

# Abhyaas Newsboard...

*For the quintessential test prep student*

## 1. Bodo Language



Bodo language is one of the key thrust areas in the Bodo Accord which was signed recently.

### More On This:

Estimated to have 1.5 million speakers (Census 2011), Bodo is listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. It is spoken in Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Meghalaya, and West Bengal.

While Bodo is officially written in the Devanagari script, the language has a history of having been written in at least three different scripts — until in 1974, the Government recognised Devanagari as its official script. In the first decade of the 20th century, Bodos started writing in the Assamese/Bangla script. Then they also used Roman Script. In the pre-13th century era, it was called Deodhai.

- Promises in the accord regarding Bodo language:
- It was only in 2003, under the then Bodo Accord, that the language was listed in the Eighth Schedule. And it was the first tribal language to be included in the Eight Schedule.
- In Assam, it has enjoyed the status of official associate language in undivided Goalpara district since 1986.
- Now the 2020 Accord makes Bodo the associate official language throughout Assam. The new Accord also promises to establish a separate directorate for Bodo medium schools, provincialise schools and colleges in the BTAD (Bodoland Territorial Autonomous District) and establish a Cultural Complex-cum-Centre of Excellence in Kokrajhar for protection and promotion of the language.

## 2. Hampi



SC backs move of Karnataka government to demolish restaurants near Hampi site. The court concluded that the constructions were in violation of the Mysore Ancient and Historical Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act of 1961.

### More On This:

Previously, the Karnataka High Court had held that the Hampi World Heritage Area Management Authority was empowered to order the demolition of the illegal buildings.

### About Hampi:

- It is a UNESCO world heritage site. It was a part of the Mauryan Empire back in the third century BC.
- Hampi was the capital city during the four different dynasties altogether in the Vijayanagar city that came into existence in the year 1336 AD.

- The Vijayanagara Empire reached unfathomable heights under the guidance of King Krishnadeva Raya of the Tuluva Dynasty. 'Kishkindha Kaand' in Ramayana has special significance concerning Hampi.
- It is located near the Tungabhadra river. By 1500 CE, Hampi-Vijayanagara was the world's second-largest medieval-era city after Beijing, and probably India's richest at that time, attracting traders from Persia and Portugal. It has been described by UNESCO as an "austere, grandiose site" of more than 1,600 surviving remains of the last great Hindu kingdom in South India.

### 3. Konark Sun Temple



A plan to restore and preserve the nearly 800-year-old Konark Sun Temple in Odisha would be drawn up soon, after a two-day conference of experts at the end of the month, Union Culture Minister Prahlad Singh Patel said.

#### More On This:

- The temple had been filled with sand and sealed by the British authorities in 1903 in order to stabilise the structure. A scientific study was carried out by the Roorkee-based Central Building Research Institute from 2013 till 2018 to ascertain the temple's structural stability as well as the status of the filled-in sand.
  - This Temple was built in the 13th century, the Konark temple was conceived as a gigantic chariot of the Sun God, with 12 pairs of exquisitely ornamented wheels pulled by seven horses.
  - It was built by King Narasimhadeva I, the great ruler of Ganga dynasty.
  - The temple is included in UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1984 for its architectural greatness and also for the sophistication and abundance of sculptural work.
  - The temple is perfect blend of Kalinga architecture, heritage, exotic beach and salient natural beauty.
- It is protected under the National Framework of India by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act (1958) and its Rules (1959).

### 4. Kambala



After Srinivas Gowda created a storm by covering 100 metres in 9.55 seconds recently, another Kambala runner Nishant Shetty has now overtaken the former by completing the same distance in 9.51 seconds.

#### More On This:

- Kambala is traditional slush track buffalo race held annually in coastal districts of Karnataka to entertain rural people of the area. Slushy/marshy paddy field track is used for Kambala. The sports season generally starts in November and lasts till March.
- Over the years, it has however become an organised sport with animal rights activists claiming that the buffaloes run in the race due to fear of being beaten, which the organizers dismiss, saying no violence is involved and that several modifications had been made to ensure that it is an animal friendly event.

## 5. Uniform Civil Code



Last week, while hearing a matter relating to properties of a Goan, the Supreme Court described Goa as a “shining example” with a Uniform Civil Code, observed that the founders of the Constitution had “hoped and expected” a Uniform Civil Code for India but there has been no attempt at framing one.

### More On This:

Uniform Civil Code is a generic set of governing laws for every citizen without taking into consideration the religion.

- Article 44 of the Constitution says that there should be a Uniform Civil Code. According to this article, “The State shall endeavor to secure for the citizens a uniform civil code throughout the territory of India”. Since the Directive Principles are only guidelines, it is not mandatory to use them.
- Indian laws do follow a uniform code in most civil matters – Indian Contract Act, Civil Procedure Code, Sale of Goods Act, Transfer of Property Act, Partnership Act, Evidence Act etc. States, however, have made hundreds of amendments and therefore in certain matters, there is diversity even under these secular civil laws. Recently, several states refused to be governed by the uniform Motor Vehicles Act, 2019.
- If the framers of the Constitution had intended to have a Uniform Civil Code, they would have given exclusive jurisdiction to Parliament in respect of personal laws, by including this subject in the Union List. But “personal laws” are mentioned in the Concurrent List.

Need of the hour is the codification of all personal laws so that prejudices and stereotypes in every one of them would come to light and can be tested on the anvil of fundamental rights of the Constitution.

## 6. Female Genital Mutilation



Every year, February 6 is observed as the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

### More on This:

It is the name given to procedures that involve altering or injuring the female genitalia for non-medical or cultural reasons, and is recognised internationally as a violation of human rights and the health and integrity of girls and women.

- Most girls and women who have undergone FGM live in sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab States, but it is also practiced in some countries in Asia, Eastern Europe and Latin America.
- Countries where FGM is performed include Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, Egypt, Oman, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Iraq, Iran, Georgia, Russian Federation, Columbia and Peru, among others.
- As per the World Health Organization (WHO), globally, over 200 million girls alive today have suffered FGM in over 30 countries.

The economic costs of treating health complications arising out of FGM amount to roughly \$1.4 billion for 2018 for 27 countries where FGM is performed. If the prevalence remains the same, the amount is expected to rise up to \$2.3 billion by 2047.

## 7. HC seeks govt. stand on plea to ban acid sale



The Delhi High Court has sought the State government's stand on a plea by an acid attack survivor, who has alleged that the chemical was easily available despite the Supreme Court's directions to regulate its sale. She also alleged that the statutory rules which regulate the sale of acid were not being implemented by the authorities.

### More on This:

- Acid violence is often referred to as “weapon of misogyny”, “result of toxic masculinity” and “weapon of patriarchy” for targeting women who have tried to assert their agency by refusing to pay dowry, asking for their property rights, defying religious norms or social custom, or laughing loudly, refusing to wear hijab, or choosing to wear jeans and most commonly rejecting a love proposal.
- Acid violence is a premeditated attack born out of a feeling of vengeance intended to put the victim who dares to challenge the attacker.
- Till 2013, there was no separate provision in the Indian Penal Code to charge those accused of acid attacks, nor were there rules restricting sale and purchase of acid.

But after the Supreme Court directives to regulate the sale of harmful substances like acid, the government declared acid attacks a cognizable offence under **Section 326 (A) of the Indian Penal Code** with punishment up to 10 years. The Supreme Court ordered strict restrictions on the sale of acid which were seldom followed.

## 7. Permanent Commission for Women



The Supreme Court has brought women officers in 10 streams of the Army on a par with their male counterparts in all respects, setting aside longstanding objections of the government.

The court ordered the government to implement its judgment in three months.

### More On This:

- The Supreme Court rejected arguments against greater role for women officers, saying these violated equality under law.
- The biological argument was also rejected as disturbing.
- The court has rejected government's arguments, saying they are based on sex stereotypes premised on assumptions about socially ascribed roles of gender which discriminate against women.
- It has also said that it only shows the need “to emphasise the need for change in mindsets to bring about true equality in the Army”.

The case was first filed in the Delhi High Court by women officers in 2003, and had received a favourable order in 2010. But the order was never implemented, and was challenged in the Supreme Court by the government.

## 8. Supreme Court upholds changes to SC/ST atrocities law



The Supreme Court has upheld a 2018 amendment which barred persons accused of committing atrocities against those belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes from getting anticipatory bail.

### More On This:

The Court upheld the constitutionality of Section 18A of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Amendment Act of 2018. The sole purpose of Section 18A was to nullify a controversial March 20, 2018, judgment of the Supreme Court diluting the stringent anti-bail provisions of the original Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act of 1989.

- A High Court would also have an “inherent power” to grant anticipatory bail in cases in which prima facie an offence under the anti-atrocities law is not made out.
- Besides, a High Court, in “exceptional cases”, could also quash cases to prevent the misuse of the anti-atrocities law.
- However, the courts should take care to use this power to grant anticipatory bail “only sparingly and in very exceptional cases”. It should not become a norm lest it leads to miscarriage of justice and abuse of the process of law.

In March 2018, Supreme Court diluted the stringent provisions of SC/ST Act (Subhash Kashinath Mahajan v. State of Maharashtra). The verdict saw a huge backlash across the country. The government filed a review petition in the Supreme Court and subsequently amended the 1989 Act back to its original form.

## 9. Delimitation of Constituencies



About six months after the State of Jammu and Kashmir was split into the Union Territories of J&K and Ladakh, the government has moved to start the delimitation of Assembly constituencies in J&K.

### More On This:

Bifurcation of J&K into two UTs has led to redrawing of Assembly constituency boundaries. While, the UT of Ladakh will not have its own legislature, J&K will. This would be similar to Puducherry or Delhi.

Such delimitation was also necessitated in 2014 when Andhra Pradesh and Telangana were bifurcated.

- The new state assembly shall have 114 seats (currently 107), out of which only 90 will be open for elections, and the remaining 24 will be shadow seats reserved for the areas of the erstwhile state that have been occupied by Pakistan (PoJK).
- For the delimitation exercise, the population figures of 2011 census shall be taken as the basis.
- The J&K Representation of the People Act 1957 has now been invalidated and, instead, delimitation will be done as per the Representation of the People Act, 1950 (as amended from time to time) and provisions of Sections 59, 60 of Act 34 of 2019.

According to the Delimitation Commission Act, 2002, the Delimitation Commission appointed by the Centre has to have three members: a serving or retired judge of the Supreme Court as the chairperson, and the Chief Election Commissioner or Election Commissioner nominated by the CEC and the State Election Commissioner as ex-officio members.



## 10. Private member's Bill



Four Members of Parliament are ready with Private Member's Bill in the Lok Sabha offering a way out for the central government to deal with high unemployment.

Who is a Private Member?

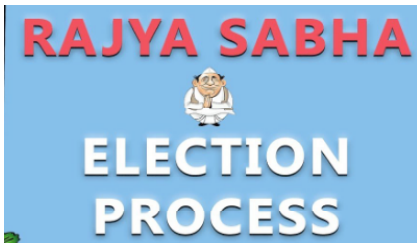
Any MP who is not a Minister is referred to as a private member.

### More On This:

- Unemployment Allowance Bill 2019 propose doling out some form of unemployment allowance to jobless citizens.
- Financial Assistance to Unemployed Post-Graduates Bill 2019 restricts the unemployment allowances to unemployed postgraduates only.
- Unemployed Youth (Allowance and Employment Opportunities) Bill 2019 eyes the twin-purpose of generating gainful employment opportunities and payment of unemployment allowance.
- Another Unemployment Allowance Bill proposes unemployment allowances for jobless youth until they get gainful employment.

As per PRS Legislative, no private member's Bill has been passed by Parliament since 1970. To date, Parliament has passed 14 such Bills, six of them in 1956. In the 14th Lok Sabha, of the over 300 private member's Bills introduced, roughly four per cent were discussed, the remaining 96 per cent lapsed without a single dialogue.

## 11. Elections to Rajya Sabha



The biennial elections for 55 Rajya Sabha seats will take place on March 26, 2020. The announcement was made by the Election Commission recently.

### More On This:

The Constitution provides that the Rajya Sabha shall consist of 250 members, of which 12 members shall be nominated by the President from amongst persons having special knowledge or practical experience in respect of such matters as literature, science, art and social service; and not more than 238 representatives of the States and of the Union Territories.

- Members representing States are elected by elected members of legislative assemblies of the States in accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote.
- Members representing Union Territories are chosen in such manner as Parliament may by law prescribe.

The Rajya Sabha is not subject to dissolution; one-third of its members retire every second year. According to Section 154 of the Representation of the People Act 1951, a member chosen to fill a casual vacancy will serve for the remainder of his predecessor's term of office. Members of a state's Legislative Assembly vote in the Rajya Sabha elections in what is called proportional representation with the single transferable vote (STV) system. Each MLA's vote is counted only once.

## 12. Finance Commission of India



The report of the Fifteenth Finance Commission, along with an Action Taken Report, has been tabled in Parliament. The Commission, headed by N K Singh, had submitted its Report to the President in December 2019.

### More On This:

- The Finance Commission is constituted by the President under article 280 of the Constitution, mainly to give its recommendations on distribution of tax revenues between the Union and the States and amongst the States themselves.
- Two distinctive features of the Commission's work involve redressing the vertical imbalances between the taxation powers and expenditure responsibilities of the centre and the States respectively and equalization of all public services across the States.

Finance commissions have over the past several decades adopted different approaches with regard to principles of tax devolution, grants to be given to states and fiscal consolidation issues. In other words, there has to be continuity and change between finance commissions.

## 13. Law commission of India



The Union Cabinet has approved the creation of the 22nd Law Commission, which advises the government on complex legal issues. The term of the previous law panel had ended in August last year. With the cabinet approval, the law ministry will now notify the new panel, which will have a term of three years.

### More On This:

- The Law Commission shall, on a reference made to it by the Central Government or suo motu, undertake research in law and review of existing laws in India for making reforms and enacting new legislation.
- It shall also undertake studies and research for bringing reforms in the justice delivery systems for elimination of delay in procedures, speedy disposal of cases, reduction in cost of litigation, etc.
- It is an executive body established by an order of the Government of India.
- Originally formed in 1955, the commission is reconstituted every three years and so far, 277 reports have been submitted to the government.
- The last Law Commission, under Justice B.S. Chauhan (retd.), had submitted reports and working papers on key issues such as simultaneous elections to the Lok Sabha and the Assemblies and a uniform civil code.
- Prior to independence, the First Law Commission was established in 1834 by the British Government under the Chairmanship of Lord Macaulay.

#### 14. East Asia Summit



India is set to host an East Asia Summit conference this week in Chennai with a focus on maritime security cooperation and tackling challenges in the maritime domain. It will be organised by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), in partnership with the governments of Australia and Indonesia.

##### More On This:

The Conference is expected to serve as a platform for free and open dialogue among all the EAS partners on various issues of maritime security cooperation, and to come up with useful suggestions on tackling challenges in the maritime domain in a cooperative manner.

- This conference is the fourth in a series of EAS Maritime Security Conferences organised by the Indian government — the first conference was organised in New Delhi in November 2015, the second in Goa in November 2016 and the third in Bhubaneswar in June 2018.
- EAS is an initiative of ASEAN and is based on the premise of the centrality of ASEAN.
- It is a forum held annually by leaders of 18 countries in the East Asian, Southeast Asian and South Asian regions.
- EAS meetings are held after annual ASEAN leaders' meetings.
- The first summit was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 14 December 2005.

There are six priority areas of regional cooperation within the framework of the EAS. These are – Environment and Energy, Education, Finance, Global Health Issues and Pandemic Diseases, Natural Disaster Management, and ASEAN Connectivity. India endorses regional collaboration in all six priority areas.

#### 15. BIMSTEC



The 2nd Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Disaster Management Exercise was recently conducted in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. The focus of the 2nd edition of Exercise is on heritage structures' protection.

##### More On This:

- The first edition of the BIMSTEC DMEx was also hosted by India in 2017 with the focus on testing the region's preparedness and resilience towards effective activation of inter-Governmental interaction/dialogue/agreements for immediate deployment of regional resources for disaster response.
- In an effort to integrate the region, the grouping was formed in 1997, originally with Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka and Thailand, and later included Myanmar, Nepal and Bhutan.

BIMSTEC, which now includes five countries from South Asia and two from ASEAN, is a bridge between South Asia and Southeast Asia. It includes all the major countries of South Asia, except Maldives, Afghanistan and Pakistan.



## 16. Brexit Deal



Britain has officially left the European Union (EU) and has become the first country to leave the 28-member bloc. The UK stopped being a member of the European Union (EU) after 23:00 GMT on 31 January 2020.

### More On This:

The EU is an economic and political union involving 28 European countries. It allows free trade, which means goods can move between member countries without any checks or extra charges. The EU also allows free movement of people, to live and work in whichever country they choose.

- The UK joined in 1973 (when it was known as the European Economic Community) and it will be the first member state to withdraw.
- After the UK formally leaves the EU, there is still a lot to talk about and months of negotiation will follow.
- While the UK has agreed the terms of its EU departure, both sides still need to decide what their future relationship will look like.

During the 11-month transition period, the UK will continue to follow all of the EU's rules and its trading relationship will remain the same.

## 17. UK's points-based visa policy



UK has launched the new points-based immigration system, which intends to change the way migrants will come to the UK to work, study, visit or join their family.

### More On This:

Effective from January 1, 2021, the new immigration system affects the EU citizens, who will now be treated at par with non-EU citizens.

- Non-EU citizens already follow a points-based system to migrate to the UK.
- The implementation of the points-based system does not change the status of those EU citizens already in the UK as per the European Union Settlement Scheme (EUSS) and those whose status under EUSS is settled.
- The points-based immigration system will take effect from January 1, 2021 and will end free movement between the UK and EU, treating both EU and non-EU citizens equally. Under this system, points will be assigned for specific skills, qualifications, salaries or professions and visas will be awarded to those who will have enough points.

## 18. Commonwealth



The Maldives re-joined the Commonwealth, more than three years after the Indian Ocean island nation quit amid mounting criticism of its human rights. In 2016, the Maldives pulled out of the Commonwealth. Maldives has been formally reinstated into the Commonwealth as its 54th member state.

### More On This:

The Commonwealth of Nations, at one time known as British Commonwealth, is an organisation of fifty three states that were principally below the colonial rule of British Government. They came into existence with the proclamation of sovereignty of the state from the colonial rule of British Empire and were later given self-governance.

## 19. Under-19 Cricket World Cup 2020



On February 9, 2020, Bangladesh won Under 19 Cricket World Cup organized by International Cricket Cup (ICC).

### More On This:

The Bangladesh team beat India to win the ICC U19 title. Bangladesh won the title for the first time in its history. The tournament was held in South Africa between January 17, 2020 and February 9, 2020. History The first U19 world cup was held in 1998. Since then the ICC U19 tournament has been held as a biennial event. India has so far won the tournament four times.

## 20. National Winter Games to be held in Gulmarg



The National Winter Games is to be held in Gulmarg from March 7, 2020. The games are to be held for five days in Gulmarg, the world-famous Ski destination. It is being held under Khelo India.

### More On This:

- Highlights The Department of Tourism is to create wide publicity about the event through roadshows. Around 30 events are to be held at the national winter games under four disciplines. It includes snow skiing, snowboarding, snow-show and cross-country. Also, snow cycling and other games are to be held for children.
- Khelo India was first held in 2018. The main aim of Khelo India event is to hunt grassroot level talent all over India. The talent are identified by the Talent Hunt Committee. Such identifies sports persons are provided with scholarship of Rs 5 lakhs for 8 years.

The first Khelo India was held in Delhi and the second event was organized in 2019 and in 2020 it was held in Guwahati, Assam.

## 21. Indian men's hockey



Manpreet Singh, Indian men's hockey team captain was named the Player of the Year 2019 by the International Hockey Federation (FIH).

### More On This:

- Manpreet Singh has become the first Indian to be awarded with FIH's Player of the Year award since its introduction in 1999. He beat Belgium's Arthur van Dorren and Argentina's Lucas Villa to win the honour with 35.2 percent of combined votes.
- Belgium's Arthur van Dorren came second with 19.7 percent of combined votes and Argentina's Lucas Villa came third with 16.5 percent of combined votes. In other awards, Indian midfielder Vivek Sagar Prasad was awarded FIH's Rising Star of the Year (male) award and striker Lalremsiami won the FIH Rising Star of the Year (female) 2019 award.
- Manpreet Singh made his debut in the Indian National Hockey Team in 2011. Since then, he has played over 260 matches for the national team.

In 2019, he had captained the Indian team to victory in the FIH Olympic Qualifiers, securing a spot for India at the Tokyo Olympic Games 2020. Manpreet represented India at the Olympics previously at the 2012 London Olympics and 2016 Rio Olympics. He will now lead the Indian Hockey team in the FIH Hockey Pro League.

## 22. Australian Open 2020



Australian Open 2020 tournament recently concluded on 2nd February 2020 in Melbourne, Australia. It is one of four grand slam tournaments played annually.

### More On This:

- The winners of this edition are as follows:
  - Men's Singles: Novak Djokovic
  - Women's Singles: Sofia Kenin
  - Men's Doubles: Rajeev Ram, Joe Salisbury
  - Women's Doubles: Tímea Babos, Kristina Mladenovic
  - Mixed Doubles: Barbora Krejčíková, Nikola Pietrangeli
- Novak Djokovic won his 8<sup>th</sup> Australian Open title and has become the No.1 in the ATP rankings.
- Sofia Kenin has become the youngest woman to win the Australian Open in 12 years.
- This was the first edition of the Australian Open with GreenSet, a hard surface produced by GreenSet Worldwide.
- GreenSet is the third type of hard surface used for the Australian Open.
- The 2020 Australian Open was the 108th edition of the tournament and was held at Melbourne Park in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

### 23. Vikram Sarabhai



Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) are conducting various events at national level in a year long programme to commemorate the 100th birth anniversary of Dr. Vikram Sarabhai.

**More On This:**

Vikram Sarabhai was born on August 12, 1919. Sarabhai was instrumental in forming India’s future in astronomy and setting up the country’s space research facilities.

- Based on his persuasion, the Indian government agreed to set up the Indian National Committee for Space Research (INCOSPAR) in 1962.
- Sarabhai was the first chairman of the committee. The INCOSPAR was restructured and renamed as Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) in 1969.
- Sarabhai founded the Physical Research Laboratory in Ahmedabad in the year 1947. The laboratory started its operation from RETREAT, Sarabhai’s residence in Ahmedabad. Its first topic of research was cosmic rays.

Vikram Sarabhai received the Padma Bhushan in 1966 for his contribution to India’s progress. He was also awarded the Padma Vibhushan in 1972, posthumously.

### 24. Station WiFi Programme



Five years after it started the ‘Station’ programme to bring free public Wi-Fi to 400 busiest railway stations in India, Google has decided to gradually wind down the service globally. However, users in India will be able to continue using the existing facilities at the over 400 stations via RailTel, Google’s partner in India for the programme.

**More On This:**

- Google believes that better data plans and improving mobile connectivity have made it “simpler and cheaper” for users to get online.
- India, specifically now has among the cheapest mobile data per GB in the world, with mobile data prices having reduced by 95% in the last 5 years, as per TRAI in 2019. Today, Indian users consume close to 10 GB of data, each month, on average.
- Besides the Indian government’s continuous impetus for internet penetration through the Digital India programme, private sector initiatives such as Vodafone’s SuperWi-fi coupled with the entry of Reliance Jio 4G services have drastically brought down the cost of internet subscription. This has been instrumental to the growth of internet users in India.

## 25. National Science Day



28th February is celebrated as National Science Day (NSD) in India. NSD is celebrated to commemorate discovery of the 'Raman Effect', which led to Sir C.V. Raman winning the Noble Prize. The first National Science Day was celebrated on February 28, 1987.

### More On This:

This year, the theme for National Science Day 2020 is "Women in Science", which aims to appreciate the contribution of women in the field of science.

- A phenomenon in spectroscopy discovered by the eminent physicist Sir Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman in 1928.
- Raman Effect is a change in the wavelength of light that occurs when a light beam is deflected by molecules.
- When a beam of light traverses a dust-free, transparent sample of a chemical compound, a small fraction of the light emerges in directions other than that of the incident (incoming) beam.
- Most of this scattered light is of unchanged wavelength. A small part, however, has wavelengths different from that of the incident light; its presence is a result of the Raman Effect.

## 26. Solar Orbiter Mission



Solar Orbiter mission was launched recently. The mission is a collaboration between ESA (the European Space Agency) and NASA. The spacecraft was launched from Cape Canaveral on a United Launch Alliance Atlas V rocket.

### More On This:

- Solar Orbiter is a mission dedicated to solar and heliospheric physics.
- It was selected as the first medium-class mission of ESA's Cosmic Vision 2015-2025 Programme.
- This is the first mission that will provide images of the sun's north and south poles using a suite of six instruments on board that will capture the spacecraft's view.

It is a seven-year mission and will come within 26 million miles of the sun. It will be able to brave the heat of the sun because it has a custom titanium heat shield coated in calcium phosphate so that it can endure temperatures up to 970 degrees Fahrenheit.



## 27. Artemis Program



United States space agency National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) announced that it will begin to accept applications for astronauts under its Artemis programme from March 2 to March 31, 2020.

### More On This:

- The space agency has listed several requirements in order to qualify for training under the Artemis programme: one must be a US citizen and have a master's degree in a STEM (Science, technology, engineering and mathematics) field from an accredited institution.
- Candidates must also have completed at least 1,000 hours of pilot-in-command time in jet aircrafts or have two years of related experience.
- Another mandatory requirement is to pass NASA's long-duration spaceflight physical test.

Artemis- Acceleration, Reconnection, Turbulence and Electrodynamics of Moon's Interaction with the Sun. It is NASA's next mission to the Moon.

## 28. International IP Index 2020



The International IP Index 2020 has been released by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Global Innovation Policy Center (GIPC).

### More On This:

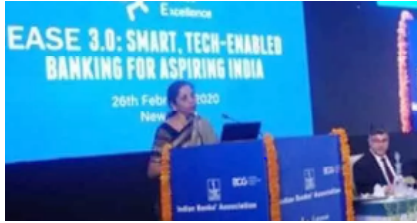
What is IIP index?

- Released by GIPC, the Index evaluates the IP infrastructure in each economy based on 45 unique indicators, which are critical to the growth of effective IP systems.
- The indicators encompass 8 categories of IP protection: patents, copyrights, trademarks, trade secrets, commercialization of IP assets, enforcement, systemic efficiency, and membership and ratification of international treaties.

### Performance of India:

1. Ranked 40 out of 53 global economies.
2. Last year India was ranked at 36th position out of 50 countries.

## 29. EASE 3.0 launched by the Finance Minister to enhance Ease of Banking



On February 26, 2020, the Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman launched Enhanced Access and Service Excellence (EASE 3.0). It was launched along with the annual report of EASE 2.0 at a function organized by Indian Banks' Association.

### More On This:

- The main aim of EASE 3.0 is to make public sector banking technology enabled and smart. By this the initiative intends to achieve ease of banking for customers. Along with its launch, the GoI has also warned about the over reliance of the state-run banks on credit rating agencies while sanctioning loans.
- EASE is set of technology-based banking reforms. It aims at improvising banking sector with technology. It ensures wider financial inclusion, better banking experience and easier credit distribution.
- The initiative will enhance paperless, digital banking. It will also support other GoI initiatives such as Udyami Mitra, credit take-off, Dial-a-loan and credit at a click.

EASE will increase the reach all these initiatives and improve the standards of banking sector.

## 30. US President Donald Trump visits India: Signs Defence Deals



On February 24, 2020, the US President Donald Trump visited India. He was accompanied by his wife, the first lady, Melania Trump, daughter Ivanka and son-in-law Jared Kushner. Along side his visit, India and US signed defence deals worth 3 billion USD.

### More On This:

- The President was welcomed by PM Modi in a traditional way at Ahmedabad airport. Mr Trump later visited Sabarmati Ashram and Taj Mahal. The leaders then addressed a large gathering at Motera stadium. India celebrated the visit of the US President by naming the event as "Namaste Trump".
- India and US will sign two defence deals for helicopters. Around 24 MH-60R helicopters are to be signed for Indian Navy and six AH-64E helicopters are to be signed for Indian Army and six AH-64E helicopters are to be signed for Apache helicopters.
- The defence relation between India and US began in 2005. The countries signed a framework to build a strategic defence cooperation between them. In 2012, the Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) was launched. The DTTI implements Next Generation Protective Ensembles for Chem-bio protection. In 2015, a strategic vision for Asia Pacific (the now Indo Pacific) and the Indian Ocean Region was signed.

---

### News Contributors

Ram Dheeraj Appasani NALSAR(Hyderabad)  
Anand Nayak Korra NALSAR(Hyderabad)

**Newsboard Developed by** - Achyuth Kadarla (Bonsagar Publications)