2 plus 2 India-US dialogue to be held on Dec 18

NATIONAL NEWS

President Kovind gives assent to Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019

- President Ram Nath Kovind has given his assent to the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019, turning it into an Act.
- The Act comes into effect with its publication in the official gazette.
- The Act makes illegal migrants of six communities - Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi and Christian from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan till December 31, 2014 eligible for Indian citizenship.
- The amendment is not applicable to the tribal areas of Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram or Tripura as included in the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution and in the areas covered under the Inner Line Permit.
- The Inner Line Permit regime is applicable in Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Mizoram.
- That there is a need to differentiate between intruders and refugees and the Citizenship Amendment Bill does not discriminate against anyone and does not snatch anyone's rights.

2 plus 2 India-US dialogue to be held on Dec 18

- The Second India-US 2 Plus 2 Ministerial Dialogue will be held in Washington DC on 18th of this month. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will lead the Indian delegation.
- External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Raveesh Kumar will meet their US counterparts for a comprehensive review of cross-cutting foreign policy and defence and security issues in India-US relations.
- In addition, both sides will exchange views on salient regional and global issues.
- The India-US 2 plus 2 Ministerial Dialogue was initiated in September 2018 in order to provide a positive, forward-looking vision for the India-US strategic partnership and to promote synergy in diplomatic and security efforts.
- Since the inaugural edition of this Dialogue, relations between India and the US have further expanded.
- The 22 Dialogue will take stock of these growing relations and provide strategic guidance for their further development.

External Affairs Ministry to host 6th Indian Ocean Dialogue, Delhi Dialogue XI

- External Affairs Ministry will host the 6th Indian Ocean Dialogue and Delhi Dialogue XI at the Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra in New Delhi.
- For the first time, these two dialogues will be held consecutively and on similar Indo-Pacific themes.
- The theme for Indian Ocean Dialogue is **"Indo-Pacific: Re-imagining the Indian Ocean through an Expanded Geography".**
- Delhi Dialogue XI will start this evening and will run through the next day.

- The theme for this year's Delhi Dialogue is **"Advancing Partnership in Indo-Pacific",** and is being organized with the assistance of the Research and Information System for Developing Countries.

STATE NEWS

Andhra Pradesh Govt takes historic decision to protect women, children

- The Cabinet headed by Chief Minister Y. S. Jaganmohan Reddy approved enacting **Andhra Pradesh Disha Act, 2019, Andhra Pradesh Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2019 and Andhra Pradesh Special Court for Specified Offences against Women and Children Act, 2019.**
- The draft Disha Act provided for harsher punishment, including death sentence, to those guilty of heinous crimes against women. The Act would cover sexual offences against women and children, acid attacks and harassment of women.
- To ensure speedy trial, the Government is establishing special courts in each district to deal exclusively with cases of offences against women and children, including rape, gang rape, acid attacks, stalking, voyeurism, sexual harassment and also cases under the POCSO Act.

ECONOMIC NEWS

Domestic air passenger traffic in November grows at fastest pace in 2019

- Domestic air passenger traffic for November grew at the fastest pace in 2019, a year in which air travel has been hit by the twin blows of the closure of Jet Airways India Ltd and an economic slowdown.
- Indian airlines carried 12.95 million people in November, up 11.2% year-on-year. This was the fastest growth recorded since December last year, according to data from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).

BANKING

Mastercard ties-up with Federal Bank for identity check security for digital transactions

- Global payments technology major Mastercard has joined hands with Federal Bank to provide an additional layer of security for digital transactions. Mastercard has entered into a partnership with Federal Bank to offer identity check to the bank's cardholders
- Mastercard Identity Check is a global authentication programme that uses the latest authentication standards of EMV 3D Secure to provide an additional layer of security for digital transactions and facilitate higher approval rates, improving the authentication experience for merchants, issuers, and cardholders.

Small Finance Bank Deposits Jump 130% in FY2019, But Cost Remains High

- Small finance banks (SFBs) will continue to see increased traction in deposits on the back of higher interest rates (1%-2% higher than most banks), focussed marketing strategies, and maturing branches of a fast growing branch network at 40% growth in branches in FY2019, says India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) in a note.

Govt to sell 100% stake in Air India

- The government has decided to sell its entire 100 percent stake in Air India under the proposed disinvestment process.
- The national carrier, which has a debt burden of more than Rs 50,000 crore, has been making loss for long and as part of revival efforts, the government has decided on disinvestment.
- After formation of the new government, Air India Specific Alternative Mechanism (AISAM) has been reconstituted and the re-initiation of the strategic disinvestment of Air India has been approved.

AWARDS

Greta Thunberg, 16, is named Time's 2019 Person of the Year becoming the youngest ever recipient of the title

- Greta Thunberg has been named Time's 2019 Person of the Year, becoming the youngest ever recipient of the title.
- The activist, 16, inspired the school strikes for the climate movement after going alone to the Swedish parliament on Fridays.
- The then 15-year-old held up a sign that read 'skolstrejk för klimatet', which translates as 'School strike for the climate'.
- Since then she has become the face of the youth climate movement, drawing large crowds with her appearances at protests and conferences over the past year and a half.

Odisha wins 'World Habitat Award' for OLHM- Jaga Mission

- Odisha won the bronze in 'World Habitat Award' for Jaga Mission also called Odisha Liveable Habitat Mission (OLHM), a slum land titling project executed for the benefit of millions of urban-poor people living in slums.
- The award was given by the World Habitat, a UK (United Kingdom) based organization which gives the award annually to recognize innovative housing projects around the world.
- The Jaga is a society under Housing and Urban Development Department (HUDD), Government of Odisha. The OLHM-JAGA aims at transforming the slums into livable habitats and under which 52,682 urban poor families living in the slums have been granted land rights certificate.

OBITUARY

Paul Volcker, former Fed chairman who fought inflation, dies at 92

- Paul Volcker, the former chairman of the Federal Reserve known for his battles against inflation in the late 1970s and early 1980s, has died. He was 92.
- Volcker served as Fed chairman from August 1979 through 1987. He returned to public service more than 20 years later in the wake of the financial crisis, serving as an economic adviser to President Barack Obama during the early days of his administration.

SPORTS

India’s G.S. Lakshmi to become first woman to referee a men’s ODI

- Former India cricketer G.S. Lakshmi is set to become the first woman match referee to oversee a men’s ODI when she officiates the opening match of the third series of the World Cup League 2 in the United Arab Emirates.

- Lakshmi will oversee the match between the United Arab Emirates and the United States of America at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium. The competition aims to provide development opportunities for officials.