

1st Jan, 2020

ISRO to set up second launch port in Thoothukodi district of Tamilnadu for small satellite launch vehicles

Indian Space Research Organisation will establish a second launch port in **Thoothukodi** district in **Tamilnadu** exclusively to launch small satellite launch vehicles. ISRO Chairman **K Sivan** informed that this will come up in 2300 acres.

On the lines of GPS navigation system developed by America, the Indian navigation system called Navic with the indigenous atomic clock will be operational with mobile phone manufacturers coming forward to install the regional navigation device.

On future programmes, the ISRO Chairman said that **Chandrayaan 3** mission to the moon, comprising of a lander and a rover is approved by the Government. On the progress made in **India's first manned mission to outer space Gaganyaan**, he said, the process of Astronaut selection is over and four men selected from Indian Air Force will leave for Russia in the third week of January to get training. The **Gaganyaan** mission is targeted to be launched by **2022**.

Before that unmanned missions will be launched to test the crew module with robots resembling humans. This unmanned space mission will test spacecraft re-entry technology, space capsule recovery experiment and effect of microgravity on the crew module necessary for the human space travel.

Pariksha Pe Charcha 2020 rescheduled to 20th January this year

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's interaction programme **Pariksha Pe Charcha 2020** with a cross-section of **Students and Teachers** from India and abroad to beat exam stress has been rescheduled to **20th January** this year. The programme has been rescheduled on account of **Pongal, Makar Sankranti, Lohri, Onam** and other festivals across the country.

The programme was earlier scheduled for 16th of January. Human Resource Development Ministry said a lot of excitement and enthusiasm is being seen among the students, teachers and parents to not only participate in the unique event but also to receive valuable tips from the Prime Minister.

GST revenue collection increased by 16% in December 2019

The GST revenue collection has crossed **one lakh crore rupees** in **December 2019**, which is a growth of **16 percent** over the revenue collected in the same month in **2018**. The total GST collected during last month was one lakh three thousand and 184 crore rupees. Finance Ministry said, a total of over 81 lakh GSTR 3B returns were filed for the month of November up to 31st December 2019.

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Vinod Kumar Yadav assumes charge as Chairman, Railway Board on reappointment for period of one year

Vinod Kumar Yadav has assumed the charge of **Chairman, Railway Board** after being reappointed. The Appointments Committee of Cabinet has approved the reappointment of Vinod Kumar Yadav as Chairman, Railway Board for a period of one year.

ISRO launched many successful missions in 2019

Indian Space Research Organisation-ISRO has successfully accomplished **13 missions** including **06 launch vehicle missions** and **satellite missions** during the year **2019**. Besides, **50 foreign satellites** from **seven countries** were launched on a commercial basis during this period. **PSLV-C44** successfully launched **Microsat-R** and **Kalamsat-V2** in January this year from **Sriharikota**. Our correspondent takes a look at the major initiatives taken by the Department of Space.

Palau is first country to ban 'reef toxic' sun cream



The Pacific nation of **Palau** has become the **first country** to ban **sun cream** that is harmful to corals and sea life. **From 1st January 2020**, sun cream that includes common ingredients, including **oxybenzone**, is not allowed to be worn or sold in the country.

Palau's President Tommy Remengesau said: "We have to live and respect the environment because the environment is the nest of life." The island nation

markets itself as a "pristine paradise" for divers.

A lagoon in Palau's Rock Islands is a Unesco World Heritage site. The country has a population of around 20,000 dotted across hundreds of islands.

The ban - which was announced in 2018 - prohibits sun cream containing any of 10 ingredients. The list includes oxybenzone and octinoxate, which absorb ultraviolet light.

The International Coral Reef Foundation said the banned chemicals were "known environmental pollutants - most of them are... incredibly toxic to juvenile stages of many wildlife species".

- Palau to ban sunscreen to save coral reefs.
- Hawaii to ban sunscreen harmful to corals.

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