



Monthly Updates On CURRENT AFFAIRS

MAY 2019

NATIONAL

- An estimated voter turnout of 67.10% was recorded across the country during the 2019 Lok Sabha Elections, which is the highest ever voter turnout in the history of general elections in India. There was 66.4% voter turnout in the 2014 Parliamentary Elections. BJP won 303 seats in 2019 elections.
- Six-day Brahmakalashothsava festival is celebrated annually in the ancient Chandkuru Sri Durga Parameshwari Temple in Polali, Dakshina Kannada district in Karnataka. Shri Rajarajeshwari, the presiding deity of the temple, has a history of nearly 1,700 years.
- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has directed the National Stock Exchange (NSE) to pay Rs. 687 crore and barred it from accessing the securities market for six months following investigations into the co-location of servers that gave an unfair advantage to some traders. Co-location refers to traders being able to place servers in close proximity to those of an exchange, thus giving them a time advantage that translates into massive profits.
- The National Anti-Terrorism Day (NATD) was celebrated in 2019 on 21st May. It is celebrated every year in India on 21st May to spread the message of global peace and nonviolence and stop youngsters from following cult practices and being misguided. On this day in 1991, the former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated by a suicide squad of Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) while attending a rally in Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu. Nation pays tribute to those who lost their lives in this attack.
- Bangladesh-based terror outfit, the Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), in May, 2019, has been banned by the Government of India (GoI) under the anti-terror law, UAPA. It is also called as Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen India or Jamaatul-Mujahideen Hindustan. It has been banned under first Schedule to the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) of 1967.
- 1st May, 2019 was celebrated as 'Maharashtra Day' and 'Gujarat Day'. In 1960, the Bombay Reorganization Act was passed by Parliament to divide the multilingual states of Bombay into Gujarat and Maharashtra. The legislation came into effect on May 1, 1960.
- The 26th Edition of Singapore India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX-19) was concluded in the South China Sea in May 2019. The four-day naval exercise included various maritime combat drills such as advanced aerial tracking, coordinated targeting tactical exercises and weapon firing on aerial and surface targets.
- The first part of the Indo-French joint naval exercise, Varuna 19.1 was held off the Goa coast from 1st to 10th May 2019. The participation of the French Navy's aircraft carrier FNS Charles de Gaulle, two destroyers, FNS Forbin and FNS Provence, the frigate FNS Latouche-Treville, the tanker FNS Marne and a

nuclear submarine have been seen in this exercise. From the Indian side, the aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya, destroyer INS Mumbai, the Tegclass frigate, INS Tarkash, the Shishumar- class submarine, INS Shankul, and the Deepak- class fleet tanker, INS Deepak, have participated in this exercise. Varuna 19.2, the second part of the exercise, was held in Djibouti.

- In May, 2019 the Indian Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, cleared that all battery-operated vehicles must have green number plates to distinguish them from other commercial and private ones. On the green plates, registration number will be marked in yellow and white depending on different categories of vehicles.
- In May, 2019, Mangaluru City Police has launched an all women police patrol unit, 'Rani Abbakka Force'. The force will cover the malls, beaches, educational institutions, places of religious importance and handle issues related to eve-teasing and chain-snatching, among others. This force named after the 16th century warrior of coastal Karnataka, Queen Abbakka of Ullal near Mangaluru, who fought against the Portuguese.

ECONOMY

- The Netherlands has emerged as the third largest foreign direct investor in India during 2017-18, with investments pegged at about \$2.67 billion across various sectors. The Netherlands was also the second largest destination for foreign investment by Indian companies, after Singapore, with investments worth \$12.8 billion in 2017.
- As per Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCIS) data, for the second year in a row, Iraq remains India's top crude oil supplier in 2018-19 fiscal year and meet more than a fifth of the country's oil needs.
- As per the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Economic Outlook, India's economic growth will approach 7.5% by 2020. This growth will come from higher domestic demand due to improved financial conditions, fiscal and quasi-fiscal stimulus, including new income support measures for rural farmers, and ongoing structural reforms.
- Reliance Industries has toppled state-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) to become the country's biggest company by revenue in May 2019. In the 2018-19 fiscal year, Reliance reported a turnover of ` 6.23 lakh crore in comparison to IOC which posted a turnover of ` 6.17 lakh crore for the fiscal. Reliance is also the most profitable company in the country with a net profit of more than double that of IOC in FY2019.
- Kerala became the first Indian State to tap into Masala Bond Market by listing the Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Board's masala bond worth of USD 312 million (2,150 crore) in London Stock Exchange (LSE)'s International Securities Market (ISM).

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) had successfully launched the 'RISAT-2B' Satellite from the Sriharikota's, Satish Dhawan Space Centre, SHAR in May 2019. It is a radar imaging earth observation satellite, weighing about 615 kg. It is intended to provide services in the field of agriculture, forestry and disaster management.
- Hope Probe project is an ambitious dream project of UAE to send a mission to Mars. It is scheduled to be launched in July 2020. With a successful launch, UAE will become the first Arabic and Islamic country to make the Mars Mission. It is planned to reach Mars by 2021 to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the founding of the UAE.
- In May, the Indian Navy has launched the Scorpene-class submarine INS Vela, the fourth of six underwater warships being built in India with French collaboration, under Project-75. The state-owned Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited has entered into a contract for construction and transfer of technology for six Scorpene-class submarines with French collaborator, Ms Naval Group (formerly DCNS).

SPORTS

- According to latest rankings released by International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) in May 2019, shooter Apurvi Chandela became the world's number one in women's 10m Air Rifle category with 1,926 rankings points. She won the gold medal in 10m Air Rifle event in the New Delhi Shooting World Cup in 2019.
- In May 2019, Novak Djokovic of Serbia beat Stefanos Tsitsipas of Greece to win his third Madrid Open Tennis title. Djokovic has now won 33 Masters 1000 titles – the same number as Rafael Nadal and five more than Roger Federer. He won Madrid Open title previously in 2011 and 2016.
- On 12th May 2019, Mumbai Indians won IPL tournament for the fourth time after defeating Chennai Super Kings in the Final in Hyderabad. Andre Russell of Kolkata Knight Riders was named Most Valuable Player, also known as Man of the Series.
- In May, Bajrang Punia has won gold in the final of men's 65kg freestyle in the Ali Aliev wrestling tournament in Kaspiisk, Russia. He had also won a gold medal at the Asian Championships in Xi'an, China.
- Indian squash players, Saurav Ghoshal and Joshna Chinappa has won their respective Asian Individual Squash Championship titles in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in May 2019. Saurav Ghoshal has defeated Leo Au Chun Ming of Hong Kong to win the men's title. Joshna Chinappa has defeated Annie Au of Hong Kong in the women's final event.
- Croatian World Cupper, Igor Stimac has been appointed as the head coach of the Indian football team for a two-year term in May 2019. As a player, he was the part of the Croatian national squad which finished third in the FIFA World Cup in France in 1998.
- Indian captain, Virat Kohli has won the International Cricketer and Batsman of the Year award during the CEAT Cricket Rating Awards 2019. Pacer Jasprit Bumrah was adjudged as International Bowler of the Year. Former Indian all-rounder and a key member of the country's World Cup-winning team of 1983, Mohinder Amarnath was bestowed with the lifetime achievement award.
- Former Indian women cricketer, GS Lakshmi became the first female to be appointed to the ICC International Panel of Match Referees. She first officiated as a match referee in women's domestic cricket in 2008-09.
- China has been confirmed as the host of 2023 Asian Cup Football Tournament after its only bidding rival, South Korea, withdrew from the bidding process. The Asian Cup is the continent's premier national team competition, held every four years.

PERSONS IN NEWS

- In May, police Officer Jitender Kumar, an Indian peacekeeper is among the 119 military, police and civilian personnel was honoured with a prestigious 2019 UN Dag Hammarskjold Medal for his courage and sacrifice in the line of duty. He made the supreme sacrifice while serving in the UN Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO).
- Bandana, a Nepali teenager danced, in May, continuously for 126 hours to set a Guinness World Record on "Longest Dancing Marathon by an Individual". She beat the record set by Kalamandalam Hemlatha of India, who performed Mohiniattam, a classical dance form continuously for 123 hours and 15 minutes in 2011.
- Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) has appointed its first independent woman director, Jayshree Vyas in May 2019. BSE has already two non-executive women directors namely Usha Sangwan and Rajeshree Sabnavis in its Board. The Companies Act of 2013 mandates a certain class of companies to have at least one woman director on board.

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- Mrinal Mukherjee (74), the veteran film and TV actor, passed away in Kolkata, West Bengal on May 8, 2019. She worked for over five decades in the Bengali film industry and acted in films like 'Dui Bon', 'Chhuti', 'Shriman Prithviraj', 'Byomkesh' and 'Chiriakhana'.
- Air Marshal Rakesh Kumar Singh Bhadauria has been appointed as the new Vice Chief of Indian Air Force (IAF) in May 2019. He succeeded Air Marshal Anil Khosla. Prior to this post, Bhadauria was the head of IAF's Bengalurbased Training Command. He was commissioned into the fighter stream of the Air Force on June 15, 1980.
- Captain Aarohi Pandit became the world's first woman to cross the Atlantic Ocean solo in a Light Sports Aircraft. She achieved the feat on May 14, when she landed her tiny aircraft at Iqaluit Airport in Canada, after a gruelling 3,000 km long flight, under adverse and extreme weather conditions.
- P.S. Golay sworn in as the Chief Minister of Sikkim in May 2019. His party, Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM), won 17 of the 32 Assembly seats. He succeeded Pawan Chamling of Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF), who has the record of being the longest serving Chief Minister of the country, having won five consecutive terms for a period over 24 years.
- In May, Nepalese Sherpa climber Kami Rita has scaled Mount Everest 8,848-metre summit for a 23rd time, breaking his own record for the most successful ascents of the world's highest peak. He is a native of Thame village located in the shadow of Mount Everest.
- Former billiards player, coach and administrator, Derek Sippy died, in May, following a massive heart attack. He served the Billiards and Snooker Association of Maharashtra in various capacities and remained its secretary for several years.
- Dinesh Pangtey has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer of LIC Mutual Fund in May 2019. He started his career as a direct recruit officer with LIC of India in 1984. Prior to taking over as CEO of LIC Mutual Fund, Dinesh Pangtey was Director and Chief Executive Officer at LIC HFL AMC.

PLANS AND POLICIES

- India has begun work on a universal debt relief scheme for small borrowers aimed at micro enterprises, small farmers and artisans. Individuals below a specified income and asset threshold will be eligible for debt relief. People with annual income of Rs 60,000 or less, outstanding loans of Rs. 35,000 or less, and assets worth Rs. 20,000 or less may be eligible.
- Steel maker SAIL has introduced a pension scheme for its current as well as former employees. Under this scheme, all executive employees who were on rolls of the company on or after January 1, 2007, as well as non-executive employees on rolls on or after January 1, 2012, shall be covered in the scheme. The scheme will extend coverage to more than 55,000 ex-employees.

AWARDS AND HONOURS

- In May, former ISRO chairman, A S Kiran Kumar has been conferred with France's highest civilian award, Chevalier de l'Ordre national de la Legion d'Honneur, for his contribution to India-France space cooperation. He served as the Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation from 2015 to 2018.
- Journalist Nileena MS, whose story titled "Coalgate 2.0" published in The Caravan magazine, won the ACJ Award for Investigative Journalism 2018. The award is given by the Asian College of Journalism with the support of the Media Development. The award comprises a trophy, a citation and ₹ 2 lakh prize money.
- In May, Chhaya Sharma, a decorated officer of the Indian Police Service (IPS) has been awarded the prestigious courage and leadership award instituted by McCain Institute for her international leadership at Arizona State University, United State of America (USA). She led the investigation team of the infamous Nirbhaya gang-rape and murder case.

- Former Indian Foreign Secretary, Shyam Saran has been conferred with Japan's second highest national award, 'Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star' in May 2019 for his contributions to strengthen the strategic ties and enhancing mutual understanding between India and Japan. He was India's Foreign Secretary during 2004-2006 and played an important role to elevate Japan-India relationship.
- In May, Boxers Mary Kom and Shivva Thapa won Gold medals in 51kg women's category and 60 kg men's category respectively at the second India Open boxing tournament. The tournament was held at Karmabir Nabin Chandra Bordoloi AC Indoor Stadium in Assam.
- Jokha Alharthi, the first female Omani novelist has won the 2019 Man Booker International prize for her novel Celestial Bodies. She belongs to Oman. Celestial Bodies is set in the Omani village of al-Awafi and follows the stories of three sisters.