OPV-54) arrived at Port Blair.
18. Defence Research and Defence Organisation (DRDO) successfully flight tested a 500 kg class Inertial Guided Bomb (IGB) from Sukhoi combat jet from the Pokhran test range in Rajasthan. The guided bomb achieved the desired range and had hit the target with high precision successfully.
19. Russian AN-32 aircraft of the Indian Air Force (IAF) was certified by CEMILAC to fly on a blended bio-jet fuel. The fuel consists of 10 percent tree-derived and 90 percent conventional aviation fuel.
20. Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully test fired AKASH-MK-1S missile from ITR, Chandipur, Odhisa. Akash MK 1S is an upgraded version of existing Akash missile with indigenous technology. Akash MK-1S is a surface to air missile.
21. The first-of-its-kind naval drill exercise 'Pacific Vanguard' has been kick started by the United States, Japan, South Korea and Australia near Guam, United States. The "Pacific Vanguard" drill brings together more than 3,000 sailors from the four countries to sharpen skills and strengthen practical cooperation at sea. The drills will focus on live fire exercises, defensive counter-air operations, anti-submarine warfare, and replenishment at sea.
22. Russia has recently launched the third and final Project 22220 LK-60Ya-class nuclear-powered icebreaker – the Ural - at the Baltic Shipyard in St Petersburg to open up Arctic shipping routes. The ship is one of a trio that when completed will be the largest and most powerful icebreakers in the world. It is part of an ambitious programme to renew and expand its fleet of the vessels in order to improve its ability to tap the Arctic's commercial potential.
23. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has successfully launched its newest microwave earth observation satellite RISAT-2B from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) at Sriharikota through its trusted workhorse PSLV-C46. The 615-kg RISAT-2B meant for application in fields such as surveillance, agriculture, forestry and disaster management support. It will replace the RISAT-2, which was launched in 2009.
24. NASA has recently unveiled the calendar for the "Artemis" program that will return astronauts to the Moon for the first time in half a century. It will also include 8 scheduled launches and a mini-station in lunar orbit by 2024. The

original lunar missions were named for Apollo -- Artemis was his twin sister in Greek mythology, and the goddess of hunting, wilderness and the Moon. The acronym 'ARTEMIS' stands for 'Acceleration, Reconnection, Turbulence, and Electrodynamics of the Moon's Interaction with the Sun'.

25. After serving the Indian Navy for 36 years, the front-line missile destroyer INS Ranjit will be decommissioned on May 6 at the naval dockyard at Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh. The ship was commissioned in the fleet of Indian Navy on September 15, 1983.
26. The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) approved the merger of IndusInd Bank with Bharat Financial Inclusion (BFIL). The merger will be completed within 2-4 weeks. Post merger, the BFIL will become a subsidiary of the IndusInd Bank.
27. Google has suspended all business with Huawei that requires the transfer of hardware, software and technical services and cancelled its Android license.
28. Team Caeli' from India comprising of three students namely Bharat Sundal, Aakash Bhadana and Vasu Kaushik emerged as First Runner-up (second position) in Microsoft's Imagine Cup World Championship final in Seattle (US). They won for developing "Caeli", world's first smart automated anti-pollution and drug delivery mask. Caeli has several intelligent automated features, specially designed for asthmatic patients.
29. World Press Freedom Day was observed on May 3, 2019 which was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in December 1993, following the recommendation of UNESCO's General Conference. The theme of World Press Freedom Day 2019 is, Media for Democracy: Journalism and Elections in Times of Disinformation.
30. The National Dengue Day is observed on May 16 every year in India, with the recommendation of Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The day aims to create awareness about dengue and calls to intensify preventive measures and preparedness for the control of disease.
31. World Metrology Day is observed every year on 20 May to commemorate the signing of the Metre Convention in 1875. The theme of the 2019 World Metrology Day was 'The International System of Units – Fundamentally better'.
32. The Menstrual Hygiene Day 2019 was observed on May 28, 2019 with the theme 'It's Time for Action!' The day aims to ensure no girl is left behind when it comes to menstrual hygiene and menstrual education.
33. The International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers is observed every year on May 29 to pay tribute to the invaluable contribution of civilian personnel and to honour over 3,800 peacekeepers who sacrificed their lives while rendering peacekeeping services.
34. The World No Tobacco Day 2019 was observed on May 31, 2019 with key focus on "tobacco and lung health."
35. India has been ranked 43rd most competitive economy in the 2019 edition of the IMD World Competitiveness Rankings on the back of its robust economic growth, a large labour force and its huge market size. In the 2019 rankings, India has scored well on several economic parameters and tax policies but has lagged in terms of public finance, societal framework, education infrastructure, health and environment. Singapore has topped the index, followed by Hong Kong SAR and United States.
36. Vice President of India, M. Venkaiah Naidu has called for protecting Ongole cattle breed on May 20, 2019. Vice President Venkaiah Naidu released a compendium on Ongole breed of cattle at Vijayawada recently.

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* We are making some updates to the monthly Crossword, to make it more interactive and user friendly. This will take some time, and till then no Crosswords will be released. We will be back with the updated version soon!