

# Headlines at a Glance - 29th Feb 2020

written by iasexam.com | 29/02/2020



## Home

### Minister chairs 24th Eastern Zonal Council meeting in Bhubaneswar

The 24th Eastern Zonal Council meeting under the chairmanship of Home Minister Amit Shah is underway at the Lokseva Bhavan in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee are participating in the meeting while Finance Minister of Jharkhand Rameswar Oram is attending in the place of Chief Minister Hemanta Soren. The meeting has discussed several issues including inter-state water issues, power transmission lines, royalty on and operationalization of coals mines, land and forest clearance of rail projects, investigation of heinous offences, cattle smuggling across country's borders, lack of telecom and banking infrastructure in remote areas, petroleum projects, sharing pattern on centrally collected revenues etc.

**SOURCE:** *The Hindu*

## Government

## to increase reach of banking in the North-East Tea Garden areas

Far flung areas in North East will be given greater access to credit, with adequate number of ATM's and branches says Union Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman while addressing the trader and industry representatives in Guwahati. While addressing the gathering the Union Finance Minister stressed on the need for simplification of direct tax regime, the need for removal of exemption, reduction of income tax rates and decriminalization of tax laws. With regard to GST, the Finance Minister assured the delegates that the issue of delayed refund of CGST and IGST would be addressed on priority. Speaking on Vivad Se Vishwas scheme, she said that if any settlement is done, no prosecution will be initiated. Replying to the queries of traders and industry representatives, the Finance Minister informed that between 1st to 15th March for 2 hours every day, each district office of Central Board of Indirect Tax and Custom remains open and the staff will be available for any tax related clarification to general public.

**SOURCE:** *PIB*

## Pradhan

### Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana: 32 projects sanctioned

A total of 32 projects have been sanctioned under 'unit' scheme of Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY) in meetings of Inter-Ministerial Approval Committee (IMAC) presided over by Union Minister of Food Processing Industries Harsimrat Kaur Badal. The projects spread across almost 17 states would leverage an investment of Rs 406 crore, an official release said. It said the projects envisage the creation of direct and indirect employment for about 15,000 persons and focus will be employment opportunities in rural areas. The release said that the introduction of modern processing techniques for food results in improved shelf-life of the agricultural produce and ensures steady revenue to farmers.

## Sri Lanka

### withdraws from UNHRC resolution on war crimes

The Government of Sri Lanka formally notified the United Nations on February 26, 2020 that it is withdrawing from a United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) resolution for investigating alleged war crimes. The case was dealing with a decade-old clash with Tamil separatists. Sri Lanka's Foreign Minister Dinesh Gunawardena informed UNHRC that Sri Lanka has decided to withdraw from the co-sponsorship of UNHRC's resolution 40/1 on promoting accountability, reconciliation and human rights. Sri Lanka's Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa said that the government will not abide by a 2015 resolution anymore that calls for accountability for alleged excesses carried out by Sri Lankan forces and reparations for victims.

**SOURCE:** *The Hindu*

## **NITI Aayog, Nasscom roll out artificial intelligence modules in schools**

The National Association of Software and Services Companies (Nasscom), in collaboration with NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), on Thursday launched an artificial intelligence (AI) based module for students of Indian schools. The AI-Base Module will be implemented across 5,000 Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL), empowering 2.5 million students. The module is to be introduced to ATL students on 27 February. The module contains activities, videos and experiments that enable students to work through and learn the various concepts of AI. NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant said the AI module was critical since it was targeted at young children. "This is path breaking, it combines playing and academics and our job is to make things very interesting. We want to make artificial intelligence a great fun, so that children can enjoy it, they can evolve and learn and take India forward," said Kant.

**SOURCE:** *Livemint*