

SSC BANKING MANTHAN

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Preface

Dear Readers,

The “Current Affairs” section is an integral part of any examination. This edition of Manthan has been developed by our team to help you cover all the important events of the month for the upcoming exams like Banking, Insurance, CLAT, MBA etc. This comprehensive bulletin will help you prepare the section in a vivid manner. We hope that our sincere efforts will serve you in a better way to fulfil aspirations.

Happy Reading!

Best Wishes

Team CL



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POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

National



India inks first green strategic partnership with Denmark

- **India and Denmark** decided to **elevate their bilateral ties to a “green strategic partnership”**, the **first of its kind**, during a virtual **summit between Prime Ministers Narendra Modi and Mette Frederiksen**.
- **Niche pollution control solutions** being offered by **Denmark include those to curb stubble burning**. PM Modi observed that India and Denmark could set up energy parks where a large number of Danish companies are present.
- Besides tapping Denmark for technology and manufacturing, another reason for India’s attempt to build closer ties is strategic. Denmark is a leading player in the group of five Nordic countries – **Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Iceland** – which, like Russia are interested in the opportunities in the Arctic Sea.
- Besides, **Denmark is the only Nordic country** that has made a maritime foray in the Straits of Hormuz (SoH) along with seven other countries with active assistance from the UAE with whom India enjoys close ties.
- Called **European Maritime Awareness in the SoH (EMASOH)**, it intends to **deploy surveillance ships and drones in the Gulf and Arabian Sea**. The EMASOH also intends to get involved in the politics of the region by encouraging de-escalation and promoting regional dialogue.

Denmark is a Nordic country in Northern Europe. The krone is the official currency of Denmark, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands, introduced on 1 January 1875. Mette Frederiksen has been Prime Minister of Denmark since June 2019. The second woman to hold either office, she is also the youngest Prime Minister in Danish history. Margrethe II is the Queen of Denmark. Copenhagen is the capital and most populous city of Denmark. Nordic countries are a group of countries in Northern Europe. These countries include Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Sweden, Norway, and the territories of the Aland Islands and the Faroe Islands. India has already established a high-altitude research station in the Himalayas, called HIMANSHI, at Spiti, Himachal Pradesh. Himadri Station is India's first Arctic research station located at Spitsbergen, Svalbard, Norway.

Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated Destination North East-2020

- **Coinciding with World Tourism Day (September 27)**, Union home minister Amit Shah **inaugurated Destination North East 2020**, a four-day festival to promote and showcase the region’s tourism, culture, heritage and business.
- **The theme of the event is ‘The Emerging Delightful Destinations’**, which speaks of the tourism destinations emerging stronger and more attractive when the sector picks up momentum.
- **Destination North East is a calendar event of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region** conceptualized with the **objective of taking the North East Region to other parts of the country** and bringing them closer together in order to strengthen national integration.
- The inauguration took place through video conferencing and was **attended by Union minister for development of north east region (DONER) Jitendra Singh and the chief ministers of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Tripura, Nagaland and Sikkim.**

Destination Northeast is an annual festival organised by the **DONER** ministry with the objective of showcasing and celebrating the region to other parts of the country in order to strengthen national integration. “The festival held earlier at Varanasi, Chandigarh and Delhi had attracted lots of visitors and educated people in those places about the northeast. **India’s Act East Policy**, which aims to open the Northeast region for trade and tourism with South East Asia and listed the initiatives taken in the past six years for development and connectivity in the region.

Northeast India (officially **North Eastern Region**) is the easternmost region of India representing both a geographic and political administrative division of the country. It comprises eight states – **Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura**. **Siliguri Corridor or Chicken’s Neck** is a narrow stretch of land of about 22 kilometres, located in the Indian state of West Bengal, which connects India’s northeastern states to the rest of India.

President Ram Nath Kovind gives assent to three farm bills passed by parliament

- **President Ram Nath Kovind** gave assent to three farm bills recently passed by the parliament. The bills are **Farmers’ Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020**, the **Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020** and the **Essential Commodities (Amendment) bill, 2020**. The act aimed at transforming agriculture in the country and raising farmers’ income.
- The **Farmers’ Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020** permits the electronic trading of farmers’ produce and allows setting up of transaction platforms for facilitating direct online buying and selling of farm products.
- The new act aims at creating additional trading opportunities outside the **APMC market yards** to help farmers get remunerative prices due to additional competition. This will supplement the existing **MSP procurement system** which is providing stable income to farmers.
- The act will create an ecosystem where the farmers and traders will enjoy freedom of choice of sale and purchase of agri-produce. It will open more choices for the farmer, reduce marketing costs for the farmers and help them in getting better prices.
- The **Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020** provides for a farming agreement prior to the production or rearing of any farm produce. A guaranteed price to be paid for the purchase of farming produce will be mentioned in such agreements.
- The **Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2020** allows the central government to regulate the supply of certain food items only under extraordinary circumstances such as war and famine.

The agriculture contribution in India’s GDP in 2019 is 15.96 percent. According to latest report, agriculture is primary source of livelihood for 58% population in India. The Primary sector of the economy includes any industry involved in the extraction and production of raw materials, such as farming, logging, hunting, fishing, and mining. India is a global agricultural powerhouse. It is the world’s largest producer of milk, pulses, and spices, and has the world’s largest cattle herd (buffaloes), as well as the largest area under wheat, rice and cotton. It is the second largest producer of rice, wheat, cotton, sugarcane, farmed fish, sheep & goat meat, fruit, vegetables and tea.

Bengaluru, Kolkata in world’s top 100 ‘science cities’, two China metros in first five

- At the top of the rankings is **Beijing**, followed by **New York**, **Boston**, **San Francisco** and **Shanghai**. **Bengaluru** fared the best among Indian cities, as it had last time, but dropped four places in rankings from 93 to 97.
- **Kolkata** came next, improving its position significantly from 121 to 99. **Mumbai** went down four places, from 128 to 132, while **Delhi-NCR** took a huge step down from 145 to 163. **Pune**, which had figured at the 169th place last time, did not make it to the top 200 at all this time.
- **David Swinbanks**, the founder of the **Nature Index**, said the concentration of talent, funding, research institutions, and other resources is crucial for the top five global science cities to maintain their leading positions.

PM Narendra Modi inaugurates world's longest highway tunnel above 10,000 feet in Manali

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated Atal Tunnel in Manali. It is “world’s longest highway” tunnel and is named Atal Tunnel, Rohtang. The 9.02 kilometres long engineering marvel connects Manali in Himachal Pradesh to Lahaul-Spiti throughout the year. Currently, the area remains cut off for about 6 months each year owing to heavy snowfall and inclement weather.
- Atal Tunnel or the Rohtang tunnel has been built in the Pir Panjal range of Himalayas. The tunnel is located at an altitude of 10,000 Feet from the Mean Sea Level (MSL). The tunnel is set to reduce road distance by 46 kilometres between Leh and Manali. Atal tunnel also reduces the journey time by around 4 to 5 hours. The decision to construct a strategic tunnel below the Rohtang Pass was taken on June 03, 2000 during the tenure of the then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee Tunnel, also known the Syama Tunnel and formerly known as the Chenani-Nashri Tunnel, is a road tunnel in the Indian union territory of Jammu and Kashmir on NH 44 (former name NH 1A before renumbering of all national highways). The work was started in 2011 and was inaugurated on 2 April 2017 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The tunnel is named after Syama Prasad Mookerjee. It is India's longest road tunnel with a length of 9.28 km (5.8 mi). It is the first tunnel in the India with a fully integrated tunnel control system. The tunnel reduces the distance between Jammu and Srinagar by 30 km and travel time by two hours.

Fourth Edition of India-Japan Maritime Bilateral exercise commences in Arabian Sea

- The fourth edition of India-Japan Maritime bilateral exercise (JIMEX) begins in North Arabian Sea. The exercise is conducted biennially between the Indian Navy and Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF).
- ‘JIMEX’ series of exercises commenced in January 2012 with special focus on maritime security cooperation. The last edition of JIMEX was conducted in October 2018 off Visakhapatnam coast. JIMEX 20 is being conducted in a ‘non-contact at-sea-only format’, in view of COVID-19 restrictions.
- The three-day long, JIMEX 20 has showcased high degree of inter-operability and joint operational skills through conduct of a multitude of advanced exercises, across the spectrum of maritime operations. Indigenously built stealth destroyer Chennai, Teg Class stealth frigate Tarkash and Fleet Tanker Deepak, under the command of Rear Admiral Krishna Swaminathan, Flag Officer Commanding Western Fleet, represented the Indian Navy.

PM Modi inaugurated six mega projects in Uttarakhand under Namami Gange Mission

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated six mega projects in Uttarakhand under the Namami Gange Mission through video conference. The projects include construction of a 68 million litres per day or MLD Sewage Treatment Plant, upgradation of the existing 27 MLD at Jagjeetpur and construction of an 18 MLD Sewage Treatment Plant at Sarai, in Haridwar.
- The inauguration of 68 MLD Jagjeetpur project also marks completion of the first sewage treatment project taken up on hybrid annuity mode of Public Private Partnership. The Haridwar-Rishikesh zone contributes about 80 per cent waste water load into the River Ganga. These plants will play a significant role in keeping the River Ganga clean.
- In Muni ki Reti town, the 7.5 MLD Plant in Chandreshwar Nagar will be the first four-storied Sewage Treatment Plant in the country where the limitation of land availability was converted into an opportunity.
- The Prime Minister also inaugurated “Ganga Avalokan”, the first museum on Ganga dedicated to showcase the culture, biodiversity and rejuvenation activities done in Ganga River. The museum is located at Chandi Ghat, Haridwar.
- A book, ‘Rowing down the Ganges’, co-published by National Mission for Clean Ganga and Wildlife Institute of India was also launched at the event. This colourful book is an attempt to merge the biodiversity and culture of river Ganga. The logo of Jal Jeevan Mission and ‘Margdarshika for Gram Panchayats and Paani Samitis under Jal Jeevan Mission’ also unveiled by the Prime Minister.

‘Namami Gange Programme’, is an Integrated Conservation Mission, approved as ‘Flagship Programme’ by the Union Government in June 2014 with budget outlay of Rs.20,000 Crore to accomplish the twin objectives of effective abatement of pollution, conservation and rejuvenation of National River Ganga. It is being operated under the Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Ministry of Jal Shakti. The program is being implemented by the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), and its state counterpart organizations i.e., State Program Management Groups (SPMGs). NMCG is the implementation wing of National Ganga Council (set in 2016; which replaced the National Ganga River Basin Authority (NRGBA). National Ganga Council under chairmanship of Hon’ble Prime Minister of India.

Govt looks to develop Great Nicobar Island using PPP model

- The government’s apex planning body, Niti Aayog, is in the process of hiring consultants to prepare a master plan for the “holistic development” of Great Nicobar Island in the Union territory of Andaman & Nicobar, through the public-private partnership model.
- Great Nicobar, with an area of around 1,000 square kilometres, is one of the largest islands of the archipelago. The Niti Aayog’s island tourism plans have had few takers since it sought investment from private bidders three years ago.
- It floated a request for proposal (RfP) on September 7 to conduct a study on the technical feasibility and financial viability of the project, and has sought proposals by October 6.
- “India has a total of nearly 1,382 off-shore identified islands consisting of 1,093 shapes (islands) and 289 points (rocks/rocky islets). They are an integral part of our rich unexplored resources with a rich biodiversity. The potential of these islands is still largely unexplored and untapped.
- The Government of India intends to set a model in place for holistic development of a few identified islands while preserving and maintaining the natural ecosystem and rich biodiversity that each of them possess.”

Andaman and Nicobar Islands, a union territory of India comprising 572 islands of which 37 are inhabited, are a group of islands at the juncture of the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea. It comprises two island groups, the Andaman Islands (partly) and the Nicobar Islands, separated by the 150 km wide Ten Degree Channel (on the 10°N parallel), with the Andamans to the north of this latitude, and the Nicobars to the south (or by 179 km). After independence, the chief commissioner and, later, the lieutenant governor, has been appointed by the President of India. The current Lieutenant Governor is Devendra Kumar Joshi. At present there are 8 Union territories are there in India.

Indian Embassy in Madagascar becomes first to go solar on October 2

- The Indian embassy in Madagascar becomes first to go solar on October 2, on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, becoming the first Indian mission globally to become clean and green with this installation.
- An 8 KW solar power plant was inaugurated at the embassy premises in the capital Antananarivo in the presence of the Malagasy Prime Minister Christian Ntsay and environment minister Rahanirina B. Vahinala.
- Madagascar, one of the world’s richest biodiversity hotspots, is also facing immense challenges in protecting its biological wealth. It hosts over 100 species of lemurs, a primate endemic to the country, but nearly all of them are threatened with extinction.
- India and Madagascar are both part of the International Solar Alliance, an intergovernmental organization initiated by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. It was launched during the Paris climate summit in 2015, which saw the signing of the landmark climate treaty committing to keeping global average temperature rise to under two degrees Celsius from pre-industrial levels.

Madagascar is an island country in the Indian Ocean, off the coast of East Africa. Antananarivo also known by its colonial shorthand form Tana, is the capital and largest city of Madagascar. Christian Louis Ntsay is currently serving as the Prime Minister of Madagascar. The ariary is the currency of Madagascar.

PM Narendra Modi addressed an international webinar on textile traditions organized by ICCR

- Speaking on the occasion, the Prime Minister lauded Indian Council for Cultural Relations and Uttar Pradesh Institute of Design for their efforts in bringing people from different countries to participate in the webinar on the theme “Weaving Relations: Textile Traditions.” He said in the textile sector one can see our history, diversity and immense opportunity.
- The Prime Minister said this Program is organized in the context of Gandhi ji’s 150th Birth Anniversary celebrations. Mahatma Gandhi saw a close link between the textile sector and social empowerment and converted the simple Charkha into a key symbol of India’s independence movement. The Charkha wove us together as one nation.

Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), is an autonomous organisation of the Government of India, involved in India’s external cultural relations, through cultural exchange with other countries and their peoples. It was founded on 9 April 1950 by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the first Education Minister of independent India. The Council addresses its mandate of cultural diplomacy through a broad range of activities. In addition to organising cultural festivals in India and overseas, the ICCR financially supports a number of cultural institutions across India, and sponsors individual performers in dance, music, photography, theatre, and the visual arts.

Indian Railways unveils new Tejas Express locomotives, capable to run at 160 kmph

- Indian Railways’ electric locomotive manufacturing unit Chittaranjan Locomotive Works (CLW) has turned out first batch of Tejas Express locomotives amid COVID-19 scare. These locos are made for ‘push-pull’ operations. CLW is one of the largest Electric Locomotive manufacturers in the world.
- The ‘push-pull’ technology will help the passenger electric locomotives to reduce air drags at higher speed. The Tejas locomotive is capable to run at 160 kmph.

Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) is a subsidiary of the Indian Railways that handles the catering, tourism and online ticketing operations of the latter, with around 5, 50,000 to 6, 00,000 bookings every day. IRCTC started running private trains, and “Tejas Express” becomes India’s first private train on 4th Oct 2019. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath flagged off the first Tejas Express, the country’s first “private” train run by its subsidiary IRCTC, on the Lucknow-New Delhi route.

Tribes India E-Marketplace launched for handicrafts, organic products

- Minister of Tribal Affairs Arjun Munda virtually launched India’s largest handicraft and organic products marketplace- Tribes India E-Marketplace. Keeping in line with the vision of the Prime Minister of making India Aatmanirbhar and self-reliant, this initiative of TRIFED will showcase the produce and handicrafts of tribal enterprises from across the country.
- It will help them market their products directly. On this occasion, Mr Munda also flagged off several other TRIFED initiatives that are aimed to support the tribal brethren.
- These include the inauguration of Tribes India’s 123rd and 124th outlets in Rishikesh and Kolkata, inclusion of new tribal product ranges from the states of Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh and partnership of TRIFED and Tribes India with Amazon in their Seller Flex programme. The Minister also launched Pakur Honey which is 100 per cent natural honey, gathered by Santhal Tribals from Pakur in Jharkhand.

The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) came into existence in 1987. TRIFED has its registered and Head Office located in New Delhi. Arjun Munda is a member of the 17th Lok Sabha of India. He represents the Khunti constituency of Jharkhand. He is the current minister for Tribal Affairs.

Andhra Pradesh: ‘Plastic-to-petrol’ making unit set to be launched by Guntur civic body

- Guntur Municipal Corporation (GMC) has entered the final lap of establishing what is claimed to be the world’s first ‘plastic-to-petrol’ making unit. Trials have been completed at the newly set up plant where young

engineers-turned- entrepreneurs converted plastic waste into reusable fuels including diesel, petrol and kerosene. **The GMC expects that the ‘plastic-to-petrol’ plant would produce fuel required to run its vehicles.**

- **This is considered to be 100% indigenous, zero pollution and zero waste-plastic waste vanishing plant**, which will not only be a one-of-its kind facility in the country but also in the world, said municipal commissioner C Anuradha. She said the plant will become operational shortly.
- **The plastic waste processing facility can transform waste end-of-life plastic into usable automobile fuels like diesel and petrol** in a singular process of sublimation, condensation and distillation.

Andhra Pradesh is the first state in India to have Five Deputy Chief Ministers one each from Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, backward, minority and Kapu communities. YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is the current Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. Andhra Pradesh is the first state in India to have three capital cities; there are Visakhapatnam (Executive capital), Amaravati (Legislative capital) and Kurnool (Judiciary). Andhra Pradesh High Court imposed a stay on implementation of 3 capitals.

Over 99 per cent of cities across country become Open Defecation Free

- Government said that more than **99 per cent of the cities across the country have become Open Defecation Free, ODF**. Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry celebrated six glorious years of Swachh Bharat Mission - urban and organised a webinar on ‘Swachhata ke 6 saal, Bemisaal’.
- The Minister said, when **Swachh Bharat Mission- urban was launched in 2014**, it was with the vision of achieving Clean India by 2nd October 2019, the 150th birth anniversary of the Father of the Nation. Housing and Urban Affairs Secretary, Durga Shanker Mishra said, **from a position of zero ODF states and cities in 2014, more than 97 per cent of Indian cities have now become ODF.**

Swachh Bharat Mission or Swachh Bharat Abhiyan or Clean India Mission was a country-wide campaign from 2014 to 2019, to eliminate open defecation and improve solid waste management (SWM) in urban and rural areas in India. The objectives of the mission also included eradication of manual scavenging, generating awareness and bringing about a behavior change regarding sanitation practices, and augmentation of capacity at the local level. Initiated by the Government of India, the mission aimed to achieve an “open-defecation free” (ODF) India by 2 October 2019, the 150th anniversary of the birth of Mahatma Gandhi. The mission aimed at progressing towards target 6.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals Number 6 established by the United Nations in 2015.

GCTC Energy Security Conference 2020

- **Union Minister Petroleum & Natural Gas and Steel Shri Dharmendra Pradhan** said that the clarion call given by Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for an ‘*Aatmanirbhar Bharat*’ will drive our efforts in evolving a comprehensive energy security architecture in the country. In his keynote address to ‘**GCTC Energy Security Conference 2020**’ organized by **Global Counter Terrorism Council**, he said that it will be marked by continuity of robust energy policies put in place over the last six years.
- Talking about the Conference’s **theme of Energy Security Towards Atmanirbhar Bharat**, Shri Pradhan said that we have adopted a multi-pronged strategy for achieving sustainable energy growth with reduced oil dependency, and align with *Atmanirbhar Bharat*. We are well on our way to **meet the target of 20% blending of ethanol in petrol and 5% blending of bio-diesel in diesel by 2030.**”
- Shri Pradhan said that the Government is focused to move towards a gas-based economy which is to **be achieved by promoting free gas markets in synchronization with creation of gas infrastructure for increasing gas share in primary energy mix to 15% by 2030**. He said that the Prime Minister Modi’s Vision to develop ‘**one Nation one Gas Grid**’, is guiding us in expanding gas infrastructure in the country.

The GCTF/GCTC is an informal, a-political, multilateral counterterrorism (CT) platform. It was launched in 2011. India is a founding member of GCTF. To reduce the vulnerability of people worldwide to terrorism by preventing, combating, and prosecuting terrorist acts and countering incitement and recruitment to terrorism. Dharmendra Debendra Pradhan is currently serving as the Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas and Minister of Steel in the Second Modi Ministry. He was elected to the Rajya Sabha in March 2018 from Madhya Pradesh.

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated artificial intelligence ‘RAISE 2020’ Summit

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Summit RAISE 2020 – ‘Responsible AI for Social Empowerment 2020’ on 5th October 2020. The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and NITI Aayog are organized the Mega Virtual Summit on Artificial Intelligence from 5th October to 9th of October.
- The summit discussed cross-sector subjects like ‘Leveraging AI for Pandemic Preparedness’, the Impetus that Innovation Places on Digitisation’, Inclusive AI and Partnerships for Successful Innovation.
- In the spirit of ‘Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas’, Prime Minister Modi plans to leverage AI for inclusive development, representing the country’s ‘AI for All’ strategy. Directed by the Prime Minister’s vision, India will soon stand out in the international community not just as a leader in the Artificial Intelligence field, but also as a model to show the world how to responsibly direct AI for social empowerment.
- The summit was a global meeting of minds to exchange ideas and chart a course for using AI for social transformation, inclusion and empowerment in areas like Healthcare, Agriculture, Education and Smart Mobility, among other sectors.

Artificial intelligence (AI), sometimes called machine intelligence, is intelligence demonstrated by machines, unlike the natural intelligence displayed by humans and animals. The field of AI research was born at a workshop at Dartmouth College in 1956 where the term “Artificial Intelligence” was coined by John McCarthy to distinguish the field from cybernetics and escape the influence of the cyberneticist Norbert Wiener.

Second edition of Indian, Bangladesh Navy Bilateral Exercise ‘Bongosagar’ concluded

- The 2nd edition of Indian and Bangladesh Navy Bilateral Exercise Bongosagar is concluded in Northern Bay of Bengal on 5 October 2020.
- Exercise is aimed at developing interoperability and joint operational skills through conduct of a wide spectrum of maritime exercises and operations. The Ministry of Defence in a statement said, ships from both navies will participate in surface warfare drills, seamanship evolutions and helicopter operations.
- This exercise was followed by the 3rd edition of Indian and Bangladesh Navy Coordinated Patrol in Northern Bay of Bengal from 4th to 5th October, wherein both the units undertake joint patrolling along the International Maritime Boundary Line.
- This edition of Exercise Bongosagar assumes greater significance since it is being conducted during Mujib Barsho, the 100th birth anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Bangladesh is a country in South Asia. It shares land borders with India and Myanmar (Burma). Nepal, Bhutan and China are located near Bangladesh but do not share a border with it. Dhaka is its capital and largest city, followed by Chittagong, which has the country’s largest port. Bangladeshi taka is the currency of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh. Mohammad Abdul Hamid is the 16th and current President of Bangladesh, in office since April 2013. Sheikh Hasina is the current Prime Minister of the Bangladesh.

Quad Foreign Ministers of India, USA, Japan, Australia to hold discussions in Tokyo

- Foreign ministers of all four Quad countries have met in the Japanese capital Tokyo on 6th October 2020. External Affairs Ministry said, Foreign Ministers have discussed the post-COVID-19 international order and the need for a coordinated response to the various challenges emerging from the pandemic. Four ministers have also discussed regional issues and collectively affirm the importance of maintaining a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific.
- The foreign ministers of all four Quad countries - External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Australian Foreign Minister Marise Payne, and Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi were present for the face to face meeting, a first amid the COVID-19 pandemic. This is the second such Quad foreign ministers meet. In 2019, all the foreign ministers of Quad countries met on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly.

- On the sidelines of the meet, **Mr Jaishankar also has bilaterals talk with his Quad counterparts, including the US Secretary of State.** It takes place even as **India and the US are getting ready for 2+2 foreign and defence ministers meeting** that will take place later this month.

The **Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QSD, also known as the Quad)** is an informal strategic forum between the **United States, Japan, Australia and India** that is maintained by semi-regular summits, information exchanges and military drills between member countries. The QUAD member countries **primary aim is to uphold democratic values and maintain a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific.** The meeting of foreign Ministers of India, United States, Australia and Japan **holds high significance amid the global pandemic.** This is the second time the four foreign ministers met after their first meeting last year on the sidelines of the United Nations meet. The crucial meet will also **embolden one of the most powerful and decisive union of nations in the recent times.** The objective of the QUAD member countries, **remains advancing the security and the economic interests of all countries having legitimate and vital interests.** Exercise Malabar is a trilateral naval exercise involving the United States, Japan and India as permanent partners.

Arvind Kejriwal launches anti-pollution campaign for a clean and green Delhi

- Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal launched a mega anti-air pollution campaign,** saying polluted air can be life threatening in view of the COVID-19 pandemic. **Under the campaign “Yudh Pradushan ke Virudh”,** separate plans have been prepared for each of the 13 pollution hotspots in the city.
- An anti-dust campaign is being **initiated by the Delhi government to settle the dust.** As part of the campaign, a technology **developed by Pusa Agriculture Institute would be used to curb the menace of stubble burning.** The government will launch a photo-based app **‘Green Delhi’ for complaints related to pollution.** This App will be launched for citizens before the end of this month.

Delhi bordered by Haryana on three sides and by Uttar Pradesh to the east. According to the 2011 census, **Delhi city proper’s population was over 11 million, the second-highest in India after Mumbai.** **Anil Baijal is the current & 21st Lieutenant Governor of Delhi.** **Arvind Kejriwal is the current and 7th Chief Minister of Delhi.** The **Constitution (Sixty-ninth Amendment) Act, 1991 declared the Union Territory of Delhi to be formally known as the National Capital Territory of Delhi.**

SC orders violated in Chardham project

- The chairman of a Supreme Court-appointed expert committee has alleged violations of the court orders in the execution of the Chardham road project — a 900-km, Rs.12, 000-crore enterprise to connect pilgrimage spots in Uttarakhand.**
- A controversial aspect was the proposed width of the two-line highways envisaged. The SC committee was divided over the width with one set of members saying it only be 5.5-metre-wide and another plumbing for a higher road width. The SC ruled last month that a 5.5-metre width be enforced as it was in conformity with a 2018 **recommendation by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) for mountain roads.** **The MoRTH is also the key coordinator of the Chardham project.** Prior to this, the government had sanctioned a road width of 10-12 metres.

Char Dham National Highway is an under construction two-lane express National Highway with a minimum width of 10 metres in the Indian state of Uttarakhand. The proposed highway will complement the under construction Char Dham Railway by **connecting the four holy places in Uttarakhand states namely Badrinath, Kedarnath, Gangotri and Yamunotri.** The project includes 900 km national highways which will connect whole of Uttarakhand state

Smriti Irani launches first ever Brand & Logo for Indian Cotton on 2nd World Cotton Day

- Minister of Textiles Smriti Irani launched the first ever Brand and Logo for Indian Cotton on Second World Cotton Day (7 October 2020) through video conferencing.**
- Now India’s premium cotton would be **known as ‘Kasturi Cotton’ in the world cotton trade.** The Kasturi Cotton brand will represent Whiteness, Brightness, Softness, Purity, Luster, Uniqueness and Indianness.

- It produces about **six million tonnes of cotton every year which is about 23 per cent of the world cotton**. She said, **India produces about 51 per cent of the total organic cotton production of the world**, which demonstrates India's effort towards sustainability. Ms Irani also said that Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) made ever highest Minimum Support Price (MSP) operation of cotton.

Smriti Zubin Irani is the **current Textiles Minister** in the Government of India and was **given additional charge as Minister of Women and Child Development** in the 2nd cabinet of Modi since May 2019. A prominent leader within the Bharatiya Janata Party, she is a **Member of Parliament in the Lok Sabha, representing Amethi**.

Gujarat announces Digital Seva Setu Programme for rural areas

- Gujarat Government has announced Digital Seva Setu Programme for the rural areas**. Under this programme, the citizens will be able to get benefit from various public welfare services at the Panchayat level.
- AIR correspondent reports that the Digital Seva Setu has been **initiated under the Bharat Net Project- an initiative to connect the Village Panchayats through fibre network**.
- The villages of Gujarat will be **connected with a 100 MBPS optical fibre network under the Digital Seva Setu programme**. Digital Seva Setu programme has been announced by the Chief Minister Vijay Rupani at a press conference in Gandhinagar.
- The Phase-1 of Digital Seva Setu **started from 8th October**, which will cover **2,000 Village Panchayats**. About **20 types of pro-people services** will be provided at the village panchayat level.

Gujarat is a state on the western coast of India with a **longest coastline of India 1,600 km (990 mi)**. Its **capital city is Gandhinagar**, while its **largest city is Ahmedabad**. **Gujarat International Finance Tec-City** is a business district **promoted by the Government of Gujarat** through a joint venture company. **GIFT City is India's first operational smart city in the Ahmedabad and international financial services centre**. **Acharya Devvrat is Governor of Gujarat and Vijay Rupani is the current Chief Minister of Gujarat**. Gujarat has become the first state to implement newly-introduced **10 per cent reservations in government jobs and higher education for the economically weaker sections in the general category** and followed by Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh.

Piyush Goyal gets additional charge of Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution

- Union Minister Piyush Goyal** has been **given additional charge of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution** following the **demise of Ram Vilas Paswan**. President Ram Nath Kovind has directed that Mr. Goyal be assigned the charge of the Ministry in addition to his existing portfolios.

Piyush Vedprakash Goyal is **currently serving as the Minister of Railways and Minister of Commerce and Industry** in the Government of India. He was **elected as the BJP candidate from Maharashtra for the Rajya Sabha on 3 June 2016**.

Public places cannot be occupied indefinitely: SC on Shaheen Bagh stir

- The Supreme Court found the **indefinite "occupation" of a public road by the Shaheen Bagh protestors unacceptable**. A bench **headed by Justice S K Kaul** held that **public places cannot be occupied indefinitely** like during the Shaheen Bagh protests.
- The court said the protest, considered an iconic dissent mounted by mothers, children and senior citizens of Shaheen Bagh against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), **became inconvenient to commuters**.
- The **13-page judgment upheld the right to peaceful protest against a law** but made it unequivocally clear that **public ways and public spaces cannot be occupied, and that too indefinitely**.
- "Democracy and dissent go hand in hand**, but then the demonstrations expressing dissent have to be in designated places alone. The present case was not even one of protests taking place in an undesignated area, but was a blockage of a public way which caused grave inconvenience to commuters", **Sanjay Kishan Kaul, who authored the verdict for a three-judge Bench, observed**.

The Right to protest peacefully is enshrined in the Indian Constitution—Article 19(1)(a) guarantees the freedom of speech and expression; Article 19(1)(b) assures citizens the right to assemble peaceably and without arms. Article 19(2) imposes reasonable restrictions on the right to assemble peaceably and without arms. These reasonable restrictions are imposed in the interests of the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the State, friendly relations with foreign States, public order, decency or morality or in relation to contempt of court, defamation or incitement to an offence.

Tamil Nadu to set up advanced manufacturing hub in partnership with WEF

- **Guidance, nodal investment promotion and facilitation agency of the state of Tamil Nadu has partnered with the World Economic Forum (WEF) to establish India's first advanced manufacturing hub (AMHUB) in Tamil Nadu.**
- **Neeraj Mittal, MD & CEO, Guidance, Francisco Betti, Head of Advanced Manufacturing and Production, World Economic Forum and Ion Cronin, Project Lead, Advanced Manufacturing & Production, World Economic Forum witnessed the partnership between Guidance and the World Economic Forum.**
- **The Advanced Manufacturing HUB or AMHUB is one of the 19 platforms designed by the WEF. This platform focuses on engaging entire regional production ecosystems to identify and address regional opportunities and challenges brought by the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) by amplifying regional success stories, sharing best practices & incubating new partnerships, said Mittal.**

Tamil Nadu lies in the southernmost part of the Indian subcontinent and is bordered by the union territory of Puducherry and the South Indian states of Kerala, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh. Its capital and largest city is Chennai. Its official language is Tamil, which is one of the longest-surviving classical languages in the world. Banwarilal Purohit is the current Governor of Tamil Nadu.

MoHUA enters into MoU with Swiggy to take street food vendors online under PM SVANIDHI scheme

- **The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has entered into an MoU with Swiggy, one of the leading food delivery platforms, to onboard street food vendors on its e-commerce platform. The MoU aims at giving the street food vendors online access to thousands of consumers and help them grow their businesses. The arrangement has been facilitated under the Prime Minister Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) Scheme.**
- **The Ministry and Swiggy will run a pilot programme by on-boarding 250 vendors across five cities namely - Ahmedabad, Chennai, Delhi, Indore, and Varanasi. In a first of its kind initiative, the Urban Affairs Ministry has coordinated with the key stakeholders including Municipal Corporations, FSSAI, Swiggy and GST officials to ensure that necessary pre-requisites are completed for this initiative.**

The PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) was launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs on June 01, 2020 for providing affordable Working Capital loan to street vendors to resume their livelihoods that have been adversely affected due to Covid-19 lockdown. The duration of the scheme is until March 2022. Vendors can avail a working capital loan of up to Rs. 10,000, which is repayable in monthly instalments in the tenure of one year. On timely/early repayment of the loan, an interest subsidy @ 7% per annum will be credited to the bank accounts of beneficiaries through Direct Benefit Transfer on quarterly basis. There will be no penalty on early repayment of loan. The scheme promotes digital transactions through cash back incentives up to an amount of Rs. 100 per month. The vendors can avail the facility of escalation of the credit limit on timely/early repayment of loan.

Centre appoints chief commissioner for gurdwara polls, sets ball rolling

- **In a first step to pave the way for holding the long pending Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) elections, the Centre approved the appointment of Justice S S Saron (retd) as Chief Commissioner, Gurdwara Elections.**

- The proposal was **approved by the Appointments Committee of the Union Cabinet**. Once there is official notification, the Chief Commissioner, Gurdwara Elections, will set the ball rolling for SGPC elections where fresh voter lists would be prepared, among other things.
- As per the **new rules notified by the Union Home Ministry in October 2014 for the appointment of Chief Commissioner, Gurdwara Elections**, “The central government shall seek from the Registrar, Punjab and Haryana High Court, a panel of at least three retired judges not exceeding the age of 70 years who have retired from the Punjab and Haryana High Court”.
- As per the new rules, the “**search-cum-selection committee consisting of Home Secretary as Chairman and Law Secretary and Secretary, Department of Expenditure will recommend a panel of suitable candidates for the post, in order of preference, to Appointments Committee of Cabinet for the final selection**”.

Delhi Cabinet gives nod for ‘Tree Transplantation Policy’

- **The Delhi Cabinet at a meeting approved the ‘Tree Transplantation Policy’ for the preservation of trees in the Capital**. Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said the Cabinet also gave its nod for the installation of the second smog tower in the world at Connaught Place within ten months.
- **Delhi is the first State in India to pass this policy. A minimum of 80% of trees affected by a development or construction project will be transplanted and as much 80% of the transplanted trees must survive after transplantation.**
- Mr. Kejriwal also said that the Delhi government will **form a panel of agencies for tree transplantation and the government departments concerned will contact these agencies.**

EC revises norms concerning star campaigners for all ongoing & future elections

- With a view to ensuring the **conduct of free, fair, peaceful, transparent, ethical and safe elections during COVID-19**, the Election Commission has revised the norms concerning star campaigners for all ongoing and future elections during the period of pandemic COVID-19.
- In the revised norms, the Commission said the maximum limit on the **number of star campaigners for recognized National and State political parties will be 30 in place of 40 and for unrecognized registered political parties it will be 15 in place of 20.**
- It said, the period of submission of the list of **star campaigners is extended from 7 days to 10 days from the date of notification**. Political parties, which have already submitted list of star campaigners will resubmit a revised list within the stipulated period.
- It said, request for permission for the campaigning by star campaigners are to be **submitted to the district election authorities at least 48 hours before the start of campaign** so that all necessary safety measures are put in place well in time.

Election Commission of India operates under the authority of Constitution per Article 324. The body administers elections to the Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, state Legislative Assemblies in India, and the offices of the President and Vice President in the country. Chief Election Commissioner of India is usually a member of the Indian Civil Service and mostly from the Indian Administrative Service. It is very difficult to remove the authority of the Chief Election Commissioner once appointed by the president, as two-thirds of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha need to vote against him for disorderly conduct or improper actions. Sukumar Sen was the first Chief Election Commissioner of India, serving from 21 March 1950 to 19 December 1958.

India's first Lichen Park comes up in Uttarakhand

- **Indicator of pollution levels in the Himalayas**, Uttarakhand forest department has claimed to have developed India's first lichen park in Kumaon's Munsiyari area, spread over 1.5 acres with over 80 species of lichens collected from across the Himalayan state.
- **Considered most significant bio-indicator of ecosystem fluctuations** as they are more sensitive towards habitat and climate changes, lichen species are facing many threats and **continue to decline from some areas of**

Himalayan regions because of overexploitation of natural resources, mounting pressures of urbanization, habitat-destruction, deforestation and increasing pollution, according to forest officials.

- **Uttarakhand has got its first lichen park.** Spread over an area of over 1.5 acres, it is presently being regulated in terms of visitors to ensure overcrowding does not take place in the wake of the pandemic.

Uttarakhand is often referred to as the Devbhumi, due to many Hindu temples and pilgrimage centres found throughout the state. On 9 November 2000, Uttarakhand became the 27th state of the Republic of India, being created from the Himalayan and adjoining northwestern districts of Uttar Pradesh. Trivendra Singh Rawat is the eighth and current Chief Minister of Uttarakhand. Baby Rani Maurya is serving as the seventh governor of Uttarakhand since 26 August 2018.

Uttar Pradesh CM inaugurates INOX oxygen plant in Modi Nagar

- On the path to self-sufficiency in medical oxygen production, **Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath inaugurated INOX oxygen plant at Modi Nagar in Ghaziabad** through Video conferencing.
- The inauguration of the oxygen plant, which has a capacity of 150 Tonnes per Day, coincided with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for Jan Andolan for creating awareness regarding Covid-19.
- On this occasion, he said the Oxygen Plant in state will help to fight Covid-19 better. He said Central and state governments are making continuous efforts to control the spread of Covid19 and now Uttar Pradesh has positivity rate of around 2.3 only.

PM delivered keynote address at Invest India Conference in Canada through video conferencing

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered the keynote address at the Invest India Conference in Canada through video conferencing on 8th October 2020.
- The forum aims to give Canadian business community a first-hand perspective of the opportunities to invest in India and showcase India as an investment destination. The conference is expected to witness participation of representatives from banks and insurance companies, investment funds, companies in sectors like aviation, electronics and manufacturing, consultant firms and universities.

Indian Air Force celebrates its 88th Anniversary

- The Indian Air Force, IAF, is celebrated its 88th anniversary on 8 October 2020. The IAF was founded on October 8, 1932. A scintillating air display by various aircraft was the hallmark of the Air Force Day Parade cum Investiture Ceremony at Air Force Station Hindan, Ghaziabad.
- The air display commenced with flag bearing sky divers of the famous AKASH GANGA Team dropping out of an AN-32 aircraft in their colourful canopies. The flypast included the vintage aircraft, modern transport aircraft and frontline fighter aircraft. The ceremony concluded with a spell binding aerobatic display. President, Vice President and Prime Minister have greeted all Air Force personnel on this occasion.

Indian Air Force (IAF) is the air arm of the Indian Armed Forces. Its complement of personnel and aircraft assets ranks fourth amongst the air forces of the world. The President of India holds the rank of Supreme Commander of the IAF. Air Chief Marshal Rakesh Kumar Singh Bhadauria is the current Chief of the Air Staff of the Indian Air Force.

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari initiates Asia's longest ZojiLa Tunnel works virtually

- In Ladakh Union Territory, Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Mr Nitin Gadkari initiated Asia's longest ZojiLa Tunnel works virtually, by igniting ceremonial blasts. The 15 years old languishing project finally took off with twin blasts at East portals of Meenamarg and Baltal.
- Minister Nitin Gadkari also sets a target for the National Highway Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL) and the contractor to complete the construction before 2024.
- ZojiLa is a challenging and dangerous route especially during the winters. This pass on national Highway One gets closed nearly six months in a year. In completion, the single tube ZojiLa Tunnel will have a bi-directional two lane with a design speed of 80 kilo meters in the tunnel.

- **The Rs. 4,430 crore Tunnel** will reduce the travel time in the stretch from three and half hours to just 15 minutes. ZojiLa tunnel will be a signature infrastructure in Ladakh region. Along with the socio economic development of the region, the tunnel also provides facility for swift movement of armed forces from other parts of the country as and when required.

Zoji La Tunnel is a 14.2 km long road tunnel under Zoji La pass in the Himalayas between Sonmarg and Drass town in Kargil district of the Indian Union Territory of Ladakh, currently under construction. The tunnel along with 6.5 km long Z-Morh Tunnel, (which is 22 km before Zoji La tunnel towards Srinagar) will ensure year-long road connectivity between Srinagar and Kargil which currently remains closed for about seven months due to heavy snowfall on the Zoji La pass which is situated at an altitude of 3,528 m (11,578 feet) on Srinagar-Kargil-Leh highway.

Nitin Jairam Gadkari was served as the President of the BJP from 2010-2013. He is the current Minister for Road Transport & Highways of India and Shipping Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in the Government of India. Gadkari represents Lok Sabha from Nagpur constituency, Maharashtra.

Blue Flag certification is given by the non-governmental organisation (NGO) the Foundation for Environmental Education, the Blue Flag is a well-recognised voluntary eco-label given to a beach, marina, or sustainable boating tourism operator which meets its standards. It is headquartered in Copenhagen, Denmark. A beach has to meet 33 criteria including environmental, educational, safety, and accessibility criteria fixed by the FEE to get the tag.

Goa becomes first state to provide 100 pc tap water connections in rural areas

- Goa has become the first state in the country to provide 100 per cent tap water connections in rural areas covering 2.30 lakh households. The government's Jal Jeevan Mission aims to provide piped water to all rural households by 2024.
- "Goa has earned itself the unique distinction of becoming first 'Har Ghar Jal' state in the country as it successfully provides 100 per cent functional household tap connections (FHTCs) in the rural areas covering 2.30 lakh rural households," the Jal Shakti Ministry said.
- The Jal Jeevan Mission aims for providing piped drinking water to all rural households by 2024. The Jal Shakti Ministry is the nodal ministry for the implementation of the scheme.
- Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) envisages supply of 55 litres of water per person per day to every rural household through Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTC) by 2024. The ministry will roll out the government's ambitious plan ('Nal se Jal' scheme under Jal Jeevan Plan) to provide piped water connection to every household in India by 2024.

In December 2019, India celebrates the 57th Goa Liberation Day in commemoration of the Indian armed forces freeing Goa from Portuguese rule. On December 19, 1961, India completed Operation Vijay, ending Portugal's 450-year rule over the state. The operation was carried out with minimal bloodshed and forced the Portuguese Governor General Vassalo da Silva to give up control of Goa. Within three days of the attack starting, Goa finally achieved independence and became a part of India. In 1963, the Parliament passed the 12th Amendment Act to the Constitution of India, formally integrating the captured territories into the Indian Union. It was in 1987 that Goa was separated from Daman and Diu and made a full-fledged state. Goa is region known as the Konkan. Satya Pal Malik is the current Governor of Goa and Pramod Sawant is the current Chief Minister of Goa.

Ministry of Jal Shakti is a ministry under Government of India which was formed in May 2019 under the second Modi ministry. This was formed by merging of two ministries; Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation and Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation. Since 31 May 2019, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat is the Minister of Jal Shakti. The Minister of State (Jal Shakti) is Rattan Lal Kataria. The ministry was incorporated with an aim to clean the river Ganges.

PM Narendra Modi launches scheme to distribute property cards under Svamitva scheme

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the physical distribution of property cards under the 'SVAMITVA' (ownership) scheme via video conferencing, and asserted that it is a "historic move" set to transform rural India.
- The move will pave the way for villagers to use property as a financial asset for taking loans and other financial benefits. Property card holders include beneficiaries from 44 villages of Madhya Pradesh. On the inauguration of the scheme, the Prime Minister discussed with Dasharatha Singh Maravi of Guraiya village in Dindori district of the state.

Arunachal Pradesh to feature on India's aviation map with Greenfield airport at Hollongi

- Arunachal Pradesh is poised to feature on India's aviation map with a Greenfield airport at Hollongi, 15 kilometres from Itanagar. With estimated cost of 650 crore rupees, the project includes the development work, construction of airport pavements, air side work, terminal Building and city side works.
- The new domestic airport, with an area of 4,100 square metres, the Hollongi Airport will be able to handle 200 passengers during peak hours. Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the country's 100th and Sikkim's first Pakyong Airport.

Arunachal Pradesh is the northeastern-most state of the country. Itanagar is the capital of the state. Brigadier (Dr.) B. D. Mishra is the present Governor of Arunachal Pradesh. Pema Khandu is the current Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh.

NIT Tiruchirappalli signs MoU with C-DAC Pune for installing state of art super computer

- National Institute of Technology, Tiruchirappalli has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), Pune for installing a state of the art super computer in the process of becoming part of the National Super Computing Mission of the Government of India.
- The MoU was signed in the presence of Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology Sanjay Dhotre, Secretary of Department of Science and Technology Dr Ashutosh Sharma and Secretary of Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology Ajay Prakash Sawhney.
- Dr. Mini Shaji Thomas, Director, NIT, Trichy and Dr. Hemant Darbari, Director General, C - DAC signed the MoU. A total of 10 Centrally Funded Institutions have been inducted into NSM including IISc, Bangalore and seven IITs in addition to NIT, Trichy.
- The objective of the NSM is to empower technology institutions with high-performance computing capabilities that can be used for solving socially relevant, computationally intensive problems.

The Government of India created an indigenous development programme as they had difficulty purchasing foreign supercomputers. As of June 2020, when ranking by number of supercomputer systems in the TOP500 list, India is ranked 23rd in the world. Pratyush and Mihir are the supercomputers established at Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune and National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecast (NCMRWF), Noida respectively. Pratyush and Mihir are the fastest supercomputer in India with a maximum speed of 6.8 PetaFlops at a total cost of INR 438.9 Crore.

India to invest USD 6 bn for setting up a Petroleum refinery in Myanmar

- India has proposed to construct a petroleum refinery in Thanlyin region near Yangon, and is planning to invest USD 6 billion. "The project which could be a win-win arrangement for both countries, as of now has IOCL expressing its interest in the project.
- With investments of over USD1.2 billion, Myanmar has the highest Indian investment in any country in South Asia, and very recently, India approved an investment of over USD 120 million in the Shwe Oil and Gas project.

- To meet its increasing energy demands, **India was keen for a pact on the Myanmar-Bangladesh-India gas pipeline**, which could not materialise. The government of Myanmar has now identified natural gas and a critical component in its recently restructured energy sector.

Sittwe Port is a deep-water port constructed by India in 2016 at Sittwe, the capital of Rakhine State in Myanmar, on the Bay of Bengal. Situated at the mouth of the Kaladan River, the **USD 120 Million port is being financed by India as a part of the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project**, collaboration between India and Myanmar. **Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project** is a project that will connect the eastern Indian seaport of Kolkata with Sittwe seaport in Rakhine State, Myanmar by sea. **Aung San Suu Kyi** is a Myanmar politician, diplomat, author, and Nobel Peace Prize laureate (1991). She is the leader of the National League for Democracy and the first and incumbent State Counsellor, a position akin to a prime minister. She is also the first woman to serve as Minister for Foreign Affairs. The incumbent president is Win Myint.

Khattar launches mobile water testing laboratory van

- Haryana Chief Minister, Manohar Lal launched a mobile water testing laboratory Van**, equipped with a multi-parameter system containing analysers, sensors, probes, and instruments based on Colorimetric, Electrochemistry.
- This mobile laboratory is pegged to be an effective mode of surveillance of drinking water quality in rural areas in the state.** The lab is capable of measuring different water quality parameters like Ph, Alkalinity, TDS, Hardness, Residual Chlorine, Zink, Nitrite, Fluoride, Turbidity and Micro-biological Test of water samples.
- The Haryana government launched Swacchta Abhiyan (campaign) and became the first state in the country to achieve 100 per cent ODF status in rural areas. All urban areas in Haryana have also been certified as open defecation free (ODF)."**

Haryana was carved out of the former state of East Punjab on 1 November 1966 on linguistic basis. Among the world's oldest and largest ancient civilizations, the Indus Valley Civilization sites located at Rakhigarhi village in Hisar district of Haryana. Haryana is a landlocked state in northern India. As per the 2011 Census, Haryana has the lowest child sex ratio in the age group of 0-6 years in the country. According to the census, against 1,000 boys born, there were only 834 girls. The state capital of Haryana is Chandigarh, a Union Territory and also the capital of the neighboring state of Punjab. Kaptan Singh Solanki is the current Governor of Haryana.

India becomes first nation to be awarded Blue Flag certification for 8 beaches in a single attempt

- Eight Indian beaches have received the 'coveted' Blue Flag certification**, announced Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Prakash Javadekar.
- In a first, eight of India's beaches including Shivrajpur (Dwarka-Gujarat), Ghoghla (Diu), Kasarkod and Padubidri (Karnataka), Kappad (Kerala), Rushikonda (AP), Golden Beach (Odisha) and Radhanagar (A&N Islands) got the eco-label of Blue Flag in a row.**
- The iconic Blue Flag is one of the world's most recognised voluntary awards for beaches, marinas.** In order to qualify for the Blue Flag, a series of stringent environmental, educational, safety and accessibility criteria is met and maintained. The tag is sought as an indication of high environmental standards. **India was also awarded the 3rd Prize by the jury under "International Best Practices" for pollution control in coastal regions.**

Cabinet approves World Bank supported 'STARS' project to boost school education system

- The Union Cabinet has approved World Bank supported Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States -STARS project.** The Project seeks to support States in developing, implementing, evaluating and improving interventions with direct linkages to improved education outcomes.
- The total project cost is 5 thousand 718 crore rupees with the financial support of World Bank amounting to 500 million US dollar.** STARS project would be implemented as a new Centrally Sponsored Scheme under Department of School Education and Literacy. It will cover six States, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala and Odisha.

- The overall focus and components of the STARS project are aligned with the objectives of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 of Quality Based Learning Outcomes.

The Ministry of Education (MoE), previously the Ministry of Human Resource Development (1985-2020), is responsible for the implementation and formulation of the National Policy on Education approved by Union cabinet of India and to ensure that it is implemented in letter and spirit. The Ministry is held currently by Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank. He represents the Haridwar Parliamentary constituency of Uttarakhand in the 17th Lok Sabha. Abul Kalam is the First Minister of Education in the Indian. He is commonly remembered as Maulana Azad; the word Maulana is an honorific meaning 'Our Master' and he had adopted Azad (Free) as his pen name.

FM Nirmala Sitharaman participates in G20 FMs & Central Bank Governors meeting through video conferencing

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman participated in the Meeting of G-20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors under the Saudi Arabian Presidency through video conferencing.
- The Ministers and Governors of G-20 countries had gathered to discuss the current global economic outlook and G-20's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, along with other G-20 Finance Track priorities for the year 2020.
- One of the key outcomes of the G20 Action Plan has been the Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) which provides time bound suspension of debt service payments for the low income debtor countries that request forbearance. The initiative was initially in force till end of 2020. During this meeting, in light of the continued liquidity pressures, the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors agreed to extend the DSSI by 6 months, and to examine by the time of the 2021 IMF/WBG Spring Meetings if the economic and financial situation requires a further extension of the DSSI.

The G20 or Group of Twenty is an international forum for the governments and central bank governors from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States and the European Union. It was founded in 1999; the G20 aims to discuss policy pertaining to the promotion of international financial stability. Membership of the G20 consists of 19 individual countries plus the European Union (EU).

India hosts virtual Summit of Ministers of Justice of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

- The Seventh Meeting of Ministers of Justice of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Member States was hosted by Union Minister of Law and Justice Ravi Shankar Prasad on 16th October.
- Law and Justice Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad highlighted the initiatives taken by the Indian Government for providing affordable and easy access to justice for all. As part of activities of Justice Ministers' Forum, the Minister urged SCO Member States to promote exchange of ideas, best practices and experiences in identified areas through the platform.
- The Ministers of Justice and senior officials and experts from the Ministries of Law and Justice of India, Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan were participated in the Meeting.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is a Eurasian political, economic, and security organisation, the creation of which was announced on 15 June 2001 in Shanghai, China by the leaders of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan; the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Charter was signed in June 2002 and entered into force on 19 September 2003. India and Pakistan have become latest full members in SCO in 2017. The Secretariat of the SCO is the primary executive body of the organisation. It is headquartered in Beijing.

First-ever SCO Startup Forum to be launched on 27th October, boost for 'Startup India'

- The first-ever SCO Startup Forum will be launched on 27th October 2020 ahead of the SCO trade ministers meeting on 28th October.

- The forum will lay the **foundation for multilateral cooperation and engagement among the SCO Member States to develop and hone their startup ecosystems**, collectively. Innovation and Startups will be the key focus area of SCO Heads of Government meeting on 30th November 2020 to be hosted by India.
- The Forum shall **identify areas of cooperation by launching multiple entrepreneurial activities like startup showcases through a dedicated virtual platform, mobilizing capital for startups**, sharing of best practices, procuring social innovations, multilateral incubator programs and knowledge exchange workshops etc. It will aid to understand the cultural and economic features of the startup ecosystem in the SCO Member States.
- In the run up to the launch of SCO Startup Forum, a virtual SCO preparatory Seminar and a workshop were also organized by India. **Around 40 Indian Missions roped in to further augment Startup India efforts.**

UP government launches 'Mission Shakti' campaign to tackle crime against women

- **Uttar Pradesh government has launched a 6-month long women empowerment campaign 'Mission Shakti' to raise awareness and tackle crime against women in the state.**
- The campaign was **kicked off by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath from Devi Paatan Shakti Peeth in Balrampur**. The campaign was initiated by various ministers, public representatives and senior officials in **all 75 districts across the state.**

India gets re-elected as President of International Solar Alliance

- **India has been re-elected as the President of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and France as the Co-President for a term of two years.**
- This was decided during the **virtual meeting of third assembly of the International Solar Alliance attended by 34 ISA members. Four new Vice-Presidents were also chosen to represent the four regions of ISA.**
- The assembly also **approved the initiatives of the ISA Secretariat in institutionalizing ISA's engagement with the private and public corporate sector through the Coalition for Sustainable Climate Action.**

The International Solar Alliance is a common platform for cooperation among sun-rich countries lying fully or partially between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn. The initiative was launched at the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris at the end of 2015 by the then, President of France and the Prime Minister of India. In January 2016, Narendra Modi, and the then, French President François Hollande jointly laid the foundation stone of the International Solar Alliance headquarters and inaugurated the interim Secretariat at the National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE) in Gwalpahari, Gurugram, India.

Asan first Uttarakhand wetland to make it to Ramsar sites list

- **Asan Conservation Reserve has become the first wetland from Uttarakhand to be included in the prestigious Ramsar sites list. Besides Asan, Kabartal Wetland from Bihar was the second new site to get included in this list.**
- On the fresh inclusion, the Ramsar website stated that **"India has named two new Wetlands of International Importance, bringing its total number of 'Ramsar Sites' to 39."** With 2 more inclusions, the total number of Ramsar sites in India is 39, the highest in South Asia.
- **Till February 2020, only 37 sites from India were in the Ramsar site list, which has now been extended to 39.** Located 40 kms from Dehradun, Asan attracts a big population of migratory birds in winters. **The man-made wetland possibly attracts the biggest number of Brahminy Duck or Ruddy Shelduck in the entire India.**

Ramsar Convention on Wetlands is an intergovernmental treaty adopted in 1971 in the Iranian city of Ramsar, on the southern shore of the Caspian Sea. It came into force for India on 1st February, 1982. Those wetlands which are of international importance are declared as Ramsar sites. The Montreux Record is a register of wetland sites on the List of Wetlands of International Importance where changes in ecological character have occurred, are occurring, or are likely to occur as a result of technological developments, pollution or other human interference. It is maintained as part of the Ramsar List. At present, two wetlands of India are in Montreux Record: Keoladeo National Park (Rajasthan) and Loktak Lake (Manipur). Chilika Lake (Odisha) was placed in the record but later removed from it.

Indian and Sri Lankan navies held their annual exercise SLINEX

- The 8th annual joint exercise between Indian and Sri Lankan navies 'SLINEX-20' is held off Trincomalee coast, Sri Lanka. The 3-day exercise is continued till 21st of October. The Sri Lanka Navy is represented by SLN Ships Sayura and Gajabahu led by Rear Admiral Bandara Jayatilaka, the Flag Officer Commanding Naval Fleet, Sri Lanka Navy.
- Indigenously built ASW corvettes Kamorta and Kiltan under the command of Rear Admiral Sanjay Vatsayan, Flag Officer Commanding Eastern Fleet, have represented the Indian Navy. Defence Ministry said, Indian Navy Advanced Light Helicopter and Chetak helicopter embarked onboard IN ships, and Dornier Maritime Patrol Aircraft were also participated. SLINEX-20 aims to enhance inter-operability, improve mutual understanding and exchange best practices and procedures for multi-faceted maritime operations between both navies.

SLINEX (Sri Lanka India Naval Exercise) are a series of naval exercises between the Indian Navy and the Sri Lanka Navy. The first ever SLINEX exercise took place in 2005. Sri Lanka is an island country in South Asia, located in the Indian Ocean to the southwest of the Bay of Bengal. Sri Lanka is separated from the India by the Gulf of Mannar and the Palk Strait. Sri Jayewardenepura Kotte is the official, administrative capital of Sri Lanka. Colombo is the commercial capital and largest city of Sri Lanka.

Nitin Gadkari laid foundation stone for India's first-ever multi-modal logistic park in Assam

- Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari virtually laid the foundation stone for the first-ever multi-modal logistic park of the country in Assam.
- The event was presided over by the Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, and was attended by Union ministers Dr Jitendra Singh, Gen VK Singh and Rameshwar Teli and several ministers of Assam.
- The 694 crore rupees park at Bongaigaon district will provide direct connectivity to air, road, rail and waterways to the people of Assam. It will also give employment to 20 lakh people.
- It will be developed under the Bharatmala Pariyojana of the Centre. The fund for the multimodal logistics park would be spent in 3 components - road and railway connectivity as well as building and infrastructure work. An MoU will also be signed to implement the project.

Nitin Jairam Gadkari was served as the President of the BJP from 2010-2013. He is the current Minister for Road Transport & Highways of India and Shipping Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in the Government of India. Gadkari represents Lok Sabha from Nagpur constituency, Maharashtra.

Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar launches AYUSHMAN SAHAKAR scheme

- Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar launched AYUSHMAN SAHAKAR scheme. The scheme is a unique way to assist cooperatives play an important role in creation of healthcare infrastructure in the country. AYUSHMAN SAHAKAR scheme has been formulated by the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC).
- NCDC would extend term loans to prospective cooperatives to the tune of 10 thousand crore in the coming years. The ongoing pandemic has brought into focus the requirement of creation of more facilities. NCDC's scheme will be a step towards strengthening farmers welfare activities by the Central Government.
- The scheme aligns itself with the focus of the National Health Policy, 2017, covering the health systems in all their dimensions- investments in health, organization of healthcare services, access to technologies, development of human resources, encouragement of medical pluralism, affordable health care to farmers etc.

National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) is a statutory Corporation set up under an Act of Indian Parliament on 13 March 1963. NCDC is an autonomous development finance institution under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare. The objectives of NCDC are planning and promoting programmes for production, processing, marketing, storage, export and import of agricultural produce, foodstuffs, industrial goods, livestock and certain other notified commodities and services on cooperative principles and for matters concerned therewith or incidental thereto.

NITI Aayog to establish Frontier Technologies Cloud Innovation Centre with AWS

- In order to address societal challenges through digital innovation, NITI Aayog announced the establishment of a **Frontier Technologies Cloud Innovation Centre, CIC with Amazon Web Services (AWS)**. It is the **first of its kind in India**.
- **This CIC is part of the AWS CIC Global Programme** which provides an opportunity for government agencies, non-profits and educational institutions, to come together on pressing challenges, apply design thinking, test new ideas, and access the technology expertise of AWS.

The **National Institution for Transforming India**, also called **NITI Aayog**, was formed via a resolution of the **Union Cabinet on January 1, 2015**. NITI Aayog is the **premier policy ‘Think Tank’ of the Government of India**, providing both directional and policy inputs. The **current chairman of NITI Aayog is Shri Narendra Modi**, **current vice chairman is Dr. Rajiv Kumar** and the **current chief executive officer is Shri Amitabh Kant**.

Rajnath Singh approves new DRDO Procurement Manual-2020

- **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has approved a new DRDO Procurement Manual-2020**. This will encourage more participation of the Indian Industry including start-ups and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in Research and Development activity and also **to achieve the goal of self-reliance in Defence**.
- The new DRDO Procurement Manual will **facilitate the indigenous Defence Industry by simplifying the processes and ensuring their participation in design and development activities**. It would contribute towards realising the objective of ‘**Atmanirbhar Bharat**’. The DRDO PM was last modified in 2016.
- The PM-2020 also exempts bid security and performance security up to **Rs. 10 lakh** and does away with the requirement for negotiations for commercial off-the-shelf items or services wherever price discovery is happening through market forces. In addition, performance security for service contracts is linked to the payment cycle, instead of total contract value.

The **Ministry of Defence (MoD)** is charged with coordinating and supervising all agencies and functions of the government relating directly to national security and the Indian armed forces. The **President of India** is the ceremonial commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the country. The **Indian Armed Forces (including Indian Army, Indian Air Force, and Indian Navy) and Indian Coast Guard** under the Ministry of Defences are primarily responsible for ensuring the territorial integrity of the nation. A **military department** was created by the supreme government of the **British East India Company at Kolkata** in the year 1776. **Rajnath Singh** is currently serving as the **Defence Minister of India**. He has been representing the **17th Lok Sabha from Lucknow constituency**. He also served as **Union Home Minister of India** from 2014 to 2019.

EC sets up panel to study candidates’ expenditure limit

- The **Election Commission** had set up a committee “to examine the issues concerning expenditure limit for a candidate in view of the increase in number of electors and rise in the Cost Inflation Index and other factors.”
- The expenditure limit for **Lok Sabha and Assembly candidates is Rs 70 lakh and Rs 28 lakh respectively**, but the **Law Ministry** has approved a **10% hike for the COVID-19 period**.
- The committee, comprising former **IRS officer and Director General (Investigation) Harish Kumar** and Secretary General and **DG (Expenditure) Umesh Sinha**, would submit its report within 120 days of its constitution, an **EC statement** said. The expenditure limit for a candidate was last revised in 2014, and for **Andhra Pradesh and Telangana**, it was revised in 2018, the **EC** said.

Govt increases expenditure limit of candidates contesting Lok Sabha, Assembly elections by 10%

- The poll spending limit for candidates contesting **Lok Sabha and Assembly elections** has been enhanced by **10 percent**. Centre has approved this based on the recommendation of the **Election Commission** that contestants be allowed to spend more on campaigning keeping in mind difficulties they may face due to **COVID-19 curbs**.

- The notification issued by the Law Ministry last night said the **maximum expenditure a candidate can incur for campaigning in Lok Sabha polls is now Rs. 77 lakh**. It was Rs. 70 lakh earlier. The last time the expenditure ceiling was enhanced was ahead of the Lok Sabha polls in 2014.
- The ceiling on poll expenditure varies across States, with candidates in Assembly elections in **bigger States like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu now allowed to spend up to ₹30.8 lakhs as against ₹28 lakhs earlier**.
- **Goa, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim and a few Union Territories**, based on the size of their constituencies and population, have a lower ceiling on poll expenditure. Here while the **enhanced ceiling for a Lok Sabha candidate is now Rs.59.4 lakhs** those contesting an Assembly can spend up to Rs. 22 lakhs.

Election Commission of India operates under the authority of Constitution per Article 324. The body administers elections to the Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, state Legislative Assemblies in India, and the offices of the President and Vice President in the country. Chief Election Commissioner of India is usually a member of the Indian Civil Service and mostly from the Indian Administrative Service. It is very difficult to remove the authority of the Chief Election Commissioner once appointed by the president, as two-thirds of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha need to vote against him for disorderly conduct or improper actions. Sukumar Sen was the first Chief Election Commissioner of India, serving from 21 March 1950 to 19 December 1958.

India hosted third India-US 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue

- India has hosted the Third India-US 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue on 27th of October in New Delhi. United States Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Secretary of Defence Mark T. Esper were visited India to participate in the dialogue. From the Indian side, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar led the delegation.
- The first 22 Ministerial Dialogue was held in New Delhi in September 2018 and followed by the second in Washington DC in 2019. The agenda for the third dialogue will cover all bilateral, regional and global issues of mutual interest.
- India and the US inked landmark defence pact, Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement for Geo-Spatial Cooperation (BECA), to expand geospatial information sharing between armed forces of the two countries.
- The signing of the long-negotiated Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) during the third edition of the 2+2 dialogue between the two strategic partners also signals further boosting of bilateral defence and military ties and it comes in the backdrop of India's tense border standoff with China in eastern Ladakh.
- Other Agreements signed by India are the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA), the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) while the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) was signed a long time ago. An extension to the GSOMIA, the Industrial Security Annex (ISA), was signed at the last 2+2 dialogue.

The 2+2 dialogue is the highest-level (Ministerial) institutional mechanism between India and the USA that brings together the perspectives of the two countries on foreign policy, defence and strategic issues. India also holds such dialogue with Japan as well. India also holds 2+2 dialogue with Australia at the foreign secretary and defence secretary level.

Himachal Pradesh: Mandi district bags top position for implementation of PMGSY

- Himachal Pradesh's Mandi district has bagged top position among 30 districts of the country in successful implementation of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY). Himachal Pradesh has also secured second position at the national level for construction of roads under PMGSY.
- Union Ministry of Rural Development has declared the list of top performing 30 districts in the country for implementing the PMGSY programme. Mandi district has received top position for constructing roads under PMGSY of maximum length in 2020-21.
- The state has also improved its performance under PMGSY programme by constructing 1104 Kilometres roads this year from April till date. PMGSY is a programme funded by the Union government to connect habitations having population of more than 250 in the state.

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Virbhadra Singh declared Dharamshala as the second capital of the state after Shimla, making it the third Indian state to have more than one capital. The winter capital of Uttarakhand is Dehradun, the largest city of the state, which is a rail head. Gairsain, a town in Chamoli district is the summer capital of Uttarakhand. The High Court of the state is located in Nainital. While Maharashtra has Mumbai and Nagpur as its capitals, Srinagar and Jammu are the respective summer and winter capitals of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

J&K UT introduces certain substitutes in 226(2) Article of J&K Civil Service Regulations

- The Government of Jammu and Kashmir has introduced certain substitutes in 226(2) Article of Jammu and Kashmir Civil Service Regulations, on the orders of Lieutenant Governor.
- A notification issued by Finance Department states that the Government may, at any time after a Government servant has attained the age of 48 years or completed 22 years of service, as the case may be, retire him in public interest. Such a Government servant shall be granted pensionary benefits admissible under these rules on the basis of qualifying service put in by him on the date of such retirement.
- Setting the Time Schedule to be followed, it stated that the exercise of review of performance of the Government Servants will be initiated for each Government Servant for the first time after her/his completion of 22 years of Government Service or attaining 48 years of age and any time subsequently, as may be required.

Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019 re-constituted the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir into two union territories, Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, with effect from 31 October 2019. Girish Chandra Murmu is the first lieutenant governor of the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Manoj Sinha is the second and current Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir. Ladakh is a region administered by India as a union territory; Radha Krishna Mathur is the first Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh.

‘Common Man’ statue to come up in Jaipur School

- The signature creation of legendary cartoonist R.K. Laxman will be built to mark his birth centenary and commemorate his special connection with Pink City.
- A statue of “Common Man”, the signature creation of legendary cartoonist R.K. Laxman, will shortly come up at a school in Jaipur to mark the centenary year of his birth and commemorate his special connection with the Pink City. The late humorist, who died in 2015, had visited the Rajasthan Capital several times.
- The iconic character’s statue will be built at Merry Lands School in Jaipur’s Malviya Nagar area. Laxman had attended many functions at the school and interacted with its students.

Rasipuram Krishnaswami Iyer Laxman was an Indian cartoonist, illustrator, and humorist. He is best known for his creation The Common Man and for his daily cartoon strip, You Said It in The Times of India, which started in 1951. Laxman was known as “Pied Piper of Delhi”. He was awarded Ramon Magsaysay Award for Journalism in 1984. He was awarded Padma Vibhushan in 2005.

UP announces to provide assistance to labourers for historical & religious tour

- Uttar Pradesh Government has announced to provide financial assistance to labourers for historical and religious tour in a unique step towards welfare of the labourers in state. Government will also provide money to buy books for the study of their daughters.
- Government will give financial assistance of 12 thousand rupees to the labourers of state for the tour of historical and religious sites under Swami Vivekananda Historical Tourism Scheme.
- It was also decided to provide 7,500 rupees assistance for purchase of books under Mahadevi Verma Book Purchase Financial Assistance Scheme. This will be given to the labourers working in factories whose daughters are pursuing higher education.
- Apart from it, government has also decided to provide money to encourage those children of the labourers who are performing well in sports. Government will give 10 thousand rupees, if they got selected at district level, 25

rupees for selection at state level, 50 thousand rupees for National level and one lakh rupees will be provide for selection at international level in sports.

Ministry of Earth Sciences dedicates Flash Flood Guidance services for South Asian countries

- Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, **Dr. M. Rajeevan** dedicated **Flash Flood Guidance services**, first of its kind for **South Asian countries** namely **India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and Sri Lanka**.
- An automated mode of dissemination is to be **established with the stakeholders along with the use of social media**, so that the information reaches the concerned disaster authorities in a timely manner.
- **Dr. M. Mohapatra, Director General of IMD and Permanent Representative of India with WMO** assured the **member nations that the Guidance for flash floods** in the form of Threats 6 hours in advance and Risks 24 hours in advance will be provided by Regional Centre to National Meteorological and Hydrological Services, National and State Disaster Management Authorities and all other stake holders for taking necessary mitigation measures.

Indian Navy operationalises first batch of 3 women pilots on Dornier Aircraft at Kochi

- **Indian Navy** has operationalized the first batch of three **Women Pilots on Dornier Aircraft** by the **Southern Naval Command (SNC)** at Kochi. **India's first batch of women pilots** are ready to soar high on Dornier Aircraft. The three women pilots were part of the six pilots of the 27th Dornier Operational Flying Training Course DOFT.
- The three women pilots of the first batch are **Lieutenant Divya Sharma, Lieutenant Shubhangi Swaroop, and Lieutenant Shivangi**. These officers had initially undergone basic flying training partly with Indian Air Force and partly with the Navy prior to the DOFT course.

PM inaugurates India's biggest cardiac hospital in Ahmedabad and world's longest temple ropeway at Junagadh in Girnar

- **Prime Minister Modi** e-dedicated **India's biggest cardiac hospital** at **U.N. Mehta Institute of Cardiology and Research Center** and launched a **Mobile Application for tele-cardiology** at **Civil Hospital campus in Ahmedabad**.
- The new facilities have been **set up at the cost of Rupees 470 crore**, which has increased the existing 450 beds to 1251 beds, 531 cardiac ICU beds, 15 cardiac modular operation theaters and 6 cardiac cath labs.
- He also **launched the world's longest temple ropeway project at Girnar in Junagadh**. The Rupees 130 crore project will attract more tourists and pilgrims to this historical place which will boost employment opportunities.
- **Girnar ropeway project** consists a total of **25 cabins** and is of **2.3 kilo meters length and 900 meters height**. It operates at a capacity of 800 passengers per hour and 8000 per day.

Gujarat is a state on the western coast of India with a longest coastline of India 1,600 km (990 mi). Its capital city is Gandhinagar, while its largest city is Ahmedabad. Gujarat International Finance Tec-City is a business district promoted by the Government of Gujarat through a joint venture company. GIFT City is India's first operational smart city in the Ahmedabad and international financial services centre. Acharya Devvrat is Governor of Gujarat and Vijay Rupani is the current Chief Minister of Gujarat. Gujarat has become the first state to implement newly-introduced 10 per cent reservations in government jobs and higher education for the economically weaker sections in the general category and followed by Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh.

India's first seaplane to take off in Gujarat on October 31

- **India's maiden seaplane service** is likely to take off from **Sabarmati riverfront** to the **Statue of Unity** on October 31. **No-frills carrier SpiceJet** is in the **process of procuring a seaplane** for the venture from the **Maldives** which is expected to arrive on October 26 for the first regular service on the about 205 km stretch.

J&K has become first UT in country to operationalise PFMS at district level

- **Jammu and Kashmir** has become the first union territory in the country to operationalise public financial management system (PFMS) at the district level.

- The Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir has **become the first UT in the country to operationalise PFMS at the district level** with the **e-inauguration of eight district offices** by Additional Controller General of Accounts Subodh Kumar Mathur, the spokesperson said.
- The launch of these offices in Jammu and Kashmir will **result in improved programme administration and management, direct payment to beneficiaries and greater transparency and accountability in use of public funds**, he said.
- The PFMS state directorate J-K was established in 2016 like in the rest of the states and the UTs for operationalising PFMS and now it has emerged as the first UT in the country in terms of expanding the PFMS to districts which is a significant achievement for all the stakeholders.

Punjab CM Lays Foundation Stone of First Sports University

- **Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh** digitally laid the foundation stone of Punjab's first dedicated sports university and a bus stand, along with various other development projects in Patiala.
- The **Maharaja Bhupinder Singh Sports University** will be developed at Rs 500 crore, of which Rs 60 crore will be invested in the initial phase for the development of academic and administrative blocks and hostels on the campus, according to a government statement.

The state capital of Punjab is Chandigarh, a Union Territory and also the capital of the neighboring state of Haryana. The five rivers from which the region took its name were Sutlej, Ravi, Beas, Chenab and Jhelum; Sutlej, Ravi and Beas are part of the Indian Punjab. Captain Amarinder Singh is currently the 26th Chief Minister of Punjab and Vijayendrapal Singh Badnore is the current Governor of Punjab.

Uttar Pradesh secures first rank in disbursing loans under PM Swanidhi Scheme

- Uttar Pradesh government has **secured the first rank in central government's one of the most ambitious schemes - the PM Atmanirbhar Nidhi Scheme (SVANidhi Scheme)** by approving the highest number of loans under the scheme in the country.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will **distribute loans to around 3 lakh beneficiaries** and will interact with a few of them via video conferencing. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will also be present on the occasion. **State has ranked first in all the categories - Applications, Sanctions and Disbursements of the loans under the scheme.**
- **As many as 6,22,167 applications** were received under the scheme in the state which is highest in the country, out of which sanctions were given to 3,46,150 applicants while the loans were disbursed to 2,26,728 beneficiaries. **Seven cities of the state also find place in the list of top 10 cities of the country.**

The PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) was launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs on June 01, 2020 for providing affordable Working Capital loan to street vendors to resume their livelihoods that have been adversely affected due to Covid-19 lockdown. The duration of the scheme is until March 2022. Vendors can avail a working capital loan of up to Rs. 10,000, which is repayable in monthly instalments in the tenure of one year. On timely/early repayment of the loan, an interest subsidy @ 7% per annum will be credited to the bank accounts of beneficiaries through Direct Benefit Transfer on quarterly basis. There will be no penalty on early repayment of loan. The scheme promotes digital transactions through cash back incentives up to an amount of Rs. 100 per month. The vendors can avail the facility of escalation of the credit limit on timely/early repayment of loan.

Jammu and Kashmir High Court's Chief Justice, Gita Mittal inaugurated the first Family Court

- **In a first in the history of Jammu and Kashmir**, Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir High Court, Gita Mittal inaugurated a Family Court at District Court Complex Srinagar.
- Addressing the inaugural function, Chief Justice observed that the objective of establishing family court in J&K is to ensure speedy justice and inexpensive relief in family matters with least formalities.
- She highlighted background about the history of establishing of family courts across India and the enactment of Family Courts Act 1984 and its subsequent enactment in J&K after the promulgation of J&K Reorganization Act 2019.

The Jammu and Kashmir High Court is the high court for Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. It was established in 26 March 1928 by letters patent issued by the Maharaja of Jammu Kashmir. The seat of the court shifts between its summer capital Srinagar and winter capital Jammu of Jammu and Kashmir. The court has a sanctioned judge strength of 17 in which 13 are permanent judges and 4 are additional judges. Justice Gita Mittal was sworn in as the first woman Chief Justice of the Jammu and Kashmir High Court on 11 August 2018.

Uttar Pradesh emerged as top destination in 2019 attracting over 53 crore tourists

- Uttar Pradesh has emerged as the top destination for attracting the highest number of domestic tourists in 2019. The Indian Tourism Statistics (ITS), 2020, has announced that as many as 53.6 crore domestic tourists visited Uttar Pradesh in 2019 which was much higher as compared to 2018 when the state had got the second position after Tamil Nadu.
- Uttar Pradesh attracted the highest number of domestic tourists in the country in 2019 with a share of 23.1% travellers visiting the state. Uttar Pradesh also secured the third position in attracting foreign tourists with a record footfall of nearly 47 lakh foreigners visiting last year.
- The list, however, was topped by Tamil Nadu with nearly 68 lakh foreigners visiting last year. Surprisingly, Goa came last on the list with over 9 lakh foreign tourist visits in 2019.

Uttar Pradesh is the most populous state in India as well as the most populous country subdivision in the world. It was created on 1 April 1937 as the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh during British rule, and was renamed Uttar Pradesh in 1950, giving the acronym UP. The state is divided into 18 divisions and 75 districts with the capital being Lucknow. On 9 November 2000, a new state, Uttarakhand, was carved out from the state's Himalayan hill region. The two major rivers of the state, the Ganges and Yamuna, join at Allahabad and flow further east as Ganges. The state contributes 80 seats to the lower house of the Indian Parliament, Lok Sabha and 31 seats to the upper house of the Indian Parliament, Rajya Sabha.

Farooq Abdullah to lead Gupkar alliance

- Seven mainstream parties of Jammu and Kashmir gave formal shape to their recently cobbled alliance for the restoration of Article 370, electing National Conference's Farooq Abdullah as its chairman and PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti as vice chairperson.
- Veteran CPM leader M.Y. Tarigami was elected the convenor while Lok Sabha member from South Kashmir Hasnain Masoodi will be the coordinator of the conglomerate known as Peoples Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD).
- After a meeting held at Mehbooba's house, Abdullah, said the alliance is fighting for the restoration of special status to Jammu and Kashmir and is an "anti-BJP platform" and not an anti-national amalgam. As a mark of defiance to the constitutional changes made by the Centre with respect to Jammu and Kashmir last year, the alliance adopted the flag of the erstwhile state as its symbol.

Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019 re-constituted the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir into two union territories, Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, with effect from 31 October 2019. Girish Chandra Murmu is the first lieutenant governor of the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Manoj Sinha is the second and current Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir. Ladakh is a region administered by India as a union territory; Radha Krishna Mathur is the first Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh.

Nitin Gadkari lays foundation stones of nine NH projects in Tripura

- Union Minister for Road Transport, Highways and MSMEs Shri Nitin Gadkari virtually laid the foundation stones of nine National Highway projects with a total length of nearly 262 kms worth over Rs 2752 crore in Tripura. The event was presided by the Chief Minister Shri Biplab Kumar Deb, in the presence of Union MoSs Dr Jitendra Singh and Gen (Retd) Dr V K Singh, Ministers from the State, Members of Parliaments, MLAs and senior officers from the Centre and the State.
- These highways will strengthen the tourism sector in the state by providing better connectivity, fast and safe movement of traffic to various tourists, historical and religious places. It will also generate large number of

employment and provide self-employment opportunities to the unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled manpower of the region.

Tripura is the third-smallest state in the country; Agartala is the capital of Tripura as well as the second largest city in North-east India after Guwahati. Biplab Kumar Deb is the first the CM of the BJP government in Tripura. The BJP win ended the 25-year-old Left rule in the state. Ramesh Bais is serving as the 18th and current Governor of Tripura. Tripura is a landlocked state in North East India, where the seven contiguous states – Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura – are collectively known as the Seven Sister States.

Vigilance Awareness Week is observed across country

- The Central Vigilance Commission observes the Vigilance Awareness Week, 2020 from 27th October till 2nd of November. This year the theme is - Satark Bharat, Samridh Bharat (Vigilant India, Prosperous India).
- Vigilance Awareness Week is observed every year during the week in which the birthday of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel falls on 31st of October. The CBI is hosting a 3-day national conference on vigilance and anti-corruption.
- Central Bureau of Investigation has hosted a National Conference on Vigilance and Anti-Corruption (27th - 29th October, 2020) which was addressed by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on 27.10.2020 at 5 p.m. during the Vigilance Awareness Week which was webcast live and all organizations / departments of Central Government may watch the live webcast.

Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) is an apex Indian governmental body created in 1964 to address governmental corruption. In 2003, the Parliament enacted a law conferring statutory status on the CVC. It has the status of an autonomous body, free of control from any executive authority, charged with monitoring all vigilance activity under the Central Government of India, advising various authorities in central Government organizations in planning, executing, reviewing and reforming their vigilance work. It was set up by the Government of India Resolution on 11 February 1964, on the recommendations of the Committee on Prevention of Corruption, headed by Shri K. Santhanam Committee, to advise and guide Central Government agencies in the field of vigilance. Nittoor Srinivasa Rau, was selected as the first Chief Vigilance Commissioner of India. K V Chowdary is the first non-IAS and current head the Central Vigilance Commission.

India assumes Chairmanship of Governing Body of ILO after 35 years

- After 35 years, India has assumed the Chairmanship of the Governing Body of International Labour Organization (ILO). It marks a new chapter in the 100 years of productive relationship between India and ILO.
- Labour and Employment Secretary, Apurva Chandra, has been elected as the Chairperson of the Governing Body of the ILO for the period October 2020- June 2021. The governing body is the executive body of the ILO. It meets thrice a year, in March, June and November. It takes decisions on ILO policy, decides the agenda of the International Labour Conference, adopts the draft programme and budget of the organisation for submission to the conference, and elects the Director-General. At present ILO has 187 members.
- It will also provide a platform to appraise participants of the transformational initiatives taken by India in removing the rigidities of labour market besides making its intention clear about universalization of social security to all workers. Mr Chandra belongs to the 1988 batch of the IAS, Maharashtra Cadre.

International Labour Organization (ILO) is a United Nations agency whose mandate is to advance social and economic justice through setting international labour standards. Founded in 1919 under the League of Nations, it is the first and oldest specialised agency of the UN. The ILO has 187 member states. Guy Ryder is the tenth and current Director-General of the ILO. ILO is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.

Odisha launches web portal for inter-caste marriages, raises incentive to Rs 2.5 lakh

- To promote inter-caste marriages Odisha chief minister Naveen Patnaik launched a web portal that would help inter-caste couples get an incentive within 60 days of application.

- **Launching the Sumangal portal**, developed by ST & SC Development, Minorities & Backward Classes Welfare Department, CM Patnaik also announced **hike in the incentive from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 2.5 lakh**. Patnaik said such kind of marriages would lead to social harmony.
- To get the one-time incentive, the marriage should be between upper-caste Hindus and Hindu of scheduled castes. **The marriage should be valid as per the law and duly registered under the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955.**
- **One of the spouses should belong to the scheduled castes as defined under Article 341 of the Constitution of India.** The grant would be given only to people marrying for the first time. However in case, the bride is a widow or the bride-groom a widower, they would be eligible for the incentive. Incentive would also be given for the purchase of lands/essential articles for house-hold or for starting a business.

The **modern state of Odisha** was established on **1 April 1936**, as a province in **British India**. The **ancient kingdom of Kalinga**, which was invaded by the **Mauryan emperor Ashoka** in **261 BCE** resulting in the **Kalinga War**, coincides with the borders of **modern-day Odisha**. **Konark Sun Temple** is a **13th-century CE** sun temple at **Konark** about **35 kilometres northeast from Puri** on the **coastline of Odisha, India**. The temple is attributed to king **Narasimhadeva I** of the **Eastern Ganga Dynasty** about **1250 CE**. **Dr. Senayangba Chubatoshi Jamir** is current **Governor of Odisha**. **Naveen Patnaik** is the **current and 14th Chief Minister of Odisha**.

Feni Bridge connecting India and Bangladesh to be completed by December

- The **1.8 kilometre long Feni Bridge** connecting **Sabrum in India** with **Ramgarh in Bangladesh** will be completed by **December** this year. According to the Ministry, Road Transport Minister **Nitin Gadkari**, **Feni Bridge** being built at the cost of **Rs. 129 crore** will ease the transportation of goods from **Chattogram and Kolkata** ports. An **integrated check post** is also proposed to be built near **Sabrum**.
- The **RCC Bridge** over **Feni** will improve connectivity to the international border with **Bangladesh**. Describing **Tripura as the gateway of the ‘Act East Policy’ of the government**, Union Minister of State for Development of North Eastern Region **Dr. Jitendra Singh** said that very soon a **train to Bangladesh from Tripura** will start.

Feni River is a **river in southeastern Bangladesh and Tripura state of India**. It is a **trans-boundary river** with an ongoing dispute about water rights. **Muhuri River**, also called **Little Feni**, joins it near its mouth.

Mobile Polling Units going door-to-door for first time for collection of ballot papers

- In **Madhya Pradesh**, the **Mobile Polling Units** are going **door-to-door** for the **first time** for collection of **ballot papers**. By-elections are being held for **28 State Legislative Assembly** seats in the state.
- In view of the **Corona pandemic**, the **Election Commission** has provided the facility to the **elderly people above the age of 80, Divyangjan and Corona-infected patients** to vote from home through postal ballot. As per the information, **overall 29 thousand** such voters have agreed to cast votes under the **Vote from Home** facility. More than **15 thousand** voters have cast their votes so far. The **Election Commission** has also facilitated **Corona patients** to cast votes from home.

Election Commission of India operates under the authority of **Constitution per Article 324**. The body administers elections to the **Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, state Legislative Assemblies** in India, and the **offices of the President and Vice President** in the country. **Chief Election Commissioner of India** is usually a member of the **Indian Civil Service** and mostly from the **Indian Administrative Service**. It is very difficult to remove the authority of the **Chief Election Commissioner** once appointed by the president, as **two-thirds of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha** need to vote against him for disorderly conduct or improper actions. **Sukumar Sen** was the first **Chief Election Commissioner of India**, serving from **21 March 1950 to 19 December 1958**.

‘Electricity Access in India and Benchmarking Distribution Utilities’ report launched

- **NITI Aayog, Ministry of Power, Rockefeller Foundation and Smart Power India** launched the **‘Electricity Access in India and Benchmarking Distribution Utilities’** report. According to the report, **92 per cent** of customers reported the overall availability of electricity infrastructure within **50 metres** of their premises.

- 87 per cent of the surveyed customers have access to grid-based electricity. The remaining 13 per cent either use non-grid sources or do not use any electricity at all. The hours of supply have improved significantly across the customer categories to nearly 17 hours per day.
- The report is based on a primary survey conducted across ten states, representing about 65 per cent of the total rural population of India and with a sample size of more than 25 thousand, including households, commercial enterprises and institutions.

The National Institution for Transforming India, also called NITI Aayog, was formed via a resolution of the Union Cabinet on January 1, 2015. NITI Aayog is the premier policy 'Think Tank' of the Government of India, providing both directional and policy inputs. The current chairman of NITI Aayog is Shri Narendra Modi, current vice chairman is Dr. Rajiv Kumar and the current chief executive officer is Shri Amitabh Kant.

Indian Army develops messaging application 'Secure Application for Internet'

- Indian Army has developed a simple messaging application named the Secure Application for Internet (SAI). The application supports end to end secure voice, text and video calling services for Android platform over the internet.
- The model is similar to commercially available messaging applications like Whatsapp, Telegram, SAMVAD and GIMS and utilises end to end encryption messaging protocol. SAI scores over on security features with local in-house servers and coding which can be tweaked as per requirements. SAI will be utilised pan Army to facilitate secure messaging within the service.
- This initiative by the Indian Army can also be seen as a part of the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.' SAI was first developed by Colonel Sai Shankar, the commanding officer of a signals unit in Rajasthan, and then upgraded to military-grade standards.

Malabar naval exercise to begin next week off A.P. coast

- The first phase of the Malabar Naval exercise including Australia along with Japan and the U.S., is scheduled to be held next week off the Visakhapatnam coast. This is the first time Australia will be joining the exercise after 2007 and it will bring all four countries of the Quadrilateral grouping together for military games.
- Over three years after Canberra's request to join the exercise, last week India announced that Australian Navy would participate in Malabar 2020. "Phase 1 of the Exercise Malabar 2020 involving participation by Indian Navy, United States Navy, Japan Maritime Self Defence Force, and Royal Australian Navy is set to commence off Vishakhapatnam in Bay of Bengal from November 3 to 6".
- With the decision to include Australia in the drills by India in 2020, it will be the first time all members of the regional grouping known as the Quad will be engaging militarily.

Exercise Malabar is a quadrilateral naval exercise involving the United States, Japan, Australia, and India as permanent partners. Originally begun in 1992 as a bilateral exercise between India and the United States, Japan became a permanent partner in 2015.

Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Goa best governed States: report

- Kerala was adjudged the best governed State in the large States category, while Uttar Pradesh ended at the bottom, in the Public Affairs Index-2020 released by the Public Affairs Centre.
- The city-based not-for-profit organisation, headed by former Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) chairman K. Kasturirangan, said in its annual report that the States were ranked on governance performance based on a composite index in the context of sustainable development. Four southern States — Kerala (1.388 PAI Index point), Tamil Nadu (0.912), Andhra Pradesh (0.531) and Karnataka (0.468) stood in the first four ranks in the large State category in terms of governance. Uttar Pradesh (-1.461), Odisha (-1.201) and Bihar (-1.158) were at the bottom of the ranking.
- In the small State category, Goa ranked first with 1.745 points, followed by Meghalaya (0.797) and Himachal Pradesh (0.725). The worst performers with negative points were Manipur (-0.363), Delhi (-0.289) and Uttarakhand (-0.277).

- Chandigarh emerged at the top in the category of Union Territories with 1.05 PAI points, followed by Puducherry (0.52) and Lakshadweep (0.003). Dadar and Nagar Haveli (-0.69), Andaman, Jammu and Kashmir (-0.50) and Nicobar (-0.30) were the worst performers.
- According to the PAC, the governance performance is analysed in the context of sustainable development defined by the three pillars of equity, growth and sustainability.

Formerly known as the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), the mission of the Brundtland Commission is to unite countries to pursue sustainable development together. The Chairperson of the Commission, Gro Harlem Brundtland, was appointed by then United Nations Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar in December 1983. At the time, the UN General Assembly realized that there was a heavy deterioration of the human environment and natural resources. In India, at the Central Government level, NITI Aayog has been assigned the role of overseeing the implementation of SDGs in the country.

India's first defence park ready for launch

- India's first defence park is ready for inauguration at Ottappalam in Palakkad district of Kerala. Located on the Kochi-Coimbatore industrial corridor, the 60-acre park with state-of-the-art infrastructure is intended exclusively for manufacturing of defence equipment for the armed forces, as also markets abroad.
- The Kerala Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (KINFRA), the nodal agency for the project, has completed infrastructure development and civil works at the park.

Kerala first state in the country to fix floor price for vegetables

- Kerala had become the first state in the country to fix the floor price for vegetables. The floor price will be 20 per cent above the production cost of the vegetable. Even if the market price goes below the floor price, the produce will be procured at the floor price from the farmers.
- The produce will be graded and the floor price will be fixed based on the quality. Sixteen varieties of vegetables would be covered in the first phase and there is a provision to revise the floor price on a regular basis.

Asan first Uttarakhand wetland to make it to Ramsar sites list

- Kabartal, a freshwater marsh of North Bihar is designated as Ramsar Site. With this the network of Indian Ramsar Sites becomes the largest in South Asia. Asan Conservation Reserve has become the first wetland from Uttarakhand to be included in the prestigious Ramsar sites list.
- Till February 2020, only 37 sites from India were in the Ramsar site list, which has now been extended to 39, the highest in South Asia. Located 40 kms from Dehradun, Asan attracts a big population of migratory birds in winters. The man-made wetland possibly attracts the biggest number of Brahminy Duck or Ruddy Shelduck in the entire India.

Ramsar Convention on Wetlands is an intergovernmental treaty adopted in 1971 in the Iranian city of Ramsar, on the southern shore of the Caspian Sea. It came into force for India on 1st February, 1982. Those wetlands which are of international importance are declared as Ramsar sites. The Montreux Record is a register of wetland sites on the List of Wetlands of International Importance where changes in ecological character have occurred, are occurring, or are likely to occur as a result of technological developments, pollution or other human interference. It is maintained as part of the Ramsar List. At present, two wetlands of India are in Montreux Record: Keoladeo National Park (Rajasthan) and Loktak Lake (Manipur). Chilika Lake (Odisha) was placed in the record but later removed from it.

International



In a first, G20 summit to take place virtually this year due to COVID-19 pandemic

- For the first time in its over ten-year history, the G20 summit this year will take place virtually amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. The virtual summit will take place on November 21 and 22 and will be chaired by Saudi King, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud.
- No major global meeting is happening physically due to the COVID crisis and for the first time in its 75-year-old history, the United Nations General Assembly also met virtually. The theme of this year's virtual summit will be 'Realizing opportunities of the 21st Century for all'.
- Earlier this year, the G20 leaders met in even as the pandemic raged and took a number of coordinated actions including contributing \$ 21 Billion to support production, distribution, and access to diagnostics, therapeutics, and vaccine.
- G20, as a grouping at leaders' level, emerged in 2008 when the global financial crisis was underway. Since then the summit has been happening in various G20 countries. India will hold the 17th summit in 2022.

The G20 or Group of Twenty is an international forum for the governments and central bank governors from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States and the European Union. It was founded in 1999; the G20 aims to discuss policy pertaining to the promotion of international financial stability. Membership of the G20 consists of 19 individual countries plus the European Union (EU).

SAARC must deal with terrorism: External Affairs Minister Jaishankar

- External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said that the SAARC must overcome challenges like cross-border terrorism and obstruction of trade to ensure peace in the region. Speaking at an informal virtual meeting of foreign ministers of SAARC members, the EAM said, "Cross-border terrorism, blocking connectivity and obstructing trade are three key challenges that SAARC must overcome.
- In normal practice, the SAARC Foreign Ministers' meeting also prepares for the SAARC leaders' summit that last took place in 2014. Since then, India has refused to participate in the summit as it is due to be hosted in Pakistan. Sources said there was no clarity yet on whether there would be any move to host the summit virtually. At a special SAARC summit on COVID-19 hosted virtually by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on March 15, Pakistan PM Imran Khan had sent his Special Advisor on Health instead. All member countries have participated in the meeting, chaired by Pradeep Kumar Gyawali, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nepal.

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) is the regional intergovernmental organization and geopolitical union of nations in South Asia. Its member states include Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, the Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. SAARC was founded in Dhaka on 8 December 1985. Its secretariat is based in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Maldives set to become world's first country to offer a traveler loyalty program

- Maldives is on track to become the first country in the world to have its own hospitality loyalty program. The Maldives Border Miles program will reportedly have three tiers: Abaarana (Gold), Antara (Silver) and Aida (Bronze). The three names all come from Divehi, the Indian Ocean nation's primary local language.

Maldives is a **South Asian country**, located in the **Indian Ocean**, situated in the **Arabian Sea**. **Male** is the **capital and most populated city**, traditionally called the “**King’s Island**” for its central location. **Maldivian rufiyaa** is the currency of the Maldives. **Ibrahim Mohamed Solih** is the **current President of the Maldives**.

Singapore in world first for facial verification

- **Singapore** will be the **first country in the world to use facial verification** in its national identity scheme. The biometric check will **give Singaporeans secure access to both private and government services**.
- The **government’s technology agency** says it will be “**fundamental**” to the country’s **digital economy**. It has been trialled with a bank and is now being rolled out nationwide. It not only identifies a person but ensures they are genuinely present.

Singapore is a **sovereign city-state and island country** in **Southeast Asia**. **Singapore dollar** is the **official currency** of Singapore. **Lee Hsien Loong** is the **current Prime Minister** of Singapore. **Halimah binti Yacob** is the **current President** of Singapore. She is the **first female president** in the country’s history.

Saudi Arabia Sends Blue Ammonia to Japan in World-First Shipment

- A pilot study conducted by the **Institute of Energy Economics, Japan and Saudi Aramco in partnership with Saudi Basic Industries Corp** has seen the **world’s first shipment of blue ammonia from Saudi Arabia to Japan to be used in power generation**. **Blue ammonia is a feedstock for blue hydrogen**. The Saudi Japan blue ammonia supply demonstration study focuses on converting hydrocarbons to hydrogen and then to ammonia as well as the capture of associated carbon dioxide emissions. Ammonia derived from renewable sources that create no emissions is known as green ammonia.
- Japan has committed to **reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by 26% by 2030 from 2013 levels, under the Paris climate pact**. Since blue ammonia can be burned in a thermal power station without releasing carbon emissions, it has the potential to make a significant contribution to the country’s low carbon future. The study also represents a way for Saudi Aramco to demonstrate the potential for hydrocarbons as a source of low carbon hydrogen. **Japan will receive 40 tons of blue ammonia in the first shipment**.

Saudi Arabia is a **sovereign Arab state** in **Western Asia**. **Saudi Arabia** is the **largest country in the Middle East**. **Riyadh** is the **capital and most populous city** of Saudi Arabia. **Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud** has been **King of Saudi Arabia, Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia**, and **Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques** since 23 January 2015. **Mohammad bin Salman** is the **Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia**, also serving as **First Deputy Prime Minister**, **President of the Council for Economic and Development Affairs** and **Minister of Defense**—the **world’s youngest office holder at the time**. **Saudi riyal** is the **currency of Saudi Arabia**.

World’s first hydrogen-powered yacht unveiled in Monaco

- The **world’s first hydrogen powered yacht** has just left **La Ciotat Dockyard**. The yacht was **designed by Hynova Boat**, a French company which promotes sustainable sailing. The model of the **367-foot yacht** was the **pinnacle of luxury and sophistication**. It would have a top speed of **17 knots** and a range of **3,750 nautical miles**. It would have a futuristic but luxurious look.

Monaco is a **sovereign city-state, country, and microstate** on the **French Riviera in Western Europe**. **Pierre Dartout** is a **French civil servant** who **currently serves as the Minister of State of Monaco** since September 2020. **Albert II** is the **reigning Prince of Monaco**. **Euro** is the **official currency of Monaco**.

Brazil has now declared that the world-famous samba carnival parade will be postponed.

- **Samba schools that organise the event in Rio de Janeiro**, made the announcement. **This is the first time in more than a century** that the carnival has been **postponed**. The carnival is **celebrated for its colours, the samba dancing and music, the drummers, among other such things**.

- The outlet reports that it can attract a whopping crowd of up to two million people every day, and as such, maintaining a distance and following other safety norms amid the pandemic may be impossible. **The celebration is believed to date back to the 1600s, when it was originally a food festival.**

Brazil is the largest country in both South America and Latin America. Brazil is the world's fifth-largest country by area and the sixth most populous. Brasília is the federal capital of Brazil and seat of government of the Federal District. Brazilian real is the official currency of Brazil. Brazil is the undisputed largest coffee-producing nation in the world. India is the seventh largest coffee-producing nation in the world. Karnataka is the largest coffee-producing state in the India. Jair Bolsonaro is the current President of Brazil.

Amsterdam, Helsinki first cities to introduce open AI registers

- Amsterdam and Helsinki became the first two cities in the world to introduce an open Artificial Intelligence (AI) register that updates its residents about the city's use of AI in public services.**
- Through the register, the cities aim to make AI in public services operate on same principles of responsibility, transparency and security as other activities they administer. The city officials believe openness will enable stronger shared participation in the development of AI.**

Artificial intelligence (AI), sometimes called machine intelligence, is intelligence demonstrated by machines, unlike the natural intelligence displayed by humans and animals. The field of AI research was born at a workshop at Dartmouth College in 1956 where the term "Artificial Intelligence" was coined by John McCarthy to distinguish the field from cybernetics and escape the influence of the cyberneticist Norbert Wiener.

2nd edition of Indian, Bangladesh Navy Bilateral Exercise 'Bongosagar' commenced on Oct 3

- The 2nd edition of Indian and Bangladesh Navy Bilateral Exercise Bongosagar is commenced in Northern Bay of Bengal.**
- Exercise is aimed at developing interoperability and joint operational skills through conduct of a wide spectrum of maritime exercises and operations. The Ministry of Defence in a statement said, ships from both navies are being participated in surface warfare drills, seamanship evolutions and helicopter operations.**
- This exercise is being followed by the 3rd edition of Indian and Bangladesh Navy Coordinated Patrol in Northern Bay of Bengal from 4th to 5th October, wherein both the units will undertake joint patrolling along the International Maritime Boundary Line.**
- This edition of Exercise Bongosagar assumes greater significance since it is being conducted during Mujib Barsho, the 100th birth anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.**

Crown prince Sheikh Nawaf Al Ahmad Al Sabah becomes Kuwait's new ruling emir

- Kuwait's Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al Ahmad Al Sabah became the oil-rich nation's new ruling emir, reaching the highest post in the country after decades in its security services.**
- Sheikh Nawaf had served as the crown prince since 2006, jumping a traditional order of alternating rule between the Al Jaber and the Al Salim branches of the country's ruling family.**

Kuwait is a country in Western Asia. Situated in the northern edge of Eastern Arabia at the tip of the Persian Gulf, it borders Iraq to the north and Saudi Arabia to the south. As of 2016, Kuwait has a population of 4.5 million people: 1.3 million are Kuwaitis and 3.2 million are expatriates. Expatriates account for approximately 70% of the population. Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is the Crown Prince of Kuwait. Aged 80 years, he is the oldest Crown Prince in the world. The Kuwaiti dinar is the currency of Kuwait.

Dubai to unveil world's largest fountain on Oct 22

- In a bid to make a Guinness World Record, Dubai is all set to unveil the world's largest fountain on October 22. The fountain will be located at the Pointe, a lifestyle and dining destination, and will be spread over 14,000 sq ft of sea water while its super shooter will be 105-metre tall and have over 3,000 LED lights.**

- **The Palm Fountain** will have **20 bespoke shows with five different shows running daily between sunset and midnight (7 pm to 12 am)** while swaying to an array of popular songs including Khaleeji, pop, classic, international and more. Each show will last three minutes and will be performed every 30 minutes.

Abu Dhab is the capital and the second most populous city of the United Arab Emirates (the most populous being Dubai), and also capital of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, the largest of the UAE's seven emirates. United Arab Emirates (UAE) is a federal sovereign absolute monarchy in Western Asia. Khalifa Al Nahyan is the current President of the United Arab Emirates. Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum is the Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Ruler of the Emirate of Dubai. United Arab Emirates dirham is the currency of the United Arab Emirates.

Azerbaijani Army lost over 3,000 servicemen in war with Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh region

- **The Azerbaijani Army** has lost more than **3,000 servicemen** since the eruption of hostilities in conflict-torn Nagorno-Karabakh, the press secretary of the president of the self-proclaimed Republic of Artsakh.
- “The intelligence data show that the **Azerbaijani losses had already exceeded 3,000 servicemen**. Most bodies remain in the neutral zone, and nothing is being done for their transportation,” said the spokesman of the separatist leader, **Vagram Pogosyan** on his Facebook page.
- **Azerbaijan** launched what it described as a “counteroffensive,” while the Artsakh authorities accused Azerbaijani forces of opening fire against civilians and civilian infrastructure in its capital of Stepanakert. The armed hostilities continue at this point.

Azerbaijan is a country in the Caucasus region of Eurasia. **Baku** is the capital and largest city of Azerbaijan, as well as the largest city on the Caspian Sea and of the Caucasus region. The city is renowned for its harsh winds, which is reflected in its nickname, the “City of Winds”. The manat is the currency of Azerbaijan. **Ilham Aliyev** is the fourth president of Azerbaijan, in office since 2003. **Ali Hidayat oğlu Asadov** is currently serving as the Prime Minister of Azerbaijan following his appointment to the post on 8 October 2019 by President Ilham Aliyev.

New Caledonia votes on becoming independent from France

- **Voters in New Caledonia** turned out in large numbers to decide whether the archipelago in the South Pacific should get independence from France and break ties that were first established in the mid-19th century.
- **Independence referendum** is part of a three-decade decolonization effort aimed at settling tensions on the archipelago between native Kanaks seeking independence and residents willing to remain in France.
- **More than 180,000 voters** were invited to answer the question: “Do you want New Caledonia to gain full sovereignty and become independent?” “Today is not a day like any other. Everyone woke up with the will to express oneself (through the vote). This is a historic day,” Robert Wayaridri, 60, told The Associated Press. In **Noumea**, the capital, large lines of people waited to vote under the hot sun, sometimes for hours.

New Caledonia is a special collectivity of France in the southwest Pacific Ocean. The capital of the territory is **Noumea**. **Thierry Santa** is a French politician in New Caledonia serving as the 9th and current President of the Government of New Caledonia. **CFP franc** is the currency used in the French overseas collectivities of French Polynesia, New Caledonia and Wallis and Futuna.

Xi Jinping pitches for closer ties with Bangladesh, seeks BRI push

- **Chinese President Xi Jinping** said he stands ready with Bangladesh leaders to better align the two countries' strategies and jointly promote the construction of his multi-billion dollar Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) to take the strategic partnership of the two countries to new heights.
- Mr. Xi made the remarks in an exchange of congratulatory messages with his Bangladesh counterpart, **Mohammad Abdul Hamid**, on the 45th anniversary of the establishment of the bilateral diplomatic relationship. The BRI

has been a **major bone of contention** between India and China as one portion of the corridor passes through **Pakistan-occupied Kashmir**.

- Besides Pakistan, where **China initiated over \$60 billion** as part of the **China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)**, **China** has stepped up its **huge infrastructure investments** in **Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Maldives** rising concerns of its growing influence in India's immediate neighbourhood.

Belt and Road Initiative is a **global infrastructure development strategy** adopted by the **Chinese government** in **2013** to invest in **nearly 70 countries and international organizations**. It is considered a **centerpiece of Communist Party of China general secretary Xi Jinping's foreign policy**. "Belt" refers to the overland routes for road and rail transportation, called **"the Silk Road Economic Belt"**; whereas **"road"** refers to the sea routes, or the **21st Century Maritime Silk Road**. It was incorporated into the Constitution of the People's Republic of China in 2017.

US, Russia to hold latest nuclear arms talks in Finland

- The **United States and Russia** will hold a round of **nuclear arms control talks** in the **Finland's capital, Helsinki**, to follow up on negotiations in Austria this summer, the Finnish president's office said.
- "The round of discussions on strategic stability and nuclear weapons between the United States and Russia, which began in Vienna in the summer, will continue in Helsinki," the office of the **Finnish President Sauli Niinisto** said in a brief statement. The office said **nuclear arms negotiators from Washington and Moscow met a previous time in Finland in 2017**.
- The talks are aimed at **producing a new agreement to replace the New START treaty** that expires in February — the last remaining pact constraining the arsenals of the world's two major nuclear powers. According to Russian news agency TASS, the previous round of consultations

India, Myanmar agree to operationalise Sittwe port in first quarter of 2021

- India and Myanmar** have agreed to work towards the **operationalisation of the Sittwe port in the Rakhine state** in the first quarter of 2021.
- 3000 vials of Remdesivir** was presented to the **State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi**, symbolic of India's commitment to assist Myanmar in its fight against the pandemic.
- India and Myanmar discussed the progress in the ongoing **Indian-assisted infrastructure projects such as the Trilateral Highway and the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project**. India thanked Myanmar for handing over 22 cadres of the Indian Insurgent groups to it.
- India announced a **grant of USD 2 million** for the **construction of the border Haat Bridge** at **Byanyu/Sarsichauk** in Chin State that will provide increased economic **connectivity between Mizoram and Myanmar**.

Sittwe Port is a **deep-water port** constructed by India in 2016 at Sittwe, the capital of **Rakhine State in Myanmar**, on the Bay of Bengal. Situated at the mouth of the Kaladan River, the **USD 120 Million port is being financed by India** as a part of the **Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project**, collaboration between India and Myanmar. **Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project** is a project that will connect the eastern Indian seaport of **Kolkata** with **Sittwe seaport** in **Rakhine State, Myanmar** by sea. **Aung San Suu Kyi** is a **Myanmar politician, diplomat, author, and Nobel Peace Prize laureate (1991)**. She is the leader of the **National League for Democracy** and the **first and incumbent State Counsellor**, a position akin to a prime minister. She is also the **first woman to serve as Minister for Foreign Affairs**. The incumbent president is **Win Myint**.

12th BRICS Summit to be held virtually on November 17

- The **12th BRICS Summit** will be held on **17th November 2020** via video conference. The theme of the Meeting of the Leaders of **BRICS countries** which includes **Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa** is **"BRICS Partnership for Global Stability, Shared Security and Innovative Growth"**.
- The Summit this year is being held under the **Chairmanship of Russia** and aims at a **multifaceted cooperation between the member countries**. The five member countries have continued close strategic partnership on all the three major pillars of peace and security, economy and finance, cultural and people-to-people exchanges.

BRICS is the acronym for an association of five major emerging national economies: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. Originally the first four were grouped as “BRIC” (China, Brazil, Russia and India), before the induction of South Africa in 2010. In 2009, the first BRIC Summit was held in Yekaterinburg, Russia.

Kuwaiti government resigns ahead of November general elections

- **Kuwait’s government, chaired by Prime Minister Sabah Al Khalid Al Sabah, has submitted its resignation to Emir Nawaf Al Ahmed Al Jaber Al Sabah** in anticipation of the upcoming general elections.
- The Emir has affirmed his confidence that the current cabinet would continue to perform its constitutional duties and finish arrangements for upcoming legislative elections, due to be held in late November this year.

Kuwait is a country in Western Asia. Situated in the northern edge of Eastern Arabia at the tip of the Persian Gulf, it borders Iraq to the north and Saudi Arabia to the south. As of 2016, Kuwait has a population of 4.5 million people: 1.3 million are Kuwaitis and 3.2 million are expatriates. Expatriates account for approximately 70% of the population. The Kuwaiti dinar is the currency of Kuwait. Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is the Crown Prince of Kuwait. Aged 80 years, he is the oldest Crown Prince in the world.

The World’s First Happiness Museum Opens in Denmark

- **The Copenhagen-based Happiness Research Institute has opened the world’s first museum dedicated to that now-fleeting feeling. Fittingly, the museum is located in Denmark, which currently holds the title of second-happiest country on the planet.**
- A one-of-a-kind establishment, **The Happiness Museum is a brainchild of ‘The Happiness Research Institute.’ The institute is meant to head research into mental well-being and quality of life in the country. The museum will now replicate its ideals. Since it is the first of its kind concept, one might not be sure as to how a museum can encapsulate happiness as a theme.**

Union Cabinet approves signing of Memorandum of cooperation in field of cyber-security between India & Japan

- **The Union Cabinet of India gave its approval for signing a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) in the field of cyber-security between India and Japan.**
- **The MoC will enhance cooperation in areas of mutual interest, which includes capacity building in the area of cyberspace, protection of critical infrastructure, cooperation in emerging technologies, sharing information on cyber security threats and malicious cyber activities. Another MoU was signed between Zoological Survey of India and its Canadian Counterpart on bar coding of faunal Genomes.**
- The Government has given its **nod to major reforms in the marketing of Natural Gas in the country.** The Cabinet, under the chairmanship of Prime Minister, approved the reforms to push the usage of Natural Gas.
- Mr Goyal said that the project, with an estimated cost of nearly 8 thousand 575 crore rupees, will be open for the public by December 2021. He said the total Route length of the **East-West Metro Corridor in Kolkata will be 16.6 kilometre and will have 12 stations.**
- The Cabinet also **approved the ratification of seven chemicals listed under Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs).** The Stockholm Convention is a global treaty to protect human health and environment from POPs, which are identified chemical substances that persist in the environment, bio-accumulate in living organisms, adversely affect human health and have the property of long-range environmental transport.

Naruhito is the Emperor of Japan. He acceded to the Chrysanthemum Throne on 1 May 2019, beginning the Reiwa era, following the abdication of his father, Emperor Akihito, on 30 April 2019. He is the 126th monarch according to Japan's traditional order of succession. Yoshihide Suga is serving as Prime Minister of Japan. He was the chief cabinet secretary under Prime Minister Shinzo Abe from 2012 to 2020. Tokyo is the capital city of Japan and yen is the official currency of Japan and it is the third most traded currency in the foreign exchange market after the United States dollar and the euro.

Hong Kong arrests 10,039 people over past year for protests, violence

- In Hong Kong, a total of 10,039 people have been arrested from 9th of June 2019 to 30th of September, 2020 in relation to last year's protests, state media reported. **On Chinese National Day i.e. 1st of October, Hong Kong Police arrested several people for trying to gather and protest the National Security Law imposed in the semi-autonomous territory by Beijing on 30th of June this year.** Anti-government protests, which started in 2019 opposing an Extradition Bill for trial in mainland courts in certain cases, often turned violent. Later, it developed into a broader movement which was responded to by Beijing by imposing National Security Law in Hong Kong.

India builds new building of Shree Saraswati Secondary School in Tikapur, Kailali District

- In Nepal, India has constructed a new building of Shree Saraswati Secondary School in Tikapur, Kailali District.** The project was taken up as a **High Impact Community Development Project (HICDP)** under an Agreement between Government of India and Government of Nepal.
- The building **built with Government of India's financial assistance of 33 Million Nepali Rupees** was jointly inaugurated by representative of the Embassy of India, Kathmandu, District Coordination Committee, School Management Committee and local representatives.
- The Government of India grant, under 'Nepal-Bharat Development Cooperation',** was utilized for construction of the two storied school building, including 11 class rooms, library, labs, administrative room, meeting hall and sanitation facilities.

Japan, Mongolia to cooperate on Free and Open Indo-Pacific

- Foreign ministers of Japan and Mongolia have agreed to cooperate in promoting a Free and Open Indo-Pacific.** The move is being seen as a step to counter China's growing assertiveness in the region.
- The recent meeting of foreign ministers of **QUAD nations - India, United States, Australia and Japan held in Tokyo had agreed to seek more countries support for the Free and Open Indo-Pacific.** Japan and the US have been **pushing the Free and Open Indo-Pacific** as a way to bring together countries that share concerns about China's growing influence in the region.

Russia successfully tests new hypersonic Tsirkon missile

- Russia says it has successfully tested a new hypersonic anti-ship cruise missile** in a move hailed by President Vladimir Putin as a "great event" for the country. The military said that the Tsirkon missile was **fired from the Admiral Gorshkov frigate in the White Sea** in the Russian Arctic and successfully hit its target.
- Valery Gerasimov, chief of the Russian military's General Staff, told Putin — that it was **the first time the missile had successfully struck a target at sea.** Putin had revealed the development of the new weapon in a state of the nation address in February 2019, saying it could hit targets at sea and on land with a range of 1,000 kilometres (620 miles) and a speed of Mach 9.

Vladimir Putin has served as the president of Russia since 2012, previously holding the position from 2000 until 2008. He was also the **Prime Minister of Russia** from 1999 to 2000 and again from 2008 to 2012. He served as the **first Director of the Federal Security Service (FSB), the KGB's successor agency,** before being appointed as prime minister in August 1999. **After the resignation of Yeltsin, Putin was elected to succeed him.** A **duma** is a **Russian assembly with advisory or legislative functions.** The **Russian ruble or rouble is the currency of the Russia.**

FATF's Asia Pacific Group keeps Pakistan on 'enhanced follow-up list' for slow progress against terror financing

- In a major setback to Pakistan, the **Financial Action Task Force's (FATF's) Asia Pacific Group (APG) on Money Laundering has reprimanded the South-Asian country** for its slow progress on the technical recommendations of the FATF to fight terror financing.
- Earlier, **Pakistan had requested for its ratings pertaining to targeted financial sanctions on terrorism and terrorist financing to be revised.** The APG stated that the insufficient progress made by the country fails to justify a re-rating.

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is an inter-governmental body established in 1989 by the Ministers of its Member jurisdictions. The objectives of the FATF are to set standards and promote effective implementation of legal, regulatory and operational measures for combating money laundering, terrorist financing and other related threats to the integrity of the international financial system. It is an intergovernmental organization founded in 1989 on the initiative of the G7 to develop policies to combat money laundering. In 2001, its mandate was expanded to include terrorism financing. It is headquartered in Paris, France.

Qatar world first on Digital Accessibility Rights Index

- Qatar has ranked first worldwide on the Digital Accessibility Rights Evaluation Index 2020 (DARE Index 2020) released by the Global Initiative for Inclusive Information and Communication Technologies (G3ict).
- DARE Index is a benchmarking tool for disability advocates, governments, civil society, international organisations and policymakers to trace country progress in making
- Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) accessible for all, in compliance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). This is the second edition of the DARE Index. It comprehensively documented the advances made by 137 countries that aim to provide global metrics for activists and those interested in the empowerment of the disabled.

Qatar is a country located in Western Asia, occupying the small Qatar Peninsula on the northeastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula. Its sole land border is with neighbouring Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) monarchy Saudi Arabia to the south, with the rest of its territory surrounded by the Persian Gulf. Doha is the capital and most populous city of the State of Qatar. The Qatari riyal is the currency of the State of Qatar. Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani is the Emir of Qatar. Khalid bin Khalifa is serving as Prime Minister of Qatar and Minister of the Interior from 28 January 2020.

Navy to hold passage exercise with U.S. carrier

- Navy ships held a PASSEX with USS Ronald Reagan on October 12 as it transits through the Indian Ocean.
- Continuing the series of its maritime engagements, the Navy is scheduled to hold another Passage Exercise (PASSEX) with a U.S. Navy aircraft carrier group on October 12. The PASSEX is held in the waters off Kochi.
- On September 25, for the first time a U.S. Navy P-8A long range maritime patrol aircraft (MPA) landed at Port Blair, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, for refuelling under the bilateral logistics support agreement.
- In July, frontline warships of the Navy conducted a PASSEX with the U.S. Navy's Nimitz carrier strike group near the Andaman and Nicobar islands as it was transiting the Indian Ocean. The USS Nimitz was returning from the South China Sea through the Strait of Malacca where it undertook Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOP). USS Ronald Reagan was in the South China Sea in August to conduct FONOPs amid tensions between China and the U.S.
- The trilateral Malabar Naval exercise with Japan and the U.S. is also scheduled to be held in November, though there is no clarity on inviting Australia for the exercise.

Indian Ocean is the third largest of the world's oceanic divisions, covering 70,560,000 km², approximately 20% of the water on the Earth's surface. It is bounded by Asia on the north, on the west by Africa, on the east by Australia, and on the south by the Southern Ocean or, depending on definition, by Antarctica. It is named after India.

Delhi, Male ink \$400-mn pact for connectivity

- Following up on India's announcement of a \$500 million package to the Maldives, the Exim Bank of India and the Maldives's Ministry of Finance signed an agreement for \$400 million in Male. The line of credit (LoC) will fund the Greater Male Connectivity Project (GMCP).
- India The GMCP, a 6.7 km bridge and causeway network connecting Male, with islands Villingili, Gulhifalhu and Thilafushi, is the second significant connectivity project in the Indian Ocean archipelago, coming two

years after the China backed \$200 million Sinamale Bridge, or the China-Maldives Friendship Bridge connecting airport island of Hulhule with the capital, was inaugurated.

Maldives is a South Asian country, located in the Indian Ocean, situated in the Arabian Sea. Male is the capital and most populated city, traditionally called the “King’s Island” for its central location. Maldivian rufiyaa is the currency of the Maldives. Ibrahim Mohamed Solih is the current President of the Maldives.

China and Russia win seats on U.N. rights council, Saudis lose

- **China, Russia and Cuba won seats on the U.N.’s premiere human rights body** on October 13 despite opposition from activist groups over their abysmal human rights records, **but another target, Saudi Arabia, lost.**
- **Russia and Cuba were running unopposed, but China and Saudi Arabia were in a five-way race in the only contested race for seats on the Human Rights Council.** In secret-ballot voting in the 193-member U.N. General Assembly on that race, Pakistan received 169 votes, Uzbekistan 164, Nepal 150, China 139 and Saudi Arabia just 90 votes.
- Under the Human Rights Council’s rules, **seats are allocated to regions to ensure geographical representation.** Except for the Asia-Pacific contest, **the election of 15 members to the 47-member Human Rights Council** was all but decided in advance because all the other regional groups had uncontested slates.

United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) is a **United Nations body** whose mission is **to promote and protect human rights around the world.** The headquarters of UNHRC is in **Geneva, Switzerland.** The UNHRC was established by the UN General Assembly on March 15, 2006 to replace the UN Commission on Human Rights because of some members’ poor rights records, the new council soon came to face similar criticism, including that rights abusers sought seats to protect themselves and their allies.

India contributes 1 million dollars to UNRWA for Palestine Refugees

- **India has contributed one million dollars to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for Palestine Refugees in Near East.** This aid will support the Agency’s programmes and services, including education, health care, relief and social services. The Representative Office of India in Ramallah said, **India’s support for the Palestinian cause is an integral part of the nation’s foreign policy.**

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) is a **UN agency** that supports the relief and human development of Palestinian refugees. UNRWA was established in 1949 by the UN General Assembly (UNGA) to provide relief to all refugees resulting from the 1948 conflict.

President of Kyrgyzstan steps down amid election turmoil

- **Kyrgyzstan President Sooronbai Jeenbekov announced his resignation in a bid to end the turmoil** that has engulfed the Central Asian nation after a disputed parliamentary election.
- **Kyrgyzstan, a country of 6.5 million people** located on the border with China, was **plunged into chaos following an October 4 vote** that election officials say was swept by pro-government parties. The opposition said the election was tainted by vote-buying and other irregularities.

Kyrgyzstan is a **landlocked country in Central Asia.** **Bishkek** is the **capital** and largest city of Kyrgyzstan. **The som** is the currency of the Kyrgyz Republic. **Sadyr Japarov** is the **current President** of Kyrgyzstan. Supreme Council is the unicameral Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic.

New Zealand Now Has the Most Powerful Passport in the World

- **According to Arton Capital’s Passport Index, a ranking of the world’s passports** in order of the number of destinations their holders can access without obtaining a visa prior to arrival. **Unlike the Henley Passport Index, which put Japan’s passport at the top of its list as recently as July 2020,** Arton Capital’s Passport Index updates its rankings in real time as new visa waivers and changes are implemented, showing the current effect COVID-19 travel bans have on global mobility right now.

- According to real-time global ranking tool The Passport Index, New Zealand passport overpowers 192 other passports of United Nation countries. Germany, Austria, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Ireland, Japan, South Korea, and Australia follow closely behind New Zealand in joint second place with visa-free access to 128 destinations currently.
- Sweden, Belgium, France, Finland, Italy, and Spain tie for third place with access to 127 destinations each. With current COVID-19 travel restrictions in place, the United States doesn't make an appearance until 21st on the list, a ranking it shares with Malaysia, with each having visa-free access to just 92 destinations currently.
- On the other hand, Afghanistan and Iraq are the countries with the weakest passports, having scored only 31. Syria, Somalia and Yemen passport are slightly better, scoring 34, 35 and 36 respectively.

India to deliver Kilo Class submarine INS Sindhuvir to Myanmar Navy

- India will be delivering a Kilo Class submarine INS Sindhuvir to Myanmar Navy as part of defence cooperation. This will be the first submarine of Myanmar Navy. This is in accordance with our vision of SAGAR - Security and Growth for All in the Region, and also in line with our commitment to build capacities and self-reliance in all our neighbouring countries.

Film museum inaugurated at Bangladesh Film Archive Bhaban in Dhaka

- A film museum was inaugurated at the Bangladesh Film Archive Bhaban in Dhaka. The museum will play an important role in presenting the history and heritage of Bangladeshi films to the future generations.

President Putin wants New START treaty extended

- President Vladimir Putin proposed a one-year extension without conditions of the last major nuclear arms reduction accord between Russia and the U.S.
- The New START deal was signed in April 2010 but went into force in February 2011. The agreement, one of the last restraints on Russia and the United States' nuclear forces, is set to expire in February 2021. The treaty restricts the numbers of strategic nuclear warheads the pair can deploy as well as the missiles and bombers that carry them.

New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) is a nuclear arms reduction treaty between the United States and the Russian Federation with the formal name of Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms. It was signed on 8 April 2010 in Prague, and, after ratification, entered into force on 5 February 2011. It is expected to last at least until 2021. New START replaced the Treaty of Moscow (SORT), which was to expire in December 2012.

New Zealand PM Jacinda Ardern's Labour Party registers landslide victory in general elections

- Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern won in New Zealand's general elections. With 87 per cent of the vote counted, Ardern's Labour Party won a landslide victory with 49 per cent support, heading to its biggest share of the vote since the 1930s.
- The opposition National Party slumped to 27 per cent. With this, Ardern led centre-left Labour Party secures a second term after her success in tackling the Coronavirus situation in the country. Jacinda Ardern's victory is regarded as voters' reward for her decisive response to COVID-19.

New Zealand is an island country in the southwestern Pacific Ocean. Wellington is the capital city. Jacinda Ardern is the current New Zealand Prime Minister. The New Zealand dollar is the official currency and legal tender of New Zealand, the Cook Islands, Niue, the Ross Dependency, Tokelau, and a British territory, the Pitcairn Islands.

Australia to join Malabar Naval exercise with India, US and Japan

- Australia will join Malabar naval exercise involving India, US and Japan. The Annual Naval Exercise Malabar-2020 is expected to be held in the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea later this year.

- This year, the exercise has been **planned on a ‘non-contact-at sea’ format**. The exercise will **strengthen the coordination between the Navies of the participating countries**.
- With the **decision to include Australia in the drills by India in 2020**, it will be the **first time all members of the regional grouping known as the Quad will be engaging militarily**.

Exercise Malabar is a **quadrilateral naval exercise** involving the **United States, Japan, Australia, and India** as permanent partners. **Originally begun in 1992 as a bilateral exercise between India and the United States, Japan became a permanent partner in 2015.**

Pakistan opposes Indian claim on Basmati rice in EU

- **Pakistan has decided to file its opposition in the European Union in response to India’s application for an exclusive Geographical Indications (GI) tag to Basmati rice in the 27-member bloc. Pakistan is preparing to contest India’s claim in the European Union that basmati rice sold in the bloc is genuine only if it originates from specific areas of India.**
- **India applied for a geographical indication, or GI, tag in the EU in 2018 for basmati rice -- a long-grain aromatic variety popular among South Asians -- exported to the trade bloc from India, including the states and union territories of Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Delhi, western Uttar Pradesh and the selected districts of Jammu and Kashmir.**

Basmati is a variety of long, slender-grained aromatic rice which is traditionally from the Indian subcontinent. As of 2018-19, India accounted for 65% of the international trade in basmati rice, while Pakistan accounted for the remaining 35%. According to the Indian Government agency APEDA, a rice variety is eligible to be called Basmati if it has a minimum average precooked milled rice length of 6.61 mm and average precooked milled rice breadth of up to 2 mm, among other parameters.

European Union (EU) is a political and economic union of 27 member states that are located primarily in Europe. The Maastricht Treaty established the European Union in 1993 and introduced European citizenship. A monetary union was established in 1999 and came into full force in 2002 and is composed of 19 EU member states which use the euro currency. Brussels is the de facto capital of the European Union. Ursula Von Der Leyen is serving as President of the European Commission since 2019. Charles Michel has been the President of the European Council since 2019. On 31 January 2020, the United Kingdom became the first member state to leave the EU.

India, Chile hold first joint commission meeting

- **India and Chile held their first joint commission meeting and agreed to add new momentum to their relations in a wide range of fields including trade and commerce, agriculture, health and social security, defence and space.**
- **The meeting held virtually was co-chaired by External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and his Chilean counterpart Andres Allamand Zavala.**
- **Both sides noted that the Joint Commission was a significant development in India - Chile relations, being the first institutionalized dialogue between the two countries at the level of Foreign Ministers. India welcomed Chile’s decision to designate India as a priority country in its foreign policy. Chile will also be opening its Consulate General in Mumbai.**

Chile is a South American country; Santiago is the capital and largest city of Chile. Chile is the world’s top copper producer. Sebastian Pinera has been President of Chile since 2018. Chile borders Peru to the north, Bolivia to the northeast, Argentina to the east, and the Drake Passage in the far south. The peso is the currency of Chile.

UAE delegation reaches Israel for first time in history

- **In an historic first visit by a Gulf Arab nation**, the **United Arab Emirates delegation reached Israel**. It was accompanied by top US officials to cement the normalisation of ties between the two nations.
- **As part of the US-brokered deal, four agreements** were signed relating to investment, scientific cooperation, civil aviation and visa exemptions, during the visit. Washington has said the deals would foster regional peace and stability.
- The **Israel–United Arab Emirates normalization agreement**, officially the **Abraham Accords Peace Agreement: Treaty of Peace, Diplomatic Relations and Full Normalization Between the United Arab Emirates and the State of Israel**, was **initially agreed to in a joint statement by the United States, Israel and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)** on August 13, 2020, officially referred to as the **Abraham Accords**.
- The **UAE thus became the third Arab country, after Egypt in 1979 and Jordan in 1994**, to agree to formally normalize its relationship with Israel, as well as the first Persian Gulf country to do so. **Concurrently, Israel agreed to suspend plans for annexing parts of the West Bank.**

Abu Dhab is the capital and the second most populous city of the **United Arab Emirates** (the most populous being **Dubai**), and also capital of the **Emirate of Abu Dhabi**, the largest of the UAE's seven emirates. **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** is a federal sovereign absolute monarchy in Western Asia. **Khalifa Al Nahyan** is the current President of the United Arab Emirates. **Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum** is the Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Ruler of the Emirate of Dubai. **United Arab Emirates dirham** is the currency of the United Arab Emirates.

India, Vietnam Business Forum held virtually

- The **India Vietnam Business Forum** was organised virtually. **Export basket from India to Vietnam includes bovine meat, fishery products, corn, steel, pharmaceuticals, cotton, machinery** while imports from Vietnam include mobile phones, electrical machinery and equipment, computers, electronic hardware, natural rubber, chemicals, and coffee.

Vietnam is the easternmost country on the **Indochina Peninsula** in Southeast Asia. **Hanoi** is the capital of Vietnam. **The dong** has been the currency of Vietnam since May 3, 1978. **Nguyen Phu Trọng** is the current General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam and **President of Vietnam**, de jure head of state of Vietnam, in office since 23 October 2018.

India world No. 2 in migration to OECD nations, getting citizenships

- **India has emerged as the second largest source country** both in terms of the “total” inflow of new migrants to **OECD countries during 2018** and also as regards the number of Indians acquiring citizenship of these countries.
- While China continued to retain its top slot as the largest source country, **India replaced Romania to emerge as the second largest source**. During 2018, about 4.3 lakh Chinese migrated to OECD countries, accounting for nearly 6.5% of the total migration inflows.
- While releasing the “**International Migration Outlook 2020**” at a virtual press conference, Angel Gurría, secretary general at OECD, said **Covid-19 has redrawn the international migration map**.
- Following the onset of Covid-19, **almost all OECD countries restricted admission to foreigners**. Issuances of new visas in these countries **plummeted by 46% in first half of 2020 compared with the same period in 2019**. This is the **largest drop ever recorded**.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an **intergovernmental economic organisation with 37 member countries**, founded in 1961 to stimulate economic progress and world trade. The **OECD's headquarters** are at the **Chateau de la Muette** in **Paris, France**. **Jose Angel Gurrea** is a Mexican economist and diplomat. Since 1 June 2006, he has been the **Secretary-General of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)**.

Saudi Arabia first in Arab world for issuing scientific papers on virus

- **Saudi Arabia was ranked first in the Arab world for issuing scientific papers** on the coronavirus. King Salman chaired a virtual session of the cabinet which reviewed various aspects related to the fight against the spread of the virus.
- **The Kingdom ranked 25th globally and 2nd in the Middle East for clinical research** and studies on the virus. The decrees appointed 20 people to the Council of Senior Scholars, the Kingdom's highest religious body.

Saudi Arabia is a sovereign Arab state in Western Asia. Saudi Arabia is the **largest country in the Middle East**. Riyadh is the **capital and most populous city** of Saudi Arabia. **Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud** has been **King of Saudi Arabia, Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia**, and Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques since 23 January 2015. **Mohammad bin Salman** is the **Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia**, also serving as **First Deputy Prime Minister**, President of the Council for Economic and Development Affairs and Minister of Defense—the **world's youngest office holder at the time**. Saudi riyal is the **currency of Saudi Arabia**.

Peru and Switzerland sign 'world first' carbon offset deal under Paris Agreement

- **Peru and Switzerland sign 'world first' carbon offset deal under Paris Agreement**. Switzerland has struck a carbon offsetting agreement with Peru, in what the two nations say is the **first deal of its kind under Article 6 of the Paris agreement**.
- **The deal signed allows Peru to fund sustainable development projects**, while **Switzerland gets to count the resulting emissions cuts against its national targets**. The agreement gives the Swiss government the option to transfer the rights to retire the offsets to local government or to private companies headquartered in Switzerland.
- **The money for these projects comes from Swiss motor fuel importers**. In practice, they can pass these costs on to their customers, who are charged a levy when filling up their cars. Transport accounts for around a third of the small, rich nation's greenhouse gas emissions.
- **The transactions are to be managed by the Klik foundation**, which was set up by the Swiss CO2 act to find 35-54 million tonnes worth of carbon offsets up to 2030. The Swiss and Peruvian governments will determine which activities are eligible to generate carbon credits.

At Conference of the Parties (COP) 21 in Paris, on 12 December 2015, Parties to the UNFCCC reached a landmark agreement to combat climate change and to accelerate and intensify the actions and investments needed for a sustainable low carbon future. The Paris Agreement builds upon the Convention and – **for the first time – brings all nations into a common cause to undertake ambitious efforts to combat climate change** and adapt to its effects, with enhanced support to assist developing countries to do so. **The Paris Agreement's central aim is to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius**. The Paris Agreement requires all Parties to put forward their best efforts through “nationally determined contributions” (NDCs) and to strengthen these efforts in the years ahead. **The Paris Agreement opened for signature on 22 April 2016 – Earth Day – at UN Headquarters in New York. It entered into force on 4 November 2016**, 30 days after the so-called “double threshold” (ratification by 55 countries that account for at least 55% of global emissions) had been met.

EU environment ministers strike deal on climate law, leave out 2030 target

- **European Union environment ministers struck a deal to make the bloc's 2050 net zero emissions target legally binding**, but left a decision on a 2030 emissions-cutting target for leaders to discuss in December.
- **The landmark climate change law will form the basis for Europe's plan to slash greenhouse gas emissions**, which will reshape all sectors, from transport to heavy industry, and require hundreds of billions of euros in annual investments.

- It will fix in law the EU target to reach net zero emissions by 2050 and define the rules for reviewing progress towards climate targets. Ministers struck a deal on these parts of the law at a meeting in Luxembourg. None of the 27 member countries rejected the bill, although Bulgaria abstained.
- Ministers agreed to make the 2050 net zero emissions target an EU-wide goal, rather than a requirement for individual countries, potentially letting some have higher emissions if others make deeper cuts.

Israel and Sudan reach U.S.-brokered deal to normalize ties

- Israel and Sudan agreed to take steps to normalize relations in a deal brokered with the help of the United States, making Khartoum the third Arab government to set aside hostilities with Israel in the last two months.
- U.S. President Donald Trump, seeking re-election on November. 3, sealed the agreement in a phone call with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Sudanese Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok and Transitional Council Head Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, senior U.S. officials said. Mr. Donald Trump's decision this week to remove Sudan from the U.S. list of state sponsors of terrorism paved the way for the accord with Israel, marking a foreign policy achievement for the Republican president.

The Sudan or Sudan also known as North Sudan since South Sudan's independence is a country in Northeast Africa. The capital is Khartoum. Sudanese pound is the basic unit of the Sudanese currency.

U.K., Japan ink post-Brexit trade deal

- Britain and Japan formally signed a trade agreement marking Britain's first big post-Brexit deal on trade, as it continues to struggle to agree on a deal with its closest trading partners in the European Union.
- Britain formally left the EU in January 2020 and it has focussed on negotiating new trade pacts with countries around the world as its status-quo transition period ends on December, 31, 2020. "This is the first new free trade deal to be agreed since the U.K. once again became an independent trading nation".

Brexit is the withdrawal of the United Kingdom (UK) from the European Union (EU) and the European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC or Euratom) on 31 January 2020. The UK is to date the first and only country to formally leave the EU. Currently it continues to participate in the European Union Customs Union and European Single Market during a transition period that will end on 31 December 2020. Following a UK-wide referendum in June 2016, which Prime Minister, David Cameron, instigated after an election manifesto promise, in which 52% voted in favour of leaving the EU and 48% voted to remain a member, the UK Government, which, following David Cameron's resignation, was then led by Theresa May formally notified the EU of the country's intention to withdraw on 29 March 2017, beginning the Brexit process.

Pakistan inaugurates first transport project under CPEC

- The first transport project under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was inaugurated in Lahore. Punjab province Chief Minister Usman Buzdar and Chinese officials inaugurated the project which has been completed in six years at the cost of over USD 2.2 billion.
- The overhead Lahore Orange Line Metro Train will operate between Lahore's Dera Gujran to Ali Town on 27 Km stretch. The CPEC is a collection of infrastructure and other projects under construction throughout Pakistan since 2013. Originally valued at \$46 billion, the projects were worth \$62 billion as of 2017.

Pakistan is a country in South Asia. It is the fifth-most populous country. Islamabad is the capital city of Pakistan. Pakistani rupee is the currency of Pakistan. Imran Ahmed Khan Niazi is the 22nd and current Prime Minister of Pakistan and the chairman of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). Before entering politics, Khan was an international cricketer and captain of the Pakistan national cricket team, which he led to victory in the 1992 Cricket World Cup. Arif-ur-Rehman Alvi is 13th and current President of Pakistan

Indian-Origin Candidate to be Seychelles President, Ending Ruling Party's 43-Year Rule

- Indian-origin opposition candidate Wavel Ramkalawan, whose great grandfather was an indentured labourer from Bihar, has won Seychelles' Presidential election with a solid majority.

- His victory marks the first time that ruling United Seychelles party has been swept out of power since the archipelago became independent in 1977.
- Electoral Commission chairman Danny Lucas declared that Ramkalawan, of the opposition Linyon Demokratik Seselwa (LDS), had won with 54.9% of the valid votes counted. He defeated Danny Faure by 7,384 votes, which was around 10% of the electorate. The third candidate, Alain St Ange of One Seychelles party got just 1.6% of the total valid votes.
- LDS also won a thumping majority in the parliament with 25 seats, while United Seychelles got 10. Not only has Ramkalawan won by a large margin, but his party also got big mandates in the parliamentary polls. This time, Seychelles also elected an Indian-origin candidate, Sathya Naidu, to parliament.

Seychelles is an archipelago country in the Indian Ocean. The capital of the 115-island country, Victoria, lies 1,500 kilometres east of mainland East Africa. As one of the world's biodiversity hotspots, Seychelles is balancing the need to both develop economically and protect its natural endowment. The rupee is the currency of the Seychelles. Wavel Ramkalawan has been President of Seychelles since 16 October 2020.

Pakistan to remain in grey list of global terror financing watchdog- FATF till February 2021

- Pakistan will remain on the grey list of global terror financing watchdog, Financial Action Task Force (FATF) as it has not been able to fulfil six out of the 27 mandates to check terror funding. The decision was announced by the President of FATF Marcus Pleyer.
- The FATF strongly urged Pakistan to swiftly complete its full action plan by February 2021. It said, Pakistan needs to do more to check terror funding, adding that the 6 items which Pakistan is yet to address are serious deficiencies.
- The implementation plan to curb money laundering and terror financing was supposed to be put in place by the end of 2019. However, the deadline was extended in the wake of COVID pandemic.

The Financial Action Task Force (on Money Laundering) (FATF), also known by its French name, Groupe d'action financière (GAFI), is an intergovernmental organisation founded in 1989 on the initiative of the G7 to develop policies to combat money laundering. In 2001, its mandate was expanded to include terrorism financing. It currently has 39 members. These include two regional organizations - the European Commission and Gulf Cooperation Council. Since 2000, FATF has maintained the FATF blacklist (formally called the "Call for action") and the FATF greylist (formally called the "Other monitored jurisdictions"). It is based in Paris, France.

BRICS Parliamentary Forum held in virtual format

- The BRICS Parliamentary Forum was held in virtual format. It was chaired by Chairman of Russian Parliament, Vyacheslav Volodin. Speakers and members of five BRICS Parliaments - Brazil, Russian, India, China and South Africa were participated in the Forum.
- An Indian Parliamentary Delegation led by Lok Sabha Speaker, Om Birla and consisting of Member of Lok Sabha Kanimozhi Karunanidhi will attend the Forum.
- The theme of the Forum is BRICS partnership in the interest of global stability, general safety and innovative growth: Parliamentary dimension.

BRICS is the acronym for an association of five major emerging national economies: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. Originally the first four were grouped as "BRIC" (China, Brazil, Russia and India), before the induction of South Africa in 2010. In 2009, the first BRIC Summit was held in Yekaterinburg, Russia.

Saad Hariri renamed Lebanon Prime Minister

- Lebanon's President Michel Aoun designated Sunni Muslim politician Saad al-Hariri as Prime Minister to form a new government to tackle the worst crisis since the country's 1975-1990 civil war.
- Three-time Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri was renamed to the post to create a cabinet that can lift the country out of its worst economic crisis in decades. Mr. Hariri made his comeback almost a year after stepping down under pressure from a protest movement demanding an overhaul of Lebanon's political system.

- Hariri won the backing of a majority of parliamentarians in consultations with Aoun. **He faces major challenges to navigate Lebanon's power-sharing politics and agree a cabinet, which must then address a mounting list of woes: a banking crisis, currency crash, rising poverty and crippling state debts.**

Lebanon is a sovereign state in Western Asia. Beirut is the capital and largest city of Lebanon. Lebanese pound is the currency of Lebanon. Michel Naim Aoun is the current President of Lebanon.

India, Mexico to further work on strengthening 'Privileged Partnership'

- The 8th India-Mexico Joint Commission Meeting was held through Video-Conference. The Meeting was co-chaired by External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and his Mexican counterpart Marcelo Ebrard.
- The two sides agreed that given their respective economic strengths, growing regional and global profile, **India and Mexico will further work on strengthening their 'Privileged Partnership'.**

Mexico is a federal republic in the southern portion of North America. Mexico City or City of Mexico is the capital of Mexico. Mexican peso is the currency of Mexico. Enrique Pena Niet is serving as the current & 57th President of Mexico, since 2012. Andrés Manuel Lopez Obrador is the President-elect of Mexico until his inauguration as President on 1 December 2018.

UN Secretary-General welcomes Armenia-Azerbaijan cease-fire agreement

- UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres welcomed the **joint statement by the United States, Armenia and Azerbaijan** announcing that a previously reached humanitarian cease-fire agreement.
- **Armenia and Azerbaijan have been at loggerheads over the mountainous region of Nagorno-Karabakh since 1988. Peace talks have been held since 1994 when a cease-fire was reached, but there have been sporadic minor clashes. A new round of armed conflict broke out along the contact line on September 27.**

Armenia is a country in the South Caucasus region of Eurasia. The dram is the monetary unit of Armenia. Yerevan is the capital and largest city of Armenia as well as one of the world's oldest continuously inhabited cities. Nikol Pashinyan is currently serving as Prime Minister of Armenia.

Japan to achieve zero carbon emissions by 2050

- **Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga has said that the country will achieve zero carbon emissions by 2050. The Prime Minister intends to make a sustainable economy a pillar of his growth strategy and put maximum effort into achieving a green society.**
- **Mr. Suga emphasized the need to shift away from fossil fuels to counter climate change as an opportunity rather than a burden. As per Japan's current energy plan, 56 per cent of its energy requirements come from fossil fuels.**

Naruhito is the Emperor of Japan. He acceded to the Chrysanthemum Throne on 1 May 2019, beginning the Reiwa era, following the abdication of his father, Emperor Akihito, on 30 April 2019. He is the 126th monarch according to Japan's traditional order of succession. Yoshihide Suga is serving as Prime Minister of Japan and Leader of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) since September 2020. Tokyo is the capital city of Japan and yen is the official currency of Japan and it is the third most traded currency in the foreign exchange market after the United States dollar and the euro.

Abu Dhabi to issue FDI licences allowing 100% foreign ownership

- **Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates, will issue foreign direct investment (FDI) licences to allow foreign investors to own 100% of projects in the emirate in sectors including agriculture, industry and service.**
- **The move implements a foreign investment law approved in 2018 allowing foreign investors to own more than 49% and up to 100% of some UAE businesses, as the country seeks to boost private sector activity. WAM said 122 economic activities, which were approved by the UAE cabinet last year across 13 sectors, would allow 100% foreign ownership in Abu Dhabi.**

Nuclear weapons ban treaty to enter into force

- The United Nations announced that 50 countries have ratified a UN treaty to ban nuclear weapons triggering its entry into force in 90 days, a move hailed by anti-nuclear activists but strongly opposed by the United States and the other major nuclear powers.
- As of 23rd October 2020, the treaty had 49 signatories, and UN officials said the 50th ratification from Honduras had been received. The 50th ratification came on the 75th anniversary of the ratification of the UN Charter which officially established the United Nations and is celebrated as UN Day.
- This moment has been 75 years coming since the horrific attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the founding of the UN which made nuclear disarmament a cornerstone, said Beatrice Fihn, executive director of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize-winning coalition whose work helped spearhead the nuclear ban treaty.

Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), or the Nuclear Weapon Ban Treaty, is the first legally binding international agreement to comprehensively prohibit nuclear weapons with the ultimate goal being their total elimination. It was adopted on 7 July 2017, opened for signature on 20 September 2017, and will enter into force on 22 January 2021. The nuclear-weapon states (NWS) are the five states—China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, and the United States—officially recognized as possessing nuclear weapons by the NPT. India, Israel, and Pakistan never joined the NPT and are known to possess nuclear weapons. India first tested a nuclear explosive device in 1974. That test spurred Pakistan to ramp up work on its secret nuclear weapons program.

Central Asian Countries welcome one billion dollar Line of Credit by India for development in region

- The Foreign Minister of Central Asian Countries welcomed the provision by India of one billion US dollar Line of Credit for priority developmental projects in fields such as energy, IT, healthcare, education and agriculture in the region.
- The second meeting of the India-Central Asia Dialogue was held in the digital video-conference format under the chairmanship of the External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar. Foreign Ministers of Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan as well as First Deputy Foreign Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic participated in the meeting.

Central Asia is a region in Asia which stretches from the Caspian Sea in the west to China and Mongolia in the east and from Afghanistan and Iran in the south to Russia in the north. The region consists of the former Soviet republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. It is also colloquially referred to as "the stans" as the countries generally considered to be within the region all have names ending with the Persian suffix "-stan", meaning "land of".

China setting up world's highest-altitude cloud computing data centre in Tibet

- China is building the world's highest-altitude cloud computing data centre in Tibet that will meet the data storage needs of the country and South Asian nations like Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan.
- The data centre is located in a high-tech zone of the Tibetan regional capital city of Lhasa located at an altitude of around 3,656 metres, making it the highest-altitude data centre in the world.

Tibet is a region in East Asia covering much of the Tibetan Plateau. Tibet is the highest region on Earth, with an average elevation of 5,000 m (16,000 ft). The highest elevation in Tibet is Mount Everest, Earth's highest mountain, rising 8,848 m (29,029 ft) above sea level. The 14th Dalai Lama is the current Dalai Lama, the highest spiritual leader of Tibet and considered a living buddha.

ECONOMY AND FINANCE



Economy News

Central government suspends operation of Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code by another 3 months to protect companies in distress due to Covid-19

- The Central government has suspended the operation of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 (IBC) by another three months in order to protect companies in distress due to the Covid pandemic.
- A gazette notification issued in this respect said that the suspension of the section 7, 9 and 10 of the IBC Code initially for six months has been further extended for another three months starting from 25th September.
- IBC (Second Amendment) Act, 2020 enables the Union Government to bar initiation of any bankruptcy proceedings against companies for defaults after March 25, 2020. The suspension of the proceeds initially meant for six months has been extended by another three months.

Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India was set up on 1st October 2016 under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 (Code). It is a unique regulator: regulates a profession as well as processes. It has regulatory oversight over the Insolvency Professionals, Insolvency Professional Agencies and Information Utilities. It writes and enforces rules for transactions, namely, corporate insolvency resolution, corporate liquidation, individual insolvency resolution and individual bankruptcy under the Code. Dr. M. S. Sahoo is currently serves as Chairperson of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India.

India Post, US Postal Service sign agreement for electronic exchange of customs data

- Department of Posts, India and United States Postal Service (USPS) have entered into an agreement for electronic exchange of customs data related to postal shipments exchanged between the two countries.
- The agreement will make it possible to transmit and receive electronic data of international postal items prior to their physical arrival at the destination and would enable customs clearance of postal items in advance in line with the evolving global postal framework.
- USA is the top export destination for India which is also reflected in exchange of goods through postal channel. In 2019, around 20 per cent of outbound EMS and 30 per cent of Letters and Small Packets transmitted by India Post were destined to USA whereas 60 per cent of the Parcels received by India Post were originated from USA.

IFAD becomes first UN fund to receive a credit rating, providing a boost to the world's poorest people

- The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) receives its first public credit rating. This sets the stage for increased investments in food security, employment, and rural economic growth, and is an important step towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- IFAD is the first fund in the United Nations system to receive a public credit rating. The AA+ (stable) rating was announced by Fitch Ratings, which also assigned IFAD a short-term rating of F1+.

- As the only global development organization exclusively dedicated to transforming agriculture, rural economies and food systems by making them more inclusive, productive, resilient and sustainable, IFAD plays a central role in the fight against extreme poverty and food insecurity.

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD or FIDA)) is an international financial institution and a specialised agency of the United Nations that works to address poverty and hunger in rural areas of developing countries. It is the only multilateral development organization that focuses solely on rural economies and food security. It is headquartered in Rome, Italy. It is funded through contributions from its 177 Member States.

Centre disburses nearly Rs. 20,000 crore among states from amount collected as compensation cess

- The Centre disbursed nearly Rs. 20,000 crore among the states from the amount collected as compensation cess this year. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman made the announcement to this effect after the 42nd GST Council meet.
- The GST Council also recommended the extension of Levy of Compensation Cess beyond the transition period of five years which is beyond June, 2022, for such period as may be required to meet the revenue gap.
- Revenue Secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey who was also present during the media briefing informed that starting from 1st January next year, taxpayers with less than Rs. five crore annual turnover will not be required to file monthly GSTR-1 and GSTR-3B returns.

GST is an indirect tax used in India on the supply of goods and services. It is a comprehensive, multistage, destination-based tax: comprehensive because it has subsumed almost all the indirect taxes except a few state taxes. The tax came into effect from 1 July 2017 through the implementation of the One Hundred and First Amendment of the Constitution of India by the Indian government. The GST replaced existing multiple taxes levied by the central and state governments. Goods and services are divided into five different tax slabs for collection of tax - 0%, 5%, 12%, 18% and 28%. However, petroleum products, alcoholic drinks, and electricity are not taxed under GST and instead are taxed separately by the individual state governments, as per the previous tax system. There is a special rate of 0.25% on rough precious and semi-precious stones and 3% on gold.

Defence Ministry scraps offset clause in Rafale-like deals in aftermath of CAG report

- CAG, in its recent defence offset report tabled in Parliament, made stern observations about foreign firms such as Dassault Aviation not meeting obligations of domestic investment undertaken at the time of securing procurement contracts. The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has now decided to altogether scrap the offset clause from inter-government and single vendor deals for procurement of defence platforms.
- As per inputs, the MoD has cited failure to achieve the desired objective of getting technology to India through foreign manufacturers, as the reason for its decision. With the offset clause, like in the case of procurement of 36 Rafale jets from France, the manufacturer Dassault Aviation and MBDA were mandated to invest 30 per cent of the contract amount in the Indian defence sector.
- In the Rafale deal where 36 fighter jets were purchased for Rs 59,000 crore, the offset clause was 50 per cent. On September 23, Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) pulled up Dassault Aviation, the French manufacturer of Rafale for not fulfilling its offset commitment to transfer technology to India as part of the 2016 contract for 36 combat jets.
- India had adopted the offset policy for defence capital purchases first in 2005. This meant that for all capital purchases above Rs 300 crore made through imports, the foreign vendor was required to invest at least 30 per cent of the value of the purchase in India itself.

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) is an Indian state-owned aerospace and defence company headquartered in Bangalore, India. It is governed under the management of the Indian Ministry of Defence. The government-owned corporation is primarily involved in the operations of the aerospace and is currently involved in the design, fabrication and assembly of aircraft, jet engines, helicopters and their spare parts.

Sofia Vergara tops Forbes list of highest paid actresses in 2020

- **Sofia Vergara is the highest-paid female actor in the world**, according to Forbes' latest list. She made **\$43 million** in a one-year period, which is the equivalent of Rs 315 crore.
- According to Forbes, **most of Vergara's earnings came from Modern Family and America's Got Talent**, which she padded up with endorsement deals. She made \$500,000 per episode for the show, while America's Got Talent makes her \$10 million per season. Jolie, meanwhile, earned the majority of her \$35.5 million from her upcoming appearance in Marvel's Eternals.
- **Last year's number one, Scarlett Johansson, had made \$56 million.** Blunt is a newcomer on the list, thanks to a hefty payday for A Quiet Place: Part 2 and Disney's upcoming Jungle Cruise film with Dwayne Johnson. Combined, the top 10 highest paid female actors made \$254 million this year, down 20% from last year.

Puducherry airport becomes AAI's first 100% solar-powered airport

- The Puducherry airport has become the first airport of the Airports Authority of India (AAI) which is entirely solar-powered. The 500KWp ground-mounted solar power plant was commissioned on 2nd October 2020. The approx cost of the plant is Rs 2.8 crore. With becoming absolutely power-neutral, the Puducherry airport will be able to meet its entire power requirement through the solar power plant.

Ashima Goyal, Jayanth R Varma, Shashanka Bhide appointed as MPC members

- The government appointed economists **Ashima Goyal, Jayanth R Varma and Shashanka Bhide as members of the rate-setting Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)** of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- The appointment of the three members of the RBI was issued by a gazette notification by the Government of India. **The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), headed by the Prime Minister**, approved the names, the sources said. As per the RBI Act, the three new members would have four-year terms.
- According to the gazette notification **Prof. Ashima Goyal is Professor, Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research, Prof. Jayanth R. Varma, Professor, Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad and Dr. Shashanka Bhide, Senior Advisor, National Council of Applied Economic Research, Delhi— Member**
- The RBI had postponed the last meeting of the MPC, which must have a quorum of four, as the appointment of independent members was delayed.

Monetary policy is the process by which the monetary authority of a country, typically the central bank or currency board, controls either the cost of very short-term borrowing or the monetary base, often targeting an inflation rate or interest rate to ensure price stability and general trust in the currency. Monetary Policy Committee of India is a committee of the Reserve Bank of India that is responsible for fixing the benchmark interest rate in India. The committee comprises six members - three officials of the Reserve Bank of India and three external members nominated by the Government of India.

India's GDP expected to contract by 9.6 per cent this fiscal: World Bank

- The World Bank said that **India's GDP is expected to contract by 9.6 per cent this fiscal** which is reflective of the national lockdown and the income shock experienced by households and firms due to the COVID-19 pandemic, noting that the country's economic situation is "much worse" than ever seen before.
- The Washington-based global lender, in its latest South Asia Economic Focus report ahead of the annual meeting of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, **forecasts a sharper than expected economic slump across the region, with regional growth expected to contract by 7.7 per cent in 2020**, after topping six per cent annually in the past five years. **Regional growth is projected to rebound to 4.5 per cent in 2021**, it said. Factoring in population growth, however, income-per-capita in the region will **remain 6 per cent below 2019 estimates**, indicating that the expected rebound will not offset the lasting economic damage caused by the pandemic.

Government forms five task forces to make Indian MSMEs future-ready

- The government has **constituted five task forces to make India's micro, small and medium enterprises future-ready and formulate a concrete strategy** towards making the country a leading exporter. MSME Secretary A K

Sharma expressed confidence that it would be on the path of implementing the futuristic initiatives by the start of next year.

- “We have formed five ministerial task forces which will be headed by our key officers. These five task forces would work for a month in five key areas where we feel that the industry of the country and particularly the MSME sector should head towards,” Sharma said at a virtual session organised by FICCI. He added that one of the five areas identified is Industry 4.0, including elements like artificial intelligence, 3D and virtual reality, and this task force has been formed with the objective of making India a global leader in Industry 4.0.

Kasturi, the first national brand of Indian cotton can fetch at least a 5% price premium

- Kasturi, the first national brand of Indian cotton, can fetch at least a 5% price premium.
- With private trade not willing to buy cotton at the minimum support price, the government agency Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) has to step in as the biggest buyer, accounting for a third of the national output.

Kasturbai Mohandas Gandhi was an Indian political activist. She married Mohandas Gandhi in 1883. Kasturba died in 1944. In association with her husband and son, she was involved in the Indian independence movement in British-ruled India. She was very influenced by her husband Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, a.k.a. Mahatma Gandhi. Kasturba Gandhi first involved herself with politics in South Africa in 1904 when, with her husband and others, she established the Phoenix Settlement near Durban.

World Trade Organization to be led by a woman for first time

- The World Trade Organization announced that South Korea’s trade minister and a Harvard-trained former Nigerian finance minister have qualified as the two finalists to become the next director-general, ensuring a woman in the top job for the first time.
- A selection committee said that Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala of Nigeria and Yoo Myung-hee of South Korea qualified for the final round in a race expected to end in the coming weeks. They were picked out of a pool of five candidates.

The World Trade Organization (WTO) is the only global international organization dealing with the rules of trade between nations. World Trade Organization has replaced the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which commenced in 1948. Roberto Azevedo is the current Director-General of the WTO. The WTO has 164 members and 23 observer governments. Liberia became the 163rd member on 14 July 2016, and Afghanistan became the 164th member on 29 July 2016.

26% FDI applies to digital media, news aggregators

- More than a year after announcing a 26 per cent foreign direct investment (FDI) cap under the government approval route in digital news, the government has said that the CEO of the company would have to be an Indian citizen, and that all foreign employees working for more than 60 days would need security clearance.
- There was no FDI policy for “news digital media sector” earlier. FDI in print media is capped at 26 per cent, and that in TV news is 49 per cent. The Commerce Ministry said the government had decided in September 2019 “to liberalise the FDI regime for entities engaged in the News Digital Media Sector”, and accordingly, these entities “have been permitted FDI upto 26% through the government approval route”.

Foreign direct investment (FDI) is an investment in a business by an investor from another country for which the foreign investor has control over the company purchased. Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) are those institutional investors which invest in the assets belonging to a different country other than that where these organizations are based. FDI is an investment that a parent company makes in a foreign country. On the contrary, FII is an investment made by an investor in the markets of a foreign nation. The FDI flows into the primary market, while the FII flows into secondary market. While FIIs are short-term investments, the FDI’s are long term investment. FII can enter the stock market easily and also withdraw from it easily. But FDI cannot enter and exit that easily. The Foreign Direct Investment is considered to be more stable than Foreign Institutional Investor.

India will become the world's third largest economy by 2050, says Lancet study

- **India is likely to overtake Japan as the third largest economy in the world by 2050** and continue in that position till 2100, according to a study published in the medical journal Lancet.
- **The study constructed scenarios for GDP using the working age population of countries.** It also assessed potential economic and geopolitical effects of future demographic shifts.
- The study based 2017 as the reference when **India was the seventh largest economy in the world**, and forecast that **India will emerge as the fourth largest economy by 2030** behind USA, China, Japan and **by 2050** it will go onto the **third spot and retain it till 2100.**
- The study published in July plotted the **forecasted number of working-age individuals (aged 20–64 years) for the ten largest countries in 2017**, in the reference scenario.

India among top three FDI destinations in near future: CII-EY survey

- A survey by the **Confederation of India Industry (CII)** and **EY** of around a hundred companies has revealed that **India has emerged as one of the top three choices for overseas investments in the next 2-3 years** and about **30% of the firms are planning to invest more than \$500 million.**
- As per the survey, for **more than two-thirds of the multi-national corporations (MNC) respondents** and **25% of the non-India headquartered MNCs**, India as the **first choice for investments.**
- India is top choice for future investments for **2/3rd of 50 MNCs** of cos see **India among top 3 economies, manufacturing destinations by 2025.** Capacity expansion, digital transformation, R&D to drive new FDI. Market potential, skilled workforce, political stability make India attractive. Cos want government to focus on infra development, faster clearances. MNCs seek labour law implementation, trade policy reform

Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), based in New Delhi, India, is a non-government, not-for-profit, industry-led, and industry-managed organisation, founded in 1895. Uday Kotak, Managing Director & CEO of Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited is the President; T. V. Narendran, MD and CEO of Tata Steel is the President-Designate.

India fares poorly in hunger index

- **India has the highest prevalence of wasted children under five years in the world**, which reflects acute undernutrition, according to the Global Hunger Index 2020. The situation has **worsened in the 2015-19 period, when the prevalence of child wasting was 17.3%**, in comparison to 2010-14, when it was **15.1%.**
- It uses four parameters to determine its scores. **India fares worst in child wasting (low weight for height, reflecting acute undernutrition) and child stunting (low height for age, reflecting chronic undernutrition), which together make up a third of the total score.**
- **Overall, India ranks 94 out of 107 countries in the Index**, lower than neighbours such as Bangladesh (75) and Pakistan (88). 2020 scores reflect data from 2015-19. GHI is a tool for comprehensively measuring and tracking hunger at global, regional, and national levels, score. **GHI is published by Concern Worldwide (international humanitarian organization) and Welthungerhilfe (private aid organisations in Germany).**

Nearly 690 million people are undernourished; 144 million children suffer from stunting, 47 million children suffer from wasting, and in 2018, 5.3 million children died before their fifth birthdays. India has the highest prevalence of wasted children.

Indian economy to contract by 10.3% in 2020; may bounce back with 8.8% growth rate in 2021: IMF

- **The International Monetary Fund (IMF) slashed the growth forecast for India for the second time this year** saying that **the country's economy will contract 10.3% in FY21**, the third steepest decline after Spain and Italy, and the sharpest fall among emerging markets and developing countries.

- However, India is likely to bounce back with an impressive 8.8 percent growth rate in 2021, thus regaining the position of the fastest growing emerging economy, surpassing China's projected growth rate of 8.2 percent, the IMF said in its latest "World Economic Outlook" report.
- Released ahead of the annual meetings of the IMF and the World Bank, the report said global growth would contract by 4.4 percent this year and bounce back to 5.2 percent in 2021. According to the IMF, India is among those likely to suffer the greatest damage from global warming, reflecting its initially high temperatures. For India, the net gains from climate change mitigation-relative to inaction-would be up to 60-80 percent of GDP by 2100.

The IMF, also known as the Fund, was conceived at a UN conference in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, United States, in July 1944. The IMF's primary purpose is to ensure the stability of the international monetary system—the system of exchange rates and international payments that enables countries (and their citizens) to transact with each other. It is headquartered in Washington, D.C., of ". At present, 189 countries are the member countries in IMF. Ms. Kristalina Georgieva, from Bulgaria, is Managing Director and Chairman of the Executive Board of IMF from October 1, 2019.

MSME Ministry introduces AI & ML for strengthening its single window system portal 'Champions'

- Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises- MSME Ministry has introduced Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning for strengthening its single window system portal 'Champions' to assist the MSMEs in the country.
- Champions Portal was launched by the Prime Minister in June this year. This multi-modal system also comprises technology equipped physical control rooms at around 69 locations in the country.
- Ministry of MSME has taken Covid-19 as a challenge and is converting it into an opportunity with futuristic interventions. In this difficult period, Ministry is not only whole-heartedly supporting the MSMEs and trying to convert this crisis into an opportunity, but is in fact making them break their barriers, make a paradigm shift and become champions.

Centre has revised the definition of micro, small and medium enterprises to give them the confidence to grow. Under the new definition, the distinction between manufacturing and services enterprises has been eliminated. Under the new definition of MSMEs, the investment criteria for such enterprises have been revised upwards, while an additional criterion of turnover has been introduced. Under the new definition, manufacturing and services enterprises with investments up to Rs 1 crore and turnover up to Rs 5 crore will be classified as micro enterprises. For small enterprises, the investment criteria has been revised upwards to Rs 10 crore, with the turnover criteria of Rs 50 crore added to the mix. Enterprises with investment up to Rs 50 crore and turnover up to Rs 250 crore will be termed medium enterprises.

Labour bureau to release new working-class inflation index on October 21

- The labour bureau will unveil a new series for consumer price index for industrial workers (CPI-IW), a measure of inflation used to calculate dearness allowance (DA) for government employees, wages for industrial workers and dearness relief for pensioners, an official said, requesting anonymity.
- The new series will account for changing spending habits of the working class in the organised sector. In the new series, the base year for calculating the CPI-IW will be updated from 2001 to 2016. The new series has been necessitated by changing consumption habits, relative prices of various commodities and spending patterns of the country's workforce in regular jobs.
- In any inflation index, the base year is the first year of an inflation index, with an index value of 100. Inflation indices of all other years are compared to the base year to see how prices vary. The index will help economists, who calculate inflation, to reflect a more accurate picture of a working-class household's costs.
- The percentage change in this index is what an inflation measure represents. The new index will assign more weight to spending on services such as education, healthcare, housing, travel and transportation, as spending on these items have gone up, as compared to primary items such as food.

Labour Bureau is responsible for the collation, collection and publication of statistics and related information on wages, earnings, productivity, absenteeism, labour turn-over, industrial relations, working and living conditions and evaluation of working of various labour enactments etc. It is a storehouse of important economic indicators like Consumer Price Index Numbers for Industrial, Agricultural and Rural Labourers; wage rate indices and data on industrial relations, socio-economic conditions in the organized and unorganised sector of industry etc. **Labour Bureau**, an attached office under Ministry of Labour and Employment, was set up on 1st October 1946. **Labour Bureau** has two main wings stationed in Shimla and Chandigarh.

India designated Vice-Chair of OECD Working Group on GLP

- **India** has been designated the Vice-Chair of Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) Working Group of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), recognising the contribution of the Indian GLP programme.
- **Good Laboratory Practice** is a quality system, which has been evolved by OECD to ensure that safety data generated on various chemicals like industrial chemicals, pharmaceuticals, cosmetic products and medical devices can be relied upon by regulatory authorities.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an intergovernmental economic organisation with 37 member countries, founded in 1961 to stimulate economic progress and world trade. The OECD is an official United Nations observer. It is headquartered in Paris.

The Bahamas issues world's first Central Bank Digital Currency

- **Central Bank of Bahamas** launches Landmark 'Sand Dollar' Digital Currency. The Central Bank of the Bahamas has officially launched its national digital currency. The first of its kind in the world to have been fully deployed, the sand dollar is a digital version of the Bahamian dollar.

MSME Minister Nitin Gadkari launches India's first-ever high quality Khadi Fabric Footwear

- Minister of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises- MSME, **Nitin Gadkari** launched India's first-ever high quality Khadi Fabric Footwear, designed by Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) through Video Conference.
- These footwear are made of Khadi fabric like Silk, Cotton and Wool. On the occasion, Mr Gadkari also launched the online sale of Khadi footwear through KVIC's e-portal www.khadiindia.gov.in.

India ranks 131 out of 138 countries in mobile internet speed, even lower than Iraq

- **Mobile internet speed in India** has dropped further in September this year, pushing the country even below war-torn Iraq. Even our neighbours, Pakistan and Nepal have better mobile internet speeds, according to the latest data from Ookla.
- As per the Ookla September speed test index, **South Korea** has the best mobile internet speed of 121 Mbps while **India** is at 131st place with 12.07 Mbps average speed. India has in fact lost two points since last month. Pakistan is at 116th place in terms mobile internet speeds with average speed of 17.13 Mbps while Nepal at 117th place with 17.12 Mbps speed. Sri Lanka has much better 19.95 Mbps mobile internet speed. Iraq, with 12.24 Mbps speed, is just ahead of India in the list.

Hyderabad Airport becomes India's first airport to start e-boarding facilities for international flights

- **Hyderabad Airport** becomes the first one in India to offer E-boarding services to flyers boarding international flights. Indigo was the first airline to start the international flight e-boarding service at Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (HYD).
- **Hyderabad airport** has already been providing end-to-end paperless E-boarding for flyers boarding domestic flights. The new procedure follows the true spirit of "Aatmanirbhar Bharat" and in line with the Centre's Digital India campaign.

India's largest power producer NTPC ties up with Japan Bank for Rs 3,500 crore loan

- India's largest power producer NTPC Ltd signed an agreement with Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) for a loan of Rs. 3,500 crore.
- Under the foreign currency loan agreement, JBIC will provide 60% of the loan amount and the balance will be covered by other commercial banks, Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation, Bank of Yokohama, San-In Godo Bank, Jyoy Bank and Nanto Bank, that are under JBIC guarantee.
- The facility is extended under JBIC's Global Action for Reconciling Economic growth and Environment preservation (GREEN) for projects which ensure conservation of global environment.
- The loan proceeds shall be utilized by India's largest power producer for funding its capex for Flue Gas Desulphurization (FGD) and renewable energy projects.

NTPC Limited, formerly known as National Thermal Power Corporation Limited, is an Indian Public Sector Undertaking, engaged in the business of generation of electricity and allied activities. It is a company incorporated under the Companies Act 1956 and is promoted by the Government of India. The headquarters of the company is situated at New Delhi. It was founded by Government of India in 1975, which now holds 54.74% of its equity shares. In May 2010, NTPC was conferred Maharatna status by the Union Government of India.

U.K. to partner for developing GIFT City, funding infra pipeline

- The United Kingdom has entered into a strategic partnership to develop India's fledgling international financial services centre GIFT City, and agreed to set up a new Fund of Funds to be managed by the State Bank of India group in order to route U.K.'s future capital investments into India.
- India and U.K. also signed off on a new infrastructure finance and policy partnership to help India execute its National Infrastructure Pipeline that envisages investments worth \$1.4 trillion, at the tenth Economic and Financial Dialogue (EFD) between the two countries steered by U.K. Chancellor Rishi Sunak and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

7,000 projects have been identified across various sectors as part of the National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) project which would be executed at an investment of Rs 110 lakh crore. To achieve the GDP of \$5 trillion by 2024-25, India needs to spend about \$1.4 trillion or Rs 100 lakh crore over these years on infrastructure, as per government estimates. It has outlined plans to invest more than Rs. 102 lakh crore on infrastructure projects by 2024-25, with the Centre, States and the private sector to share the capital expenditure in a 39:39:22 formula.

China's first domestically-built aircraft carrier likely to be combat-ready by year-end

- China's first domestically-built aircraft carrier Shandong is expected to be combat-ready by this year-end. The aircraft has completed regular testing and training missions at sea.
- Shandong is China's second aircraft carrier. It is also the country's first domestically built aircraft carrier. Chinese aircraft carriers Liaoning and Shandong have recently completed routine training and sea trials.

IIM-Bangalore's programme among top 100 in global list

- The postgraduate programme in enterprise management (PGPEM), offered by the Indian Institute of Management-Bangalore (IIM-B), has been ranked in the top 100 in the Financial Times (FT) EMBA 2020 ranking.
- Participating for the first time in this ranking, the programme has taken the second position in India. The PGPEM at IIM-B is a weekend MBA programme designed for working mid-level and senior executives with a minimum of four years of work experience after graduation.

NITI Aayog, QCI launch 'National Program and Project Management Policy Framework' for infrastructure sector

- NITI Aayog and Quality Council of India (QCI) launched the 'National Program and Project Management Policy Framework' (NPMPPF), with the aim of bringing radical reforms in the way infrastructure projects are executed in India.
- Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways and MSMEs Nitin Gadkari unveiled the Indian Infrastructure Body of Knowledge (InBoK), a book on the practice of program and project management in India, and launched the framework, along with Union Minister Piyush Goyal, NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant, and QCI Chairman Adil Zainulbhai.
- In the future, InBoK is envisioned to have extensions, which will be specific to each domain or industry for infrastructure, for example, a dedicated extension for roadways that captures issues and best practices specific to that sector.

Quality Council of India (QCI) was set up in 1997 by Government of India jointly with Indian Industry as an autonomous body under the administrative control of the DPIIT to establish and operate the National Accreditation Structure for conformity assessment bodies; providing accreditation in the field of education, health and quality promotion. It also promotes the adoption of quality standards relating to Quality Management Systems (ISO 14001 Series), Food Safety Management Systems (ISO 22000 Series) and Product Certification and Inspection Bodies through the accreditation services provided by National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies (NABCB). Indian industry is represented in QCI by three premier industry associations namely ASSOCHAM; CII; and FICCI. QCI is assigned the task of monitoring and administering the National Quality Campaign a plan scheme of the department, and also to oversee function of the National Information and Enquiry Services.

Banks in News

RBI suggests five-pillared approach to deal with cybersecurity issues in UCBs

- The Reserve Bank came out with a five-pillared strategic approach 'GUARD' to deal with cyber security threats being faced by Urban Cooperative Banks (UCBs).
- The RBI said in its document 'Technology Vision for Cyber Security for Urban Cooperative Banks 2020-2023' that the number, frequency and impact of cyber incidents and attacks have increased manifold in the recent past, more so in the case of the financial sector, including UCBs.
- Therefore, it has become essential to enhance the security posture of UCBs to prevent, detect, respond to and recover from cyber-attacks. According to the central bank, the technology vision document, which was formalised after obtaining inputs from various stakeholders, is aimed at enhancing the cybersecurity posture of UCBs against evolving IT and cyber threat environment.
- Observing that the cybersecurity landscape will continue to evolve with wider adoption of digital banking channels, necessitating the UCBs to manage the associated risks effectively, the RBI said that the active collaboration within UCBs and their stakeholders would be necessary for sharing and coordinating various measures taken on cybersecurity aspects.

Co-operative Banks, which are distinct from commercial banks, were born out of the concept of co-operative credit societies where members from a community group together to extend loans to each other, at favourable terms. Co-operative Banks are broadly classified into Urban and Rural co-operative banks based on their region of operation. According to the Bank's website, RBI 'regulates and supervises the banking functions of UCBs under the provisions of Banking regulation Act, 1949. Within the Reserve Bank, a separate department, viz. Urban Banks Department, has been entrusted with these functions. Further, RBI has been 'vested powers to issues licence to UCBs under Section 22 and 23 Banking Regulation Act, 1949 to carry on banking business and to open new places of business (branches, extension counters, etc.) respectively. Recently, Cabinet approved the amendment in Banking Regulation Act 1949 to bring in even the management functions of cooperatives also under RBI (Based on the Malegam committee report).

IDBI Bank becomes first bank to enable document embedding feature on SFMS

- IDBI Bank has become the first lender to enable document embedding feature on a structured financial messaging system managed by Indian Financial Technology and Allied Services. Indian Financial Technology and Allied Services is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Reserve Bank of India.
- "IDBI Bank Limited becomes the first bank to have implemented the new feature of document embedding facility with Letter of Credit/Bank Guarantee messages over SFMS platform.
- In an effort to further digitise the financial transactions and to secure the financial communication system, IFTAS has introduced the feature of document embedding, along with Letter of Credit/Bank Guarantee messages.

IDBI Bank (Industrial Development Bank of India) was established in 1964 in Mumbai by an Act of Parliament to provide credit and other financial facilities for the development of the fledgling Indian industry. It is owned by the Government of India. LIC completed acquisition of 51% controlling stake on January 21, 2019 making it the majority shareholder of the IDBI Bank. Reserve Bank of India has clarified vide a Press Release dated March 14, 2019, that IDBI Bank stands re-categorized as a Private Sector Bank for regulatory purposes with effect from January 21, 2019.

Reserve Bank to evaluate impact of 'RBI Kehta Hai' campaign

- The document said the RBI's awareness campaign is one of its kind due to the kind of infrastructure and planning required for nationwide reach while ensuring the last mile connectivity.

- The Reserve Bank will evaluate the impact of multi-media public awareness campaign ‘RBI Kehta Hai’, which was launched in 14 languages to educate the public about safe banking and financial practices. ‘RBI Kehta Hai’ was the first even 360 degree campaign initiated by the central bank using all mass media, including media such as television, radio, newspapers, hoardings, web banners, gifs, social media and SMS.
- In order to evaluate the impact of the public awareness campaign, the RBI has invited Expression of Interest (EoI) from eligible companies and other entities which have successfully completed at least five similar projects. The document further said companies, NGOs, voluntary agencies or public trusts participating in the EoI should have a turnover of at least Rs 2 crore from "Impact Evaluation/Surveys Business" in each of the last three financial years -- 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20.

Govt names RBI executive director M Rajeshwar Rao as fourth dy governor

- The appointment committee of the government named M Rajeshwar Rao, executive director of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) as the fourth deputy governor of the central bank.
- This position lay vacant after N S Vishwanathan demitted office on March 31. Rao was the senior-most among RBI's 12 EDs. Until recently, he used to look after Internal Debt Management Department, Financial Markets Operation Department, International Department, and Secretary's Department.
- Rajeshwar Rao joined RBI in 1984, and is a career central banker having exposure in various aspects of central banking. He was appointed as RBI ED on November 7, 2016, in charge of the Department of Statistics and Information Management, Financial Markets Operation Department and International Department. As Chief General Manager of the central bank, Rao was in charge of Financial Markets Operations Department.

The Reserve Bank of India was founded on 1 April 1935 to respond to economic troubles after the First World War. RBI was conceptualised as per the guidelines, working style and outlook presented by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in his book titled “The Problem of the Rupee – Its origin and its solution” and presented to the Hilton Young Commission. The bank was set up based on the recommendations of the 1926 Royal Commission on Indian Currency and Finance, also known as the Hilton–Young Commission. In 1969, the Indira Gandhi-headed government nationalised 14 major commercial banks. Upon Indira Gandhi's return to power in 1980, a further six banks were nationalised. The first Governor of the RBI was British banker Osborn Smith and C.D. Deshmukh was the first Indian Governor of RBI. Shashikant Das is the current Governor of RBI.

Interest subvention on MSME loans extended till end of March 2021: RBI

- The Reserve Bank of India has said that the two per cent interest subvention scheme for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) on loans offered by co-operative banks has been extended till 31st of March next year.
- RBI has further informed that the scheme, initially announced for just two years, has been extended for the financial year 2020-21. RBI said that the coverage of the scheme is limited to all term loans and working capital to the extent of 100 lakh rupees, adding that the requirement of Udyog Aadhaar Number may be dispensed with for units eligible for GST.
- Government of India, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) had announced the ‘Interest Subvention Scheme for MSMEs 2018’ on November 2, 2018 for Scheduled Commercial Banks.
- The scheme provides for an interest relief of two per cent per annum to eligible MSMEs on their outstanding fresh/incremental term loan/working capital during the period of its validity. The coverage of the Scheme is limited to all term loans / working capital to the extent of Rs.100 lakh. The loan accounts on the date of filing claim should not have been declared as NPA as per the extant guidelines in force. No interest subvention shall be admissible for any period during which the account remains NPA.

API integration between PM SVANidhi and SBI portal launched

- As a part of Prime Minister Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) Scheme, Shri Durga Shanker Mishra, Secretary, Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs launched the Application Programming Interface (API) integration between the PM SVANidhi Portal and the State Bank of India (SBI) portal.

- This integration will facilitate seamless flow of data between the two portals i.e. **PM SVANidhi Portal and SBI's eMudra Portal in a secure environment and expedite the loan sanctioning and disbursement process**, which will benefit the street vendors seeking working capital loan under the Scheme. Ministry would be exploring similar integration with other banks as well for which a consultative meeting will be held shortly.
- The Ministry is implementing **PM SVANidhi Scheme since June 01, 2020, for providing affordable working capital loan to street vendors to resume their livelihoods** that have been adversely affected due to Covid-19 lockdown.
- **This scheme targets to benefit over 50 lakh Street Vendors** who had been vending on or before 24 March, 2020, in urban areas including those from surrounding peri-urban/rural areas. Under the Scheme, the vendors can avail a working capital loan of up to Rs. 10,000, which is repayable in monthly instalments in the tenure of one year. On timely/early repayment of the loan, an interest subsidy @ 7% per annum will be credited to the bank accounts of beneficiaries through Direct Benefit Transfer on quarterly basis.
- **There will be no penalty on early repayment of loan.** The scheme promotes digital transactions through cash-back incentives up to an amount of Rs. 1,200 per annum. The vendors can fulfil their aspiration of climbing up the economic ladder by availing the facility of enhanced credit limit on timely/early repayment of loan.

RBI announces monetary policy; No changes in Interest rate & Reverse Repo rate

- **The Reserve Bank of India in its bi-monthly Monetary Policy statement issued has maintained a status quo keeping the key interest rates unchanged. The reverse repo rate remains unchanged at 3.35 per cent, the repo rate at four per cent.**
- The Monetary Policy Committee has also **decided to maintain its accommodative stance as long as necessary at least through the current financial year and next year** as Indian economy is entering into decisive phase in its fight against coronavirus.
- In major announcements, **RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das proposed that the RTGS system for real time fund transfer to become 24X7 from December 2020. The new housing loans risk weights to be linked to Loan-to-value ratio and also rationalize risk weights for all new housing loans until March 31, 2022.**

Repo rate is the rate at which the Reserve Bank of India lends money to commercial banks in the event of any shortfall of funds. Repo rate is used by monetary authorities to control inflation. **In the event of inflation, central banks increase repo rate as this acts as a disincentive for banks to borrow from the central bank.** This ultimately reduces the money supply in the economy and thus helps in arresting inflation. **Reverse repo rate is the rate at which the Reserve Bank of India borrows money from commercial banks within the country.** It is a monetary policy instrument which can be used to control the money supply in the country. **An increase in the reverse repo rate will decrease the money supply and vice-versa, other things remaining constant. An increase in reverse repo rate means that commercial banks will get more incentives to park their funds with the RBI, thereby decreasing the supply of money in the market.**

Dinesh Kumar Khara assumes charge as new Chairman of State Bank of India

- **Dinesh Kumar Khara has assumed charge as the new Chairman of the country's largest lender State Bank of India. Mr. Khara took over from Rajnish Kumar**, who superannuated. Soon after taking over charge, Mr. Khara said, one of his top priorities will be to maintain the quality of the loan book, adding that maintaining safety of bank employees and customers will also be focussed on.
- **Mr. Dinesh Kumar Khara has been appointed as SBI Chairman for a period of three years.** Prior to this appointment, he was serving the bank as the bank's Managing Director (Global Banking & Subsidiaries).

Indian Bank launches business mentoring programme to support MSMEs

- **Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman launched in Chennai Indian Bank's mentoring programme** that aims to support 1,500 entrepreneurs across India in small businesses.
- **Padmaja Chunduru, MD & CEO of Indian Bank**, said 'MSME Prerana' gives inputs without jargon and in local languages. The objective is to equip entrepreneurs with business skills and communication. The programme will begin in Tamil for the Coimbatore clusters of Indian Bank and later spread across the country.

- The programme will educate entrepreneurs about measures taken by the government, central bankers and lenders for MSMEs. Entrepreneurs will be trained for due diligence, credit assessment, compliance, and risk mitigation. Indian Bank has supported 1.6 million MSME customers.

Indian Bank is an Indian state-owned financial services company established in 1907 and headquartered in Chennai, India. As per the announcement made by the Indian Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on 30 August 2019, Allahabad Bank merged from 1 April 2020, making it the seventh largest bank in the country.

Reserve Bank of India reallocates portfolios of deputy governors

- Reserve Bank of India has reallocated portfolios of deputy governors, with the department of regulation entrusted to the newly-appointed M Rajeshwar Rao.
- Mr Rao was executive director of the Reserve Bank before being elevated to the post of deputy governor. Besides the department of regulation, Mr Rao will look after the departments of communication, enforcement legalities among others. Mr Rao was appointed to the post vacated by NS Vishwanathan, who stepped down three months ahead of his extended tenure on health grounds.
- RBI also announced portfolios of the four deputy governors effective from October 12, consequent upon the appointment of Mr Rao as deputy governor. Deputy Governor MD Patra will continue to look after the monetary policy department.
- His other portfolios, include department of economic and policy research, deposit insurance and credit guarantee corporation, financial markets operations department, and financial markets regulation department.
- Deputy Governor MK Jain will look after central security cell, corporate strategy and budget department, consumer education and protection department, department of supervision, and human resource management department, among others.
- Deputy Governor BP Kanungo will oversee coordination, currency management, external investments and operations, department of government and banks accounts, IT, payment and settlement systems, foreign exchange department, internal debt management department, Right of Information (RIA) Division, and secretary's department.

Govt appoints J Venkatramu as MD, CEO of India Post Payments Bank

- "The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the proposal of the department of posts for appointment of J Venkatramu to the post of Managing Director and Chief Executive Office, India Post Payments Bank for a period of three years from the date of assumption of the charge of the post, or till the date of his superannuation, or until further orders, whichever is the earlier," a government statement said.
- Venkatramu has over 22 years of work experience across banking services such as payments, mobile banking, retail banking products and has also managed digital financial services projects. He is currently chief digital officer at Equitas Small Finance Bank.

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) decides appointments to several top posts under the Government of India. The committee is composed of the Prime Minister of India (who is the Chairman), the Minister of Home Affairs. Originally the Minister-in-charge of the concerned Ministry was also the part of the committee but as per the new notification (as on 14 July 2016) the minister of concerned ministry has been excluded from the committee. There are eight Committees of the Cabinet, all committees of cabinet except that of Parliamentary Affairs (CCPA) and Accommodation are chaired/headed by the Prime Minister. CCPA is headed by Home Minister] and CCA by Minister of Home Affairs.

ICICI Bank customers can create FD, pay bills via WhatsApp

- ICICI Bank has made it even more convenient for its customers to avail its services. The bank announced for its customers the launch of services like creating fixed deposits (FDs), payment of utility bills and accessing details of trade finance on WhatsApp.
- While creating FDs and paying utility bills are available for customers, trade finance services are being tested with select corporates and will be available on the messaging platform in the next few days.

- With the launch of these services, the total number of ICICI banking services available to customers on WhatsApp has risen to 25. ICICI Bank had launched a host of services on WhatsApp six months ago, becoming the first bank to do so. Also available shortly will be service to recharge prepaid mobile phones

ICICI Bank Limited is an Indian multinational banking and financial services company headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra with its registered office in Vadodara, Gujarat. ICICI Bank was established by the Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India (ICICI), an Indian financial institution, as a wholly-owned subsidiary in 1994. ICICI Bank is one of the Big Four banks of India others banks are SBI, Bank of Baroda and HDFC. Sandeep Bakhshi is the current MD & CEO, ICICI Bank since October 2018.

Union Bank of India CEO Rajkiran Rai is new chairman of IBA

- Indian Banks' Association (IBA) said Union Bank of India's MD and CEO Rajkiran Rai G has been elected as the association's chairman for the term 2020-21.
- State Bank of India's Chairman Dinesh Kumar Khara has been elected as the deputy chairman of the association. IBA is an association of banks and other entities in the banking ecosystem in India catering to its members.

Indian Banks' Association (IBA), formed on 26 September 1946 as a representative body of management of banking in India operating in India - an association of Indian banks and financial institutions based in Mumbai. With an initial membership representing 22 banks in India in 1946, IBA currently represents 237 banking companies operating in India. Indian Banks' Association is managed by a managing committee, and the current managing committee consists of one chairman, 3 deputy chairmen, 1 honorary secretary and 26 members.

RBI to conduct first-ever OMO purchase of SDLs on October 22

- Reserve Bank of India will conduct its first-ever Open Market Operation (OMO) purchase of State Developments Loans (SDLs) on 22nd October.
- The OMOs worth ten thousand crore rupees will be conducted as a special case during the current financial year with an aim to improve liquidity and facilitate efficient pricing. The size of the auctions may be enhanced subsequently, depending on the market response.
- The RBI will purchase the SDLs through a multi-security auction using the multiple price method. The result of the auction will be announced on the same day.

An open market operation (OMO) is an activity by a central bank to give (or take) liquidity in its currency to (or from) a bank or a group of banks. The central bank can either buy or sell government bonds in the open market (this is where the name was historically derived from) or, in what is now mostly the preferred solution, enter into a repo or secured lending transaction with a commercial bank: the central bank gives the money as a deposit for a defined period and synchronously takes an eligible asset as collateral. A central bank uses OMO as the primary means of implementing monetary policy.

Govt. designates single SBI branch for all FCRA accounts

- The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has asked all NGOs seeking foreign donations to open a designated FCRA account at the State Bank of India's New Delhi branch by March 31, 2021.
- The MHA order reiterated that NGOs registered under FCRA shall not receive any foreign donations in any other bank account from April 1, 2021. In September, the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2020 was amended by Parliament and a new provision that makes it mandatory for all non-government organisations and associations to receive foreign funds in a designated bank account at SBI's New Delhi branch was inserted.

The Minister of Home Affairs, Amit Shah introduced the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2020. Under the Act, a person who receives foreign contribution must use it only for the purpose for which the contribution is received. Further, they must not use more than 50% of the contribution for meeting administrative expenses. The Bill reduces this limit to 20%. Under the Act, every person who has been given a certificate of registration must renew the certificate within six months of expiration.

SBI authorised to issue, encash Electoral Bonds

- **State Bank of India (SBI)** has been authorised to issue and encash Electoral Bonds through its 29 Authorized Branches with effect from 19th October to 28th of October this year.
- Electoral Bonds will be valid for fifteen calendar days from the date of issue and no payment will be made to any payee Political Party if the Electoral Bond is deposited after expiry of the validity period. The Electoral Bond deposited by an eligible Political Party in its account will be credited on the same day.
- Any party that is registered under section 29A of the Representation of the Peoples Act, 1951 (43 of 1951) and has secured at least one per cent of the votes polled in the most recent General elections or Assembly elections is eligible to receive electoral bonds. The party will be allotted a verified account by the EC and the electoral bond transactions can be made only through this account. **The electoral bonds will not bear the name of the donor.** Thus, the political party might not be aware of the donor's identity.

The electoral bonds were introduced with the Finance Bill (2017). On January 29, 2018 the Narendra Modi-led NDA government notified the Electoral Bond Scheme 2018. The bonds will be issued in multiples of Rs 1,000, Rs 10,000, Rs 100,000 and Rs 1 crore (the range of a bond is between Rs 1,000 to Rs 1 crore). The electoral bonds are available for purchase for 10 days in the beginning of every quarter. The first 10 days of January, April, July and October has been specified by the government for purchase of electoral bonds. An additional period of 30 days shall be specified by the government in the year of Lok Sabha elections.

NBFCs ask RBI again to open TLTRO window to access funds

- Nonbank finance companies (NBFCs) have again called on the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to give them access to the on-tap TLTRO (targeted long term repo operations) window, which provides long-term funds to banks at the policy rate. Despite the RBI introducing several tools to prop up bank funding to non-banks, the latter have been complaining of a persistent lack of liquidity, especially the smaller ones.
- The Finance Industry Development Council (FIDC), the NBFC lobby group, has urged RBI governor Shaktikanta Das to direct banks to lend to NBFCs under this scheme to ensure benefits reach a wider segment of borrowers.

Targeted Long-Term Repo Operations are Long term repo operations (LTROs) conducted by the RBI to ensure adequate liquidity at the longer period for specific sectors. Under LTROs, the RBI will auction funds to banks for making investment in prescribed corporate and other instruments. In the initial phase, the RBI instructed banks to invest funds availed from TLTRO to invest in investment-grade corporate debt. Purpose of the TLTRO is to ensure that there is enough liquidity in markets like corporate market and their yield are not going up in the context of the Covid set back. The TLTROs are exempted from regulatory requirement of the cash reserve ratio for the equivalent of incremental credit disbursed by banks as loans. Interest rate under for banks will be floating rates linked to the policy repo rate.

A non-banking financial company (NBFC) is a company registered under the Companies Act, 1956, NBFCs are doing functions akin to that of banks, however there are a few differences: NBFC cannot accept demand deposits (demand deposits are funds deposited at a depository institution that are payable on demand -- immediately or within a very short period -- like your current or savings accounts.) and it is not a part of the payment and settlement system and as such cannot issue cheques to its customers.

Dhanlaxmi Bank: RBI approves interim panel to run operations till new MD, CEO take charge

- Dhanlaxmi Bank said that the Reserve Bank of India has approved a three-member panel till the new managing director and chief executive officer take charge.
- The committee of directors will be constituted with Shri. G. Subramonia Iyer as chairman, G. Rajagopalan Nair and P.K Vijayakumar as members. The banking regulator has directed that the interim arrangement will not continue beyond four months, the bank said in the regulatory filing. The bank has been asked to complete the proceedings of appointing a new MD and CEO.

Dhanalakshmi Bank Ltd is an old private sector bank and incorporated on 14 November 1927 at Thrissur city, Kerala with a capital of Rs. 11,000 and 7 employees. It became a Scheduled Commercial Bank in the year 1977.

IndusInd Bank is the first bank to go live on RBI's 'Account Aggregator Framework'

- IndusInd Bank announced that it has gone live as a 'Financial Information Provider' (FIP) under the new 'Account Aggregator Framework' of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), making it the first bank in the country to do so.
- With this, customers can now avail a host of benefits such as viewing statements of their accounts, track deposits, plan investments (such as shares, mutual funds, Insurance, EPF, PPF), avail credit cards, etc. on a single window, thereby empowering them to take informed decisions pertaining to their finances.
- The initiative is a path breaking step taken by the RBI which will enable individuals as well as small and mid-sized businesses to avail services that will help them fulfill their financial requirements in a seamless way.

IndusInd Bank Limited is an Indian new generation bank in Pune, established in 1994. The bank offers commercial, transactional and electronic banking products and services. The bank began its operations on 17 April 1994 under the chairmanship of S.P. Hinduja with the primary objective of serving the NRI community. Sumant Kathpalia is the current MD & CEO of the bank.

Aditya Puri hands over charge; Jagdishan takes over as HDFC Bank MD & CEO

- Aditya Puri stepped out of HDFC Bank's corporate headquarters after handing over charge to Sashidhar Jagdishan as the new chief executive and managing director of the largest private sector lender.
- Over 25 years ago, at a nondescript office across the road in Lower Parel's Kamala Mills compound, Puri had started work as the bank's first head, and built the lender which now employs close to 1.20 lakh people.

HDFC Bank Limited is an Indian banking and financial services company headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra. HDFC Bank is India's largest private sector lender by assets. In 1994 HDFC Bank was incorporated, with its registered office in Mumbai, India. Sashidhar Jagdishan is the MD of HDFC Bank.

Nabard launches sanitation literacy campaign in Karnataka

- National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) regional office in Karnataka launched the Sanitation Literacy Campaign to promote literacy on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, (WASH) under Swach Bharath Mission.
- NABARD Chief General Manager, Niraj Kumar Verma said, there is a need for continuous awareness creation to sustain behavioural change among the rural masses for good hygiene and sanitation.
- The campaign which will be ending on 26th of January, next year will provide special refinance facility of 800 crore rupees across the country to Commercial banks, regional rural banks, Cooperatives and non-banking financial institutions at the rate of 6.65 percent. This will support WASH activities by covering 95 percent of the project cost.

NABARD came into existence on 12 July 1982 by transferring the agricultural credit functions of RBI and refinance functions of the then Agricultural Refinance and Development Corporation (ARDC). NABARD is headquartered at Mumbai. The Bank has been entrusted with "matters concerning policy, planning and operations in the field of credit for agriculture and other economic activities in rural areas in India". Govinda Rajulu Chintala is the new chairman of the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).

Gujarat: NABARD inks 3 MoUs with SBI to extend credit support for various projects

- In Gujarat, the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development -NABARD has inked three Memoranda of Understanding with Public Sector Bank- State Bank of India to extend credit support for various projects.

- The signing of MoUs took place between D. K. Mishra, Chief General Manager of NABARD in Gujarat and Dukhbandhu Rath, Chief General Manager, SBI Ahmedabad Circle in the presence of NABARD Chairman G. R. Chintala.
- The MoUs were **signed for financing joint liability groups and Self-Help Groups-support credit inflows to Farmer Producers' Organizations and economic support for watershed development projects**. These will help in providing credit support to the different sections of the society including the priority sector.

NABARD came into existence on 12 July 1982 by transferring the agricultural credit functions of RBI and refinance functions of the then Agricultural Refinance and Development Corporation (ARDC). **NABARD is headquartered at Mumbai. The Bank has been entrusted with “matters concerning policy, planning and operations in the field of credit for agriculture and other economic activities in rural areas in India”.** Govinda Rajulu Chintala has been **appointed the chairman** of the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).

SBI becomes first corporate partner of edX from India to offer Massive Open Online Courses

- **India's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI)** announced that it has **entered into a strategic partnership with trusted global non-profit education platform edX in order to offer its Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs).**
- The collaboration **aims at facilitating learners with expanding perspectives and access to knowledge beyond the classrooms.** These courses have been curated and designed by practicing bankers possessing rich experience and excellent academic credentials.

On April 1, 2017, the State Bank of India, which was India's largest bank, merged with five of its associate banks (State Bank of Bikaner & Jaipur, State Bank of Hyderabad, State Bank of Mysore, State Bank of Patiala and State Bank of Travancore), and with the Bharatiya Mahila Bank. Dinesh Kumar Khara is the current chairman of the State Bank of India (SBI). Imperial Bank of India was the oldest and the largest commercial bank of the Indian subcontinent, and was subsequently transformed into State Bank of India in 1955.

Nabard to set up subsidiary to guarantee agri-loans

- **Agri-lender Nabard has proposed to set up a subsidiary to provide a guarantee for loans under agriculture and rural development.**
- To start with, a guarantee will be **provided for loans under Animal Husbandry Infrastructure (CGAHI) scheme** announced as part of Animal Husbandry Infrastructure and Development Fund (AHIDF), **under PM's 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat programme',** and for financing Farmer producer organisation (FPOs) as part of central sector scheme for FPOs.

RBI excludes 6 PSBs from Second Schedule of RBI Act

- **The RBI has excluded six public sector banks, including OBC and Allahabad Bank, from the Second Schedule of the RBI Act following their merger with other banks.**
- **The six banks are Syndicate Bank, Oriental Bank of Commerce (OBC), United Bank of India, Andhra Bank, Corporation Bank, and Allahabad Bank.**

Public Sector Banks (PSBs) or Nationalised Banks in India are banks where a majority stake i.e. more than 51% is held by a government. In 1969 the Indian government nationalised 14 major private banks, one of the big bank was Bank of India. In 1980, 6 more private banks were nationalised. They dominate the banking sector because of their large size and widespread networks.

Firms in News

LIC, GIC, New India Assurance identified as D-SIIs

- **The Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), General Insurance Corporation of India and The New India Assurance Co** have been **identified as Domestic Systemically Important Insurers (D-SIIs)** for 2020-21 by insurance regulator IRDAI.
- Given the nature of operations and their systemic importance, **the three public sector insurers** have been **asked to raise the level of corporate governance as well as identify all relevant risk** and promote a sound risk management culture. **The D-SIIs** will also be **subjected to enhanced regulatory supervision**, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) said.
- According to the regulator, **D-SIIs refer to insurers of such size, market importance and domestic and global inter connectedness whose distress or failure would cause a significant dislocation in the domestic financial system**. Thus, the continued functioning of D-SIIs is critical for the uninterrupted availability of insurance services to the national economy.

Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) is an **autonomous, statutory body** tasked with **regulating and promoting the insurance and re-insurance industries** in India. It was **constituted by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority Act, 1999**, an Act of Parliament passed by the Government of India. The **agency's headquarters** are in **Hyderabad, Telangana**, where it moved from **Delhi** in **2001**. **Dr. Subhash C. Khuntia** is the current **Chairman of IRDAI**.

BSE joins hands with Yes Bank to empower SMEs

- **Leading stock exchange BSE** has **signed a pact with private sector lender Yes Bank to empower the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) listed on the platform**. The pact aims at **empowering the SME segment through awareness and knowledge-sharing programmes**.
- As per the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), **BSE and Yes Bank will conduct knowledge events for SMEs, export promotion of SMEs**, in addition to providing banking and financial solutions. The bank will also **offer customised services and products to the listed SME members of the platform**.

Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) is an **Indian stock exchange located at Dalal Street, Mumbai**. It was **established in 1875**. BSE is **Asia's first stock exchange**. BSE claims to be the **world's fastest stock exchange, with a median trade speed of 6 microseconds**.

Goldman Sachs to open office in Hyderabad, second in India

- **Investment banking firm Goldman Sachs** has **identified the city as a new location for its global shared services footprint in India**.
- **"The new Hyderabad office will be the second location for Goldman Sachs Services in India**, and will complement the Bengaluru office footprint in terms of both execution and support that it will provide to the firm's businesses globally.

The **Goldman Sachs Group** is **leading global investment banking, securities and investment management firm** that provides a **wide range of financial services to a substantial and diversified client base** that includes corporations, financial institutions, governments and individuals. **Founded in 1869**, the firm is **headquartered in New York** and maintains offices in all major financial centres around the world.

Vistara, Axis Bank launch co-branded forex card

- **Vistara and Axis Bank launched a co-branded forex card that can load up to 16 currencies**. The card has locked-in exchange rates and the cardholder will accrue 3 award points on Club Vistara for every USD 5 or an equivalent value spent, the airline said in a press release.

- Club Vistara (CV) is the airline's frequent flyer program. **"Customers also get awarded 500 CV Points as a Welcome Bonus on signing up (for the forex card),"** it said. The forex card can load up to 16 currencies and has various emergency assistance services like loss of passport assistance through TripAssist and insurance cover of up to Rs 3 lakhs, the release added. **Vistara's Chief Commercial Officer Vinod Kannan** said, "We are proud to be the first Indian airline to offer a co-branded forex card."

Tata SIA Airlines Limited, operating as **Vistara**, is an **Indian full-service airline**, based in **Gurgaon**, with its hub at **Indira Gandhi International Airport**. The carrier, a joint venture between **Tata Sons and Singapore Airlines**, commenced operations on **9 January 2015** with its inaugural flight between **Delhi and Mumbai**.

Reliance Jio becomes first telco to cross 40 crore subscribers mark

- **Mukesh Ambani-owned Reliance Jio** has become the first mobile service provider in the country to cross **40 crore customers mark**. According to data released by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India. **Reliance Jio now dominates India's mobile market with 35.03 per cent market share** at 40,08,03,819 subscribers.

Reliance Jio Infocomm Limited (Jio), is an **Indian telecommunications company** and subsidiary of **Reliance Industries**, headquartered in **Mumbai, Maharashtra, India**. It operates a **national LTE network** with coverage across all 22 telecom circles. It does not offer **2G or 3G service**, and instead uses only **voice over LTE** to provide **voice service on its 4G network**.

PepsiCo to set up Greenfield potato chips production unit in UP with investment of Rs. 814 crore

- The multi-national food and beverage major **PepsiCo** is setting up a **Greenfield potato chips production unit in Uttar Pradesh** with an investment of **Rs. 814 crore**.
- The unit is being set up in **Kosi - Mathura** on 35 acres of land provided by **UP State Industrial Development Authority (UPSIDA)**. **PepsiCo India Chairman Ahmed El Sheikh** said the initial investment in this project was pegged at **Rs 500 crore** which has been revised to **Rs 814 crore**.

PepsiCo, Inc. is an **American multinational food, snack, and beverage corporation** headquartered in **Purchase, New York**. The recipe for the soft drink **Pepsi** was first developed in the 1880s by **Caleb Bradham**, a pharmacist and industrialist from **New Bern, North Carolina**. He coined the name "**Pepsi-Cola**" in 1898. **Indra Nooyi** has been the chief executive of **PepsiCo** since 2006. **Indra Nooyi** has been appointed to the **International Cricket Council (ICC) Board** as its first independent female director. **Ramon Laguarta** is the chairman and chief executive officer of **PepsiCo**.

EarlySalary unveils digital Salary Card

- **Fintech start-up and consumer lending platform EarlySalary** has launched a **zero-touch digital card, called Salary Card**, in partnership with **RuPay**. The contact-less card provides instant access to digital credit for **salaried professionals** and enables instant purchases from merchants across India.
- The Salary Card also allows consumers the flexibility of setting up a dynamic credit limit to suit their needs and also decide the repayment tenure. The ongoing pandemic has created a higher preference for contact-less payments and the Salary Card enables customers activate the card within seconds by accessing the **EarlySalary mobile app**, **Akshay Mehrotra, CEO and cofounder, EarlySalary**, said.
- **Powered by RuPay**, the Salary Card comes with a feature that allows consumers the flexibility of setting up a credit limit to suit shopping, medical, travel, entertainment and other needs. Since the on-going pandemic has created a higher preference for non-contact payments, this digital zero-touch 'Salary Card' credit solution from **EarlySalary** will offer a safe and secured environment to customers.

MCX launches India's first-ever real-time base metal index

- **MCX** launched India's first real-time base metal index in the country, **MCX iCOMDEX Base Metal or METLDEX**. It tracks the real-time price movement of a basket of **MCX base metal near month futures** that includes **Zinc, Copper, Nickel, Lead and Aluminium**.

- The contract has a lot size equal to 50 times of underlying MCX iCOMDEX Base Metals Index. The tick size or the minimum price movement for the contract is Re.1. The contracts would finally be settled in cash at the end of the expiry of each contract.

Multi Commodity Exchange of India Ltd (MCX) is an independent commodity exchange based in India. It was established in 2003 and is based in Mumbai. MCX offers options trading in gold and futures trading in non-ferrous metals, bullion, energy, and a number of agricultural commodities (mentha oil, cardamom, crude palm oil, cotton and others).

NTPC ranks first among Indian PSUs in Forbes World's Best Employer 2020

- India's largest power producer NTPC Ltd came first among Indian PSUs under World's Best Employer this year in a list published by Forbes. The recognition is testimony to NTPC's commitment towards inculcating best in class practices that are thoughtfully designed and robustly executed.
- During the lockdown phase and the subsequent unlock period, NTPC Learning and Development strategy moulded itself significantly to further evolve as per the requirement of the current scenario. Its training methodology enriched the lives of thousands of its employees through intensive digitisation and online training enabling them to avail services even from remote locations.

IRDAI sets up panel to examine need for standard cyber liability insurance product

- The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has set up a panel to explore possibility of a basic standard product structure to provide insurance cover for individuals and establishments to manage their cyber risks. The general liability policies do not cover cyber risks, and cyber insurance policies currently available are highly customised for clients in a new and quickly growing market.
- The panel, headed by P Umesh, Consultant-Liability Insurance, has been asked to study various statutory provisions on information and cybersecurity, and to evaluate critical issues involving legal aspects of transactions in cyber space.

Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) is an autonomous, statutory body tasked with regulating and promoting the insurance and re-insurance industries in India. It was constituted by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority Act, 1999, an Act of Parliament passed by the Government of India. The agency's headquarters are in Hyderabad, Telangana, where it moved from Delhi in 2001. IRDAI is a 10-member body including the chairman, five full-time and four part-time members appointed by the government of India. Subhash Chandra Khuntia is the current Chairman of IRDAI.

Snapchat Announces First-of-Its Kind Content Tie-Up with NDTV

- NDTV has been chosen by Snap Inc for a unique collaboration, which will see NDTV providing breaking news and premium content to Snapchat's users in the country.
- According to third party estimates, Snapchat has approximately 30 million users in India, though the company does not share region-specific data. Snap has no other relationship of this nature with a premium new media company in India.

Snapchat is an American multimedia messaging app developed by Snap Inc., originally Snapchat Inc. One of the principal features of Snapchat is that pictures and messages are usually only available for a short time before they become inaccessible to their recipients. Snapchat was created by Evan Spiegel, Bobby Murphy, and Reggie Brown, former students at Stanford University.

Hindustan Zinc, Gujarat govt sign pact to set up zinc smelter plant

- Vedanta Group firm Hindustan Zinc Ltd (HZL) has signed a pact with Gujarat government to set up a Greenfield zinc smelter in the state.
- The project will entail an investment of up to Rs 10,000 crore. Spread over 415 acres, the facility will entail an investment of Rs 5000- 10,000 crore in phases, creating more than 5,000 direct and indirect jobs and will be operational by 2022.

- **The new facility - the first for Hindustan Zinc in Gujarat - will be set up with zero discharge technology and will be among the lowest cost smelters in the world.**

Hindustan Zinc Limited (HZL) is an integrated mining and resources producer of zinc, lead, silver and cadmium. It is a subsidiary of Vedanta Limited. HZL is the world's second largest zinc producer. It is headquartered in Udaipur.

Facebook's AI model can translate 100 languages without relying on English

- **Facebook introduced the first open-source multi-lingual machine translation model M2M-100 that can translate between any pair of 100 languages without relying on English data.**
- **When translating, previous models made use of English translation data as it was widely available. Facebook's model translates directly from language one to another to preserve meaning better,** the company said in a statement.
- **The programme outperforms English-centric systems by 10 points on the BLEU metric, which is used for evaluating machine translations. M2M-100 is trained on a total of 2,200 language directions. It will improve the quality of translations for billions of people, especially those who speak low-resource languages.**

Facebook is an American online social media and social networking service company based in Menlo Park, California. Its website was launched on February 4, 2004, by Mark Zuckerberg along with Eduardo Saverin, Andrew McCollum, Dustin Moskovitz, and Chris Hughes. WhatsApp was founded in 2009 by Brian Acton and Jan Koum, both former employees of Yahoo!. WhatsApp Inc., based in Mountain View, California, which was acquired by Facebook in February 2014 for approximately US\$19.3 billion.

Biocon ranked among top five biotech employers globally

- **Biocon Ltd, a Bengaluru-headquartered biopharmaceuticals company, has been ranked among the Top 5 Global Biotech Employers for 2020** in the U.S.-based Science magazine's annual 'Science Careers Top 20 Employers' list.
- **The other top pharma employers in the list are Regeneron, Alnylam, Incyte and Syngenta. With this ranking, Biocon has moved up from No. 7 in 2018 and No. 6 in 2019 and to No.5 this year, ahead of global pharma companies like Novo Nordisk, Roche, Eli Lilly, Abbott, Novartis, Pfizer etc.**

Biocon Limited is an Indian biopharmaceutical company based in Bangalore, India by Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, the founder. The Company manufactures generic active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) that are sold in over 120 countries across the globe, including the developed markets of the United States and Europe.

HAL, Tech Mahindra sign Rs 400 crore contract for 'Project Parivartan'

- **Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd and Tech Mahindra signed a contract worth Rs 400 crore for implementation of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) to support HAL's 'Project Parivartan'.**
- **'Project Parivartan' is a comprehensive business transformation exercise initiated by HAL through technology enhancement and centralised ERP. The exercise would enable HAL to adopt some of the best practices followed in some of the similar industries globally.**

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) is an Indian state-owned aerospace and defence company headquartered in Bangalore (Bengaluru), India. It is governed under the management of the Indian Ministry of Defence. The government-owned corporation is primarily involved in the operations of the aerospace and is currently involved in the design, fabrication and assembly of aircraft, jet engines, helicopters and their spare parts.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



China is sending the world's first mining robot to space in November

- China is all set to send out the world's first mining robot into space by November this year. A private Beijing company, Origin Space, will be launching this ambitious project. Despite being called an 'asteroid mining robot', it's not going to do any actual mining.
- The NEO-1 will most probably be launched as a secondary payload on a Chinese Long March rocket. The spacecraft is quite light by spacecraft standards at 30 kg. It will enter at an orbit around the earth at 500 km altitude.
- The 30-gram spacecraft, NEO-1, is likely to be launched as a secondary payload on a Chinese Long March rocket. This company also has another mission, Yuanwang-1 ('Look up-1'), nicknamed 'Little Hubble', which is to be launched by late 2021 or early 2022.

Space is the boundless three-dimensional extent in which objects and events have relative position and direction. Physical space is often conceived in three linear dimensions, although modern physicists usually consider it, with time, to be part of a boundless four-dimensional continuum known as spacetime. The concept of space is considered to be of fundamental importance to an understanding of the physical universe. Galilean and Cartesian theories about space, matter, and motion are at the foundation of the Scientific Revolution, which is understood to have culminated with the publication of Newton's Principia in 1687. Newton's theories about space and time helped him explain the movement of objects. While his theory of space is considered the most influential in Physics, it emerged from his predecessors' ideas about the same. April 12, 1961 was already a huge day in space history twenty years before the launch of the first shuttle mission. On that day in 1961, Russian cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin (left, on the way to the launch pad) became the first human in space, making a 108-minute orbital flight in his Vostok 1 spacecraft.

'World first' floating green hydrogen project coming to Aberdeen

- Aberdeen has been selected as the home for the "world's first" offshore floating facility to produce green hydrogen. The "pioneering" Dolphyn project in Aberdeen will sit 15 km off the coast, allowing the UK to harness the power of the superfuel using floating wind turbines.
- Developer Environmental Resources Management (ERM) described it as the "start of the process" which will see a predicted wave of thousands of green energy jobs supported by the hydrogen economy.
- ERM, a London-headquartered multinational consultancy, who earlier this year was awarded £3 million in UK government funding for Dolphyn, said Aberdeen beat out both Orkney and Cornwall for the development.

ISRO to launch its Venus mission in 2025, France to take part: French space agency

- ISRO is scheduled to launch its Venus mission in 2025 and France will participate in it. The VIRAL (Venus Infrared Atmospheric Gases Linker) instrument co-developed with the Russian federal space agency Roscosmos and the LATMOS atmospheres, environments and space observations laboratory attached to the French national scientific research centre CNRS has been selected by the ISRO after a request for proposals, it said in a statement.

- **ISRO chairman K Sivan and CNES president Jean-Yves Le Gall held talks** and reviewed the areas driving cooperation between France and India in space. “In the domain of space exploration, France will be taking part in ISRO’s mission to Venus, scheduled to launch in 2025. **CNES will coordinate and prepare the French contribution, the first time a French payload will be flown on an Indian exploration mission,**” CNES said in a statement.

Venus is the second planet from the Sun. It is named after the Roman goddess of love and beauty. As the second-brightest natural object in the night sky after the Moon, Venus can cast shadows and can be, on rare occasion, visible to the naked eye in broad daylight. Venus lies within Earth’s orbit, and so never appears to venture far from the Sun, either setting in the west just after dusk or rising in the east a bit before dawn. **Venus orbits the Sun every 224.7 Earth days. With a rotation period of 243 Earth days, it takes longer to rotate about its axis than any other planet in the Solar System** and does so in the opposite direction to all but Uranus (meaning the Sun rises in the west and sets in the east). **Venus does not have any moons, a distinction it shares only with Mercury among planets in the Solar System.**

IIT Jodhpur receives first ‘NVIDIA DGX A100’ AI Supercomputers in India

- **India Indian Institute of Technology, Jodhpur (IITJ) announced the receipt of NVIDIA DGX A100 to be installed at the Central Computing Facility systems for students, from all departments, including the School of AI and Data Science.**
- **With this, IITJ becomes the first Indian customer & recipient of this industry-leading AI Supercomputer.** The DGX A100 infrastructure will be combined with every department and curriculum at IIT Jodhpur, with Machine Learning as a major part of it.
- **NVIDIA DGX A100 is the universal system for all AI workloads,** offering unprecedented compute density, performance, and flexibility in the world’s first 5 petaFLOPS AI system.
- **NVIDIA DGX A100 features the world’s most advanced accelerator,** the NVIDIA A100 Tensor Core GPU, enabling enterprises to consolidate training, inference, and analytics into a unified, easy-to-deploy AI infrastructure that includes direct access to NVIDIA AI experts.

NASA lifts off SS Kalpana Chawla cargo spacecraft

- **A commercial cargo spacecraft bound for the International Space Station (ISS) launched carrying the name of deceased NASA astronaut Kalpana “K.C.” Chawla, the first Indian-born woman to enter space, for her key contributions to human spaceflight.**
- **A Northrop Grumman Cygnus, the commercial cargo spacecraft named the SS Kalpana Chawla after astronaut Kalpana Chawla, carries a 360-degree camera for spacewalking, and radish seeds for growing and a smorgasbord of fancy meats and cheeses for feasting.**

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is an independent agency of the executive branch of the United States federal government responsible for the civilian space program, as well as aeronautics and aerospace research. President Dwight D. Eisenhower established NASA in 1958. James Frederick Bridenstine is an American politician and the current administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. He became the first member of Congress to lead NASA.

Science and Technology Minister Harsh Vardhan launched CSIR technologies for rural development

- **Science and Technology Minister Harsh Vardhan has launched CSIR technologies for rural development.** This is a joint initiative of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Unnat Bharat Abhiyan, Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi and Vijnana Bharti (VIBHA). The event was organized through online platform on the occasion of CSIR-NISTADS 40th Foundation Day in the National Capital.

India successfully test-fires BrahMos supersonic cruise missile

- **India successfully test-fired BrahMos supersonic cruise missile with a strike range of more than 400 km with several indigenous features.** The test firing of the missile was carried out by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) from Balasore in Odisha.

- **BrahMos surface-to-surface supersonic cruise missile features indigenous Booster and Airframe Section** along with many other 'Made in India' sub-systems. Defence Ministry said, the **BrahMos Land-Attack Cruise Missile was cruising at a top speed of Mach 2.8**. It is one more major step in enhancing the indigenous content.
- **Jointly developed by the DRDO and NPOM**, a leading aerospace enterprise of Russia, the BrahMos missile is a **medium-range ramjet supersonic cruise missile capable of being launched from submarines, warships, fighter jets or land**. The missile, already operational with the Indian Army, Navy and Air Force, is regarded as the fastest supersonic cruise missile in the world

The BrahMos missile is named after two rivers, the Brahmaputra and the Moskva. India is a member of the MTCR, India and Russia are now planning to jointly develop a new generation of Brahmos missiles with 600 km-plus range.

NASA launches SS Kalpana Chawla Cygnus spacecraft to International Space station

- **The International Space Station (ISS) is gearing up to receive the flight which will supply thousands of kilograms essential space supplies and related-equipments to the astronauts**. Northrop Grumman launched another flight to the International Space Station, this time **named after late astronaut 'Kalpana Chawla'**. The **Cygnus vehicle S.S Kalpana Chawla along with Antares rocket for NG-14 mission** was launched on October 2nd.
- Northrop Grumman further affirmed that they wanted to name their next Cygnus vehicle after someone who has played an instrumental role in space exploration and then **decided to name it after Kalpana Chawla on her family's permission**.
- The US vehicle is expected to reach the International Space Station after a 2 day's journey and will **deliver a cargo of 1,217 kg of science experiments, personal items and 850 kg of crew equipment**. As per the information cited on the NASA Spaceflight website, the Cygnus vehicle will make an approach towards the space station from 10 meters below. **Thereafter, the astronauts will connect the Cygnus to International Space Station through its robotic arm of Candarm2**.

International Space Station (ISS) is a modular space station (habitable artificial satellite) in low Earth orbit. It is a **multinational collaborative project between five participating space agencies: NASA (United States), Roscosmos (Russia), JAXA (Japan), ESA (Europe), and CSA (Canada)**. The ownership and use of the space station is **established by intergovernmental treaties and agreements**. The station serves as a microgravity and space environment research laboratory in **which scientific research is conducted in astrobiology, astronomy, meteorology, physics, and other fields**. The ISS programme evolved from the Space Station Freedom, an American proposal in the 1980s to construct a permanently crewed Earth-orbiting station, and the contemporaneous Soviet/Russian Mir-2 proposal with similar aims.

India successfully tests nuclear-capable Shaurya missile

- **India successfully test-fired a new version of the nuclear-capable hypersonic Shaurya missile with a range of 750 kilometres from a defence facility off the Odisha coast**, officials said. The launch is the latest in a string of recent weapons tests amid military tensions with China in the Ladakh sector.
- The launch came three days after India test-fired an **extended-range BrahMos surface-to-surface supersonic cruise missile** from the **Integrated Test Range at Balasore in Odisha**. The cruise missile can **hit targets 400 kilometres away - its range increased from the existing 290 kilometres**.
- **The surface-to-surface medium range Shaurya missile, that can reach speeds of 7.5 Mach (seven and half times the speed of sound)**, blasted off from a canister from the **Abdul Kalam Island test range off Dhamra** at about 12.10 pm, the officials said, speaking on the condition of anonymity. There was no official word from the government on the successful launch. During the test flight, the missile was **tracked by various telemetry stations and radars and performed well**.

Telemetry is the in situ collection of measurements or other data at remote points and their automatic transmission to receiving equipment (telecommunication) for monitoring. The word is derived from the Greek roots tele, "remote", and metron, "measure". Systems that need external instructions and data to operate require the counterpart of telemetry, telecommand.

India successfully tests Supersonic Missile Assisted Release of Torpedo

- **India successfully flight-tested its indigenously developed SMART torpedo system**, with the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) hailing it as a “game changer” in anti-submarine warfare.
- According to a defence ministry statement, **the Supersonic Missile Assisted Release of Torpedo or SMART was successfully tested from the Wheeler Island off the coast of Odisha**. It added that the entire mission objectives were perfectly met, which included the missile flight upto range and altitude, separation of the nose cone, release of torpedo as well as the deployment of Velocity Reduction Mechanism (VRM).
- **SMART is a missile assisted release of lightweight Anti-Submarine Torpedo System for Anti-Submarine Warfare or ASW operations far beyond Torpedo range**. The launch and demonstration are significant in establishing Anti-Submarine warfare capabilities.
- **A number of DRDO laboratories including DRDL, RCI Hyderabad, ADRDE Agra, NSTL Visakhapatnam have developed the technologies required for SMART**. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh congratulated the DRDO Scientists and other stake holders for the important feat. Secretary, Department of Defence R&D and Chairman DRDO Dr G Satheesh Reddy, said that SMART is a game changer technology demonstration in the Anti-Submarine Warfare.

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is an agency of the Republic of India, charged with the military's research and development, headquartered in New Delhi, India. It was formed in 1958 by the merger of the Technical Development Establishment and the Directorate of Technical Development and Production with the Defence Science Organisation. **Dr G. Satheesh Reddy** is the current Chairman of DRDO.

C-DAC to Commission India's Fastest HPC-AI Supercomputer PARAM Siddhi - AI with NVIDIA

- **The Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) will be commissioning India's largest HPC-AI supercomputer 'PARAM Siddhi – AI'**. This initiative will place India among the top countries in global AI supercomputing research and innovation.
- The initiative was headed by **Abhishek Das, Scientist and Program Director (HPC-AI Infrastructure Development)** at C-DAC, who conceived the idea and designed the architecture for the largest HPC-AI infrastructure in India. This high-performance computing-Artificial Intelligence (HPC-AI) supercomputer is a machine with 210 AI Petaflops (6.5 Petaflops Peak DP).

The Government of India created an indigenous development programme as they had difficulty purchasing foreign supercomputers. As of June 2020, when ranking by number of supercomputer systems in the TOP500 list, India is ranked 23rd in the world. Pratyush and Mihir are the supercomputers established at Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune and National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecast (NCMRWF), Noida respectively. Pratyush and Mihir are the fastest supercomputer in India with a maximum speed of 6.8 PetaFlops at a total cost of INR 438.9 Crore.

NASA's SS Kalpana Chawla Cygnus Arrives at ISS For 'rendezvous And Capture'

- Following a successful launch of Northrop Grumman Cygnus spacecraft, dubbed as the S.S. Kalpana Chawla, NASA in a recent update informed that the cargo ship arrived at the International Space Station for 'rendezvous and capture' on October 5.
- **The uncrewed Cygnus spacecraft launched on 2, October from Pad 0A at the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport in Virginia**. It is carrying nearly 8,000 pounds of scientific investigations, technology demonstrations and commercial products.
- **Kalpana Chawla was the first Indian-born woman to travel to space**. She was born on March 17, 1962, and completed her Bachelor of Engineering in Aeronautical engineering from Punjab Engineering College in India and later moved to the United States in 1982. **Chawla died on February 1, 2003, in the Space Shuttle Columbia disaster along with her other crew members**. Columbia disintegrated over Texas while it was re-entering into the Earth's atmosphere.

Nobel Prize in Physics 2020 awarded to 3 Scientists for discoveries about Black Hole

- Nobel Prize in Physics 2020 awarded, with one half to Roger Penrose, University of Oxford, UK & the other half jointly to Reinhard Genzel (Max Planck Institute for Extraterrestrial Physics, Garching, Germany and University of California, Berkeley, USA) and Andrea Ghez (University of California, Los Angeles, USA) for their discoveries about Black hole.
- Roger Penrose used ingenious mathematical methods in his proof that black holes are a direct consequence of Albert Einstein's general theory of relativity. Einstein did not himself believe that black holes really exist, these super-heavyweight monsters that capture everything that enters them. Nothing can escape, not even light.
- In January 1965, ten years after Einstein's death, Roger Penrose proved that black holes really can form and described them in detail; at their heart, black holes hide a singularity in which all the known laws of nature cease. His groundbreaking article is still regarded as the most important contribution to the general theory of relativity since Einstein.

The first Nobel Prize in Physics was awarded to physicist Wilhelm Rontgen in recognition of the extraordinary services he rendered by the discovery of the remarkable rays (or x-rays). Sir Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman carried out ground-breaking work in the field of light scattering, which earned him the 1930 Nobel Prize for Physics. He was the first Asian and first non-white to receive any Nobel Prize in the sciences. Before him Rabindranath Tagore (also Indian) had received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913.

Emmanuelle Charpentier & Jennifer A. Doudna win Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2020

- French scientist Emmanuelle Charpentier and American Jennifer A. Doudna have won the Nobel Prize in chemistry for developing a method of genome editing known as CRISPR.
- The recipients were announced in Stockholm by Goran Hansson, Secretary General of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences. The prestigious award comes with a gold medal and prize money of 10 million krona (more than \$1.1 million), courtesy of a bequest left more than a century ago by the prize's creator, Swedish inventor Alfred Nobel. The amount was increased recently to adjust for inflation.

Nobel Prize in Chemistry is awarded annually by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences to scientists in the various fields of chemistry. It is one of the five Nobel Prizes established by the will of Alfred Nobel in 1895. The first Nobel Prize in Chemistry was awarded in 1901 to Jacobus Henricus van't Hoff, of the Netherlands, "for his discovery of the laws of chemical dynamics and osmotic pressure in solutions".

India's first Hydrogen Fuel Cell (HFC) electric hybrid car successfully completed its maiden test run last week in Pune

- India's first Hydrogen Fuel Cell (HFC) electric hybrid car successfully completed its maiden test run last week in Pune
- This indigenously developed technology was a collaborative effort between scientists from two Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) labs – National Chemical Laboratory (NCL), Pune and Central Electro Chemical Research Institute (CECRI), Karaikudi along with KPIT, Pune.
- The technology, developed over four years, has the potential to reduce dependence on petrol and diesel once introduced in markets. This could mean fewer polluting emissions due to fuel combustion from vehicles.
- In the HFC technology, hydrogen gas from the on-board gas cylinder interacts with the Membrane Electrode Assembly (MEA) from the anode side to produce protons (positively charged particles) and electrons (negatively charged particles).
- The protons, after passing through the proton exchange membrane, interact with oxygen from the local air available on the cathode side to produce water. The electrons flow through the outside circuit and produce electricity.
- Deepesh Gujarathi, project leader, KPIT, said a car could travel at least 400 km in a single hydrogen fill cycle. This was true for Indian road driving conditions and when the vehicle speed was maintained at 60–65 kmh.

NASA to launch Karur students' satellite

- **M. Adnaan of Thanthonrimalai, M. Kesavan of Nagampalli village near Malaikovilur and V. Arun of Thennilai** - college students from Karur in Tamil Nadu are elated. Their experimental satellite 'Indian Sat' is one among the 80 student-built satellites from across 73 countries that will be launched into 120 km sub-orbit by a NASA sounding rocket. Such launches are done as a part of the Cubes in Space initiative, which is said to be the only global competition offered at no-cost for students aged between 11 and 18.
- **Indian Sat** - a cube of 3 cm, weighing 64 grams, powered by solar energy, is fitted with 13 sensors that can be used to calculate over 20 parameters. **Gravitational force, magnetic force, cosmic radiation are among the scientific parameters that are to be measured.** It is said that the satellite also has its own radio frequency communication to transmit and receive signals from earth to outer space.
- **Team 'Indian Sat'** was inspired by the launch of student satellite Kalam Sat, which was launched in early 2019 by the Indian Space Research Organization. **Incidentally, Rifath Sharook, who is part of SpaceKidz and had worked on KalamSat has his roots in Karur.** This was how the team had gotten in touch with Sharook and SpaceKidz to enable their ambition to take flight.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is an independent agency of the executive branch of the United States federal government responsible for the civilian space program, as well as aeronautics and aerospace research. **President Dwight D. Eisenhower** established NASA in 1958. **James Frederick Bridenstine** is an American politician and the current administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. He became the first member of Congress to lead NASA.

Emmanuelle Charpentier & Jennifer A. Doudna win Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2020

- **French scientist Emmanuelle Charpentier and American Jennifer A. Doudna** have won the Nobel Prize in chemistry for developing a method of genome editing known as CRISPR.
- The recipients were announced in Stockholm by **Goran Hansson**, Secretary General of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences. The prestigious award comes with a gold medal and prize money of 10 million krona (more than \$1.1 million), courtesy of a bequest left more than a century ago by the prize's creator, Swedish inventor Alfred Nobel. The amount was increased recently to adjust for inflation.
- **Two women scientists won the 2020 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for creating genetic 'scissors' that can rewrite the code of life, contributing to new cancer therapies and holding out the prospect of curing hereditary diseases.**

Nobel Prize in Chemistry is awarded annually by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences to scientists in the various fields of chemistry. It is one of the five Nobel Prizes established by the will of Alfred Nobel in 1895. The first Nobel Prize in Chemistry was awarded in 1901 to **Jacobus Henricus van't Hoff**, of the Netherlands, "for his discovery of the laws of chemical dynamics and osmotic pressure in solutions".

Alphabet tests world's first internet from above 62,000 feet

- **Google's parent Alphabet and Soft Bank** successfully tested the world's first LTE internet connectivity from a solar-powered unmanned aircraft flying above 62,000 feet. SoftBank's HAPSMobile and Alphabet's Loon LLC jointly conducted the test on High Altitude Platform Station's (HAPS) autonomous aircraft.
- It enabled LTE connectivity for about 15 hours during the test flight, despite demanding conditions in the stratosphere, where wind speed crossed 30 meters per second and temperature was as low as negative 73 degree Celsius.

Alphabet Inc. is an American multinational conglomerate headquartered in Mountain View, California. It was created through a restructuring of Google on October 2, 2015, and became the parent company of Google and several former Google subsidiaries. **Larry Page and Sergey Brin** announced their resignation from their executive posts in December 2019, with the CEO role to be filled by **Sundar Pichai**, also the CEO of Google. **Page and Brin** remain co-founders, employees, board members, and controlling shareholders of Alphabet Inc.

AI helps make world's largest 3D map of the universe

- Scientists at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa Institute for Astronomy (IfA) produced the world's largest 3D astronomical imaging catalog of stars, galaxies and quasars using Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- The team of astronomers used world's largest deep multi-coloured optical survey, produced by the Pan-STARRS observatory at Haleakala, Maui, to develop the map. They fed the algorithm spectroscopic measurements to accurately determine definite object classifications and distances between celestial objects.
- The study found that the AI or Machine Learning (ML) approach achieved an overall classification accuracy of 98.1% for galaxies, 97.8% for stars and 96.6% for quasars. And galaxy distance estimates were accurate to almost 3%.

Chandigarh University filed most patents in 2018-19: Report

- Mohali's Gharuan-based Chandigarh University has emerged as the top varsity in India which filed the highest number of patents in a year. The university had filed 336 patents in a year, according to the annual rankings for 2018-19 recently released by the office of controller general of patents, designs and trademarks. The university has filed 779 patents so far.

Health Ministry's telemedicine service 'eSanjeevani' completes 5 lakh tele-consultations

- E-Sanjeevani, Ministry of Health's telemedicine initiative, is rapidly gaining popularity amongst patients and doctors. Health Ministry in a statement said that it has recorded five lakh tele-consultations in a short span of time and the last one lakh consultations were completed in a record time of 17 days.
- At present, 26 states are using e-Sanjeevani's two variants of telemedicine namely - doctor to doctor (e-SanjeevaniAB-HWC) and patient to doctor (e-SanjeevaniOPD).

Dr. Harsh Vardhan is the incumbent Minister of Science and Technology, Minister of Health and Family Welfare and Minister of Earth Sciences in the BJP-led NDA government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He represents Chandni Chowk in Delhi as a Member of Parliament in the 17th Lok Sabha. He was elected to the office of Chairperson of Executive Board of the World Health Organization from May 22, 2020

Indigenously built ASW stealth corvette INS Kavaratti to be commissioned into Navy

- The last of four indigenously built Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) stealth corvettes INS Kavaratti under Project 28 (Kamorta class) will be commissioned into the Indian Navy by Chief of the Army Staff General Manoj Naravane, at Naval Dockyard in Visakhapatnam.
- Touted as a potent Stealth ASW Corvette, Kavaratti is indigenously designed by the Indian Navy's in-house organization, Directorate of Naval Design(DND) and built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata and portrays the growing capability of the Indian Navy, GRSE and the nation in becoming self-reliant through indigenization, thus, accentuating our national objective of Atmanirbhar Bharat.
- Kavaratti takes her name from erstwhile INS Kavaratti which was an Arnala class missile corvette. The older Kavaratti distinguished herself by operating in support of was Bangladesh's liberation in 1971.

P 28 is a project under which four Anti-Submarine Warships have to be built indigenously in India by Garden Reach Shipbuilders And Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata. Project 28 was approved in 2003, with construction of the lead ship, INS Kamorta commencing on 12 August 2005. Three of the four corvettes, INS Kamorta, INS Kadmat and INS Kiltan were commissioned in 2014, 2016 and 2017 respectively. Project 28's objective was to enhance localization and development of warship construction industry in India. The warships are named after the islands in the Lakshadweep archipelago.

Supersonic Cruise Missile, BrahMos successfully test fired from Indian Navy's indigenously-built stealth destroyer INS Chennai

- BRAHMOS, the supersonic cruise missile was successfully test fired from Indian Navy's indigenously-built stealth destroyer INS Chennai, hitting a target in the Arabian Sea. The missile hit the target successfully with pin-point accuracy after performing high-level and extremely complex manoeuvres.

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh congratulated **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Indian Navy for the successful launch**. Secretary, Department of Defence Research and Development and DRDO Chairman Dr G Satheesh Reddy, congratulated the scientists and all personnel of DRDO, BrahMos, Indian Navy and industry for the successful feat.
- In May last year, the **Indian Air Force successfully test fired the aerial version of the BrahMos missile from a Su-30 MKI fighter aircraft**. On September 30, India successfully test fired a new version of the surface-to-surface version of the BrahMos. The range of the new land attack version of the missile has been extended to 400 km from the original 290 km.

BrahMos Aerospace Limited is a joint venture between the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) of India and the Federal State Unitary Enterprise NPO Mashinostroyeniya (NPOM) of Russia under BrahMos Aerospace. The BrahMos missile is named after two rivers, the Brahmaputra and the Moskva. India is a member of the MTCR, India and Russia are now planning to jointly develop a new generation of Brahmos missiles with 600 km-plus range.

IIT- Kharagpur develops novel Industry 4.0 tech for advanced manufacturing sector

- IIT Kharagpur has developed a novel Industry 4.0 technology for remotely controlled factory operations and real-time quality correction during industrial production in India's advanced manufacturing sector. The present innovation upgraded the industrial process of friction stir welding to a multi-sensory system of Industry 4.0.
- The innovative technology developed by Surjya K Pal, professor in-charge at the Centre of Excellence in Advanced Manufacturing Technology, IIT – Kharagpur, in association with TCS, will acquire real-time information about the welding process through multiple sensors and, enable online control of weld quality by means of cloud-based communication with the friction stir welding machine.

The First Industrial Revolution used water and steam power to mechanize production. The Second used electric power to create mass production. The Third used electronics and information technology to automate production. Now a Fourth Industrial Revolution which builds upon the Third, the digital revolution has been occurring since the middle of the 20th century. It is characterized by a fusion of technologies that is blurring the lines between the physical, digital, and biological spheres. In the Fifth Industrial Revolution, humans and machines will dance together, metaphorically. At Davos 2019, an event sponsored by Forbes, MIT and Tata had the theme "Blockchain+AI+Human = Magic".

Argentina to produce climate-resistant super wheat in world first

- Gene-edited wheat is to be grown in Argentina, as the country becomes the first in the world to give the green light on the use of the drought-resistant crop.
- The genetically modified variety flourishes under dry conditions, providing hope for Latin America's largest wheat producer, which has struggled with on-going water stress in recent years.
- The new generation of wheat is known as BIOX.BA HB4 and was developed by Triggall Genetics, in partnership with Bioceres BIOX.A and France's Florimond Desprez. In field trials conducted over the past 10 years, the seed varieties showed an average increased crop yield of 20 per cent during growing seasons affected by droughts.

Indus valley had dairy production way back in 3rd millennium BCE

- Dairy production in India began as far back as in the 3rd millennium BCE and may have been a factor behind sustaining the Indus Valley Civilisation, according to findings from a team of Canadian and Indian researchers.
- "This is the first time it's been proved scientifically that dairy production was in place in the Indus Valley civilization in 2500 BCE, and the earliest known evidence of dairy production,".
- The results were based on molecular chemical analysis of residue in shards of pottery found at the archaeological site of Kotada Bhadli, a rural settlement located in Gujarat. Of the 59 samples studied, 22 showed the presence of dairy lipids. Through a process called stable isotope analysis, the researchers were also able to identify the type of ruminant used for dairy, and concluded that these were cattle, like cows and buffalo, rather than goats and sheep.

DRDO successfully conducts final trial of Nag anti-tank guided missile in Pokhran range

- India successfully carried out the final trial of the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO)-developed Nag anti-tank guided missile with a warhead. The test was carried out at the Pokhran field firing ranges in Rajasthan.
- The trial of Nag anti-tank guided missile comes after the DRDO tested the helicopter launched Stand-off Anti-Tank Missile (SANT) with a range beyond 10 km from Balasore testing range in Odisha. The Nag anti-tank missile is ready for induction in the Indian Army. It has completed 10 successful user trial as it finds the target and then hit it.
- The missile will be produced by Defence PSU Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL), whereas Ordnance Factory, Medak will produce the NAMICA.” Among these trials were two other ATGMs—the Laser-Guided ATGM, which was successfully tested twice at a range in Maharashtra, and Stand-Off Anti-Tank Missile (SANT), which was tested off the east coast.

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is an agency of the Republic of India, charged with the military's research and development, headquartered in New Delhi, India. It was formed in 1958 by the merger of the Technical Development Establishment and the Directorate of Technical Development and Production with the Defence Science Organisation. Dr G. Satheesh Reddy is the current Chairman of DRDO.

Nokia picked by NASA to build first cellular network on the moon

- Nokia has been chosen by NASA to build the first ever cellular network on the moon. The Finnish telecommunications firm said that the partnership will create a path toward “sustainable human presence on the lunar surface,” and will result in the first LTE/4G communications system in space.
- Nokia's Bell Labs unit is planning to build what it describes as an “ultra-compact, low-power, space-hardened, end-to-end LTE solution” that will be available on the moon by late 2022.
- The idea is to provide the kind of technology that makes it possible to remotely control lunar rovers, or allow real-time navigation and streaming of high definition video.

Nokia is a Finnish multinational telecommunications, information technology, and consumer electronics company, founded in 1865. Nokia's headquarters are in Espoo, in the greater Helsinki metropolitan area, Finland. Knut Fredrik Idestam is best known as a founder of Nokia.

Inventions/Discoveries

NASA's SOFIA discovers traces of water on sunlit surface of Moon

- NASA's Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA) has confirmed, for the first time, water on the sunlit surface of the Moon. This discovery indicates that water may be distributed across the lunar surface, and not limited to cold, shadowed places.
- SOFIA has detected water molecules (H₂O) in Clavius Crater, one of the largest craters visible from Earth, located in the Moon's southern hemisphere. Previous observations of the Moon's surface detected some form of hydrogen, but were unable to distinguish between water and its close chemical relative, hydroxyl (OH). Data from this location reveal water in concentrations of 100 to 412 parts per million – roughly equivalent to a 12-ounce bottle of water – trapped in a cubic meter of soil spread across the lunar surface. The results are published in the latest issue of Nature Astronomy.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is an independent agency of the executive branch of the United States federal government responsible for the civilian space program, as well as aeronautics and aerospace research. President Dwight D. Eisenhower established NASA in 1958. James Frederick Bridenstine is an American politician and the current administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. He became the first member of Congress to lead NASA.

IIT-Jodhpur develops transistors with biodegradable gelatin as electrical insulator

- In a breakthrough towards “green electronics”, researchers at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Jodhpur, have developed transistors with biodegradable gelatin as an electrical insulator, which may be utilised as breath analyser.
- The changes in the property of transmitting electric force by exposure to moisture will enable the device to measure respiratory rate.
- IIT's Flexible Large Area Microelectronics (FLAME) research group, headed by Professor Shree Prakash Tiwari, has used the natural protein gelatin, with a unique amino acid profile, for the fabrication of high-performance organic field-effect transistors.

IIT Roorkee researchers develop world's first specific bacterial biosensor for detection of environmental detergent pollutant

- A five-member team of researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee have developed the world's first specific reliable bacterial biosensor to detect the presence of common environmental pollutant-Sodium Dodecyl Sulphate /Sodium Lauryl Sulfate (SDS).
- SDS is extensively used in soaps, toothpaste, creams, shampoos, laundry detergents in households, agricultural operations, laboratories, and industries. Its subsequent disposal in waterways causes harmful effects on aquatic organisms, environmental microcosms, and associated living organisms besides deteriorating the quality of drinking water. This objective of the study was to develop a novel biosensor for the detection of a detergent Sodium Dodecyl Sulphate / Sodium Lauryl Sulfate (SDS) in environmental samples.

Tectonic faultline in Ladakh moving northward, says Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology

- In Ladakh, the recent studies have found that the tectonic faultline is moving northward. Dehradun situated Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology noted that the fault line is tectonically active along the Indus Suture Zone (ISZ).
- Studies observed, the sedimentary rocks of Indus are over riding the Ladakh betholith granite. This confirms that the Indus suture zone around Leh is seismologically active. Ladakh region is classified as the High Damage Risk Zone of seismic zone IV.
- According to the Ministry of Earth Sciences, Zone V includes entire northeastern India, parts of Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh, Uttaranchal, Rann of Kutch in Gujarat, parts of North Bihar and Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

The Bureau of Indian Standards has classified regions in India into four seismic zones on the basis of historical seismic activity. These are zones II, III, IV and V. Among these, Zone V is the most seismically active region and zone II is the least active. According to Modified Mercalli scale, the seismic zone intensity are classified as zone II (low intensity zone), zone III (moderate intensity zone), zone IV (severe intensity zone) and zone V (very severe intensity zone). Richter magnitude scale is a scale of numbers used to tell the power (or magnitude) of earthquakes.

Sun's magnetic field over five decades digitally mapped

- In possibly a first, the Sun's magnetic field recorded over five decades of the 20th century have been digitally mapped, which will facilitate solar physicists to better understand the Sun's behaviour in future.
- Solar observations recorded between 1915 and 1965 were gathered from Kodaikanal Solar Observatory (KoSO) run by the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA). Among one of the oldest solar observatories in the world, KoSO has been providing continuous and long-term uniform solar observations for over a century now, many of them taken in the form of photographic images.

The Sun is the star at the center of the Solar System. It is a nearly perfect sphere of hot plasma, heated to incandescence by nuclear fusion reactions in its core, radiating the energy mainly as light and infrared radiation. It is by far the most important source of energy for life on Earth. Its diameter is about 1.39 million kilometers (864,000 miles), or 109 times that of Earth, and its mass is about 330,000 times that of Earth. It accounts for about 99.86% of the total mass of the Solar System. It formed approximately 4.6 billion years ago from the gravitational collapse of matter within a region of a large molecular cloud.

Scientists once again discover signs of water in the lakes of planet Mars

- The most intriguing notion of humankind of being alone in the universe might just got busted as scientists once again discovered substantial signs of water present in the Mars, where a rigorous research is going on to find life-supporting evidences.
- As per a research paper published in the journal Nature Astronomy, recently, scientists have found three more underground water lakes in the south pole of the Red planet. Besides the main lake, smaller surrounding lakes have also been discovered. This after the discovery of the same such lake came into being in the year 2018 which was spread across a wide-area of 20 sq.km and was 1.5 km under the Martian surface.
- In addition, scientists have also confirmed the presence of the fourth lake and, in the hindsight, have drawn monumental significance, because of the presence of water may lead their way to find out biological processes in the future which may prove the existence of any form of living organism on the planet.
- The team of scientists utilized the European space agency's 'Mars Express Spacecraft' which has a radar instrument called MARSIS – Mars Advanced Radar for Subsurface and Ionosphere Sounding to carry out their probe on the southern polar region of the planet.

IIT-M team develops sutures with nanofiber yarns

- A team of researchers at IIT Madras is ready with a prototype of suture thread made of nanofiber yarns that is bio-absorbable and can deliver a higher load of antibiotics and/or therapeutics at the site itself.
- The suture material uses nanofibers woven as yarn using certain specific techniques, and the strength can be varied depending on the target tissue (skin, muscle, cartilage), explains Rama S. Verma of the Stem Cell and Molecular Biology laboratory, Department of Biotechnology, IIT Madras. Each strand has a good tensile strength, besides degrading rapidly and mimics the collagen fibrils of body tissues.

During Covid, scientists turn to computers to understand C4 photosynthesis

- When Covid closed down labs in March, 2020, a group from the University of Essex turned to computational approaches to grasp what makes some crops higher tailored to remodel mild and carbon dioxide into yield by way of photosynthesis.
- There are two kinds of photosynthesis: C3 and C4. Most food crops depend on C3 photosynthesis where carbon is fixed into sugar inside cells called 'mesophyll' where oxygen is abundant.

- However, **oxygen can hamper photosynthesis**. **C4 crops evolved specialised bundle sheath cells to concentrate carbon dioxide**, which makes **C4 photosynthesis as much as 60 per cent more efficient**. In this study, scientists wanted to **find out how C4 crops are able to express several important enzymes inside bundle sheath cells instead of the mesophyll**. “The ultimate goal is to be able to understand these mechanisms so that **we can improve C3 photosynthesis in food crops like cowpea and cassava** that smallholder farmers in sub-Saharan Africa depend on for their families’ food and income.

Respiration and photosynthesis are biological reactions in the environment that complement each other. Both are similar reactions that occur in a specific manner. **In the process of respiration, oxygen and glucose yield water and carbon dioxide, while carbon dioxide and water yields glucose and oxygen during the process of photosynthesis.** The main difference between photosynthesis and cellular respiration is that **photosynthesis is an anabolic process**, where the synthesis of organic compounds occurs, **storing energy** whereas **cellular respiration is a catabolic process**, where the stored organic compounds are utilized, **producing energy**.

Century-old data help measure the Sun’s magnetic field

- **The magnetic field of the Sun is unique in that**, unlike many other celestial bodies, **it reverses its polarity roughly every 11 years**. **Regular observations of the Sun’s magnetic field begin in 1967**, and, so far, we have data for the period from 1967 almost to the present, spanning the solar cycles 20-24. Now, an Indo-Russian collaboration has added to this with a plot of the solar magnetic field from 1915 to 1965 (solar cycles 15-19). Using a novel approach, they have **calibrated and calculated the field using data from the archives of the Kodaikanal Solar Observatory of the Indian Institute of Astrophysics**.
- **The Kodaikanal Solar Observatory was established in 1899 and observations of the Sun from this observatory run over a hundred years**, providing what is among the longest series of solar data. An important feature of these data is the multi-wavelength observations.

The Sun is the star at the center of the Solar System. It is a **nearly perfect sphere of hot plasma, heated to incandescence by nuclear fusion reactions in its core**, radiating the energy mainly as light and infrared radiation. It is by far the most important source of energy for life on Earth. **Roughly three quarters of the Sun’s mass consists of hydrogen (~73%); the rest is mostly helium (~25%),** with much smaller quantities of heavier elements, including oxygen, carbon, neon, and iron. **Aditya or Aditya-L1 is a spacecraft mission to study the Sun.** It has been **designed and will be built in collaboration between the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and various Indian research institutes.** It is **planned to be launched in January 2022.** It is **India’s first solar mission.**

Scientists discover two dozen planets which are suitable for life than the Earth

- If we thought that Earth is just the perfect planet for human beings to thrive, then we might be wrong as **scientists have discovered two-dozen planets** that are **habitable and perhaps support suitable conditions for the thriving of life forms**. The research found out that **there are at least 24 Superhabitable planets** which may support life better than the Earth.
- As per the research **conducted by the team led by scientist Dirk Schulze-Makuch of Washington State University** and published in the journal *Astrobiology* — researchers have rummaged for the planets which are older, slightly warmer and wetter than the Earth.
- In the process, **scientists went through observing over 4,500 exoplanets and were able to find out 24 planets** based on certain parameters that gave evidences of a conducive environment for life-supporting conditions although no life has yet been confirmed on those planets. Moreover, **all these planets are 100 light-years away from the Earth located outside the Solar System.**

The Goldilocks Zone refers to the habitable zone around a star where the temperature is just right - not too hot and not too cold - for liquid water to exist on a planet. Liquid water is essential for life as we know it. Where we find liquid water on Earth we also find life. **The ‘Goldilocks Zone,’ or habitable zone,** is the range of distance with the right temperatures for water to remain liquid. **Discoveries in the Goldilocks Zone, like Earth-size planet Kepler-186f, are what scientists hope will lead us to water—and one day life.**

Health/Disease

India, S. Africa move WTO on COVID-19 prevention, treatment

- India and South Africa, in a formal submission to the World Trade Organization (WTO) on October 2, sought a waiver on certain provisions of the international agreements that regulate intellectual property rights to speed up efforts to prevent, treat and contain the COVID-19 pandemic.
- In the communication, the countries said there were several reports about intellectual property rights hindering or potentially hindering timely provisioning of affordable medical products to COVID-19 patients and that a particular concern for countries with insufficient or no manufacturing capacity were the requirements of cumbersome and lengthy process of the import and export of pharmaceutical products.
- Many countries, especially the developing ones, may face institutional and legal difficulties when using flexibilities available in the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS Agreement). The *TRIPS Agreement* is a minimum standards agreement, which allows Members to provide more extensive protection of intellectual property if they so wish.

The World Trade Organization (WTO) is the only global international organization dealing with the rules of trade between nations. World Trade Organization has replaced the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which commenced in 1948. Roberto Azevedo is the current Director-General of the WTO. The WTO has 164 members and 23 observer governments. Liberia became the 163rd member on 14 July 2016, and Afghanistan became the 164th member on 29 July 2016.

The Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2020

- The Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2020 was awarded jointly to Harvey J. Alter, Michael Houghton and Charles M. Rice “for the discovery of Hepatitis C virus.”
- This year’s Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine rewards an effort that eventually made blood transfusion safer for everyone. American scientists Harvey Alter and Charles Rice, and Michael Houghton of the UK, have been recognised for their contributions to the discovery of a new virus that was the cause of a vast majority of chronic hepatitis cases, or cases of serious liver inflammation, in patients who required blood transfusion. This virus was eventually called Hepatitis C virus.
- Since the discovery and identification of the virus in the 1970s and 1980s, a cure has been found for the disease, and effective anti-viral drugs are now available. Tests have been developed to identify blood that has this virus, so that infected blood is not given to any patient.

Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine administered by the Nobel Foundation is awarded yearly for outstanding discoveries in the fields of life sciences and medicine. It is one of five Nobel Prizes established in his will in 1895 by Swedish chemist Alfred Nobel, the inventor of dynamite. The first one was awarded in 1901 to the German physiologist Emil von Behring, for his work on serum therapy and the development of a vaccine against diphtheria. The first woman to receive the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, Gerty Cori, received it in 1947 for her role in elucidating the metabolism of glucose. The first Indian to receive award in Medicine was Har Gobind Khorana for research that showed the order of nucleotides in nucleic acids, which carry the genetic code of the cell and control the cell’s synthesis of proteins. He shared the 1968 Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine with Marshall W. Nirenberg and Robert W. Holley for research that showed the order of nucleotides in nucleic acids, which carry the genetic code of the cell and control the cell’s synthesis of proteins.

India’s health budget fourth lowest in world, according to Oxfam

- Afghanistan and India set aside the same share for health in their budgets, 4%, just above a quarter of the recommended spending and one-third of what the second poorest country in the world, Burundi, did.
- And that may have affected how far people were shielded from the Covid-19 outbreak, the latest ‘Commitment to Reducing Inequality Index 2020’ by international charity Oxfam says. Globally, the report found, only 26 of the 158 countries surveyed were spending the recommended 15% of their budgets on health.

- “Nigeria, Bahrain and India, (the last of) which is currently experiencing the world’s fastest-growing outbreak of Covid-19, were among the world’s worst performing countries in tackling inequality going into the pandemic,” the Oxfam statement said.

IIT Kharagpur launches telemedicine software

- IIT Kharagpur launched a telemedicine software which facilitates critical health care support to patients at their doorsteps through remote consultation by a physician.
- The system iMediX which is accessible by any standard internet browser and also from a mobile device, has been developed by researchers at IIT Kharagpur’s Department of Computer Science and Engineering.

IIT Madras researchers develop wrapping material to improve shelf life of food

- Indian Institute of Technology (IIT Madras) researchers have developed a biodegradable wrapping material, with a built-in anti-bacterial compound to prevent food contamination, and to reduce plastic waste.
- Their project won the ‘SITARE- Gandhian Young Technological Innovation Appreciation 2020’. The researchers have also filed for a patent.

Punjab-based SeguraMAX introduces world’s first plant-based technology to contain surface transmission of viruses

- While COVID-19 vaccination continues to remain under development and containing the spread of the coronavirus has become the most critical aspect in world, Ludhiana, Punjab-based start-up SeguraMAX Global (SeguraMAX) has announced the launch of ‘Keep-U-Safe’, a pathbreaking, first-of-its-kind technology in the world, which will aid in achieving significant reduction of viruses on surfaces of their products.

New glands found in the human body

- Scientists have identified a previously unknown set of salivary glands in the upper part of the throat, discovering what could be the first set of major glands to be found in the human body in 300 years and paving the way for techniques that could improve the quality of life for people who receive radiation therapy for cancers of the head and neck.
- The new set of glands is about 1.5 inches on average and lie in the nasopharyngeal region, behind the nose and above the throat. The researchers, from the Netherlands Cancer Institute in Amsterdam, said in their report that sparing these glands in radiotherapy could help reduce the difficulty in salivation and swallowing that patient of head and neck cancer experience after radiation therapy.
- “The human body contains a pair of previously overlooked and clinically relevant macroscopic salivary gland locations, for which we propose the name tubarial glands.
- More research is likely needed to confirm that these are indeed a new major set of salivary glands, and if confirmed, it would be the first discovery of new salivary glands in about 300 years, according to a report in Science. The new glands have been labelled as tubarial salivary glands because these are situated over a piece of cartilage called the torus tubarius.

Glands are important organs located throughout the body. They produce and release substances that perform certain functions. Though you have many glands throughout your body, they fall into two types: endocrine and exocrine. The pituitary gland is a small pea-sized gland that plays a major role in regulating vital body functions and general wellbeing. It is referred to as the body’s ‘master gland’ because it controls the activity of most other hormone-secreting glands.

ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT



At UN summit, India commits to restore 26 million hectares of degraded land by 2030

- **India plans to restore 26 million hectares of degraded land by 2030**, Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar said in a statement at the **United Nations Biodiversity Summit on the sidelines of the 75th United Nations General Assembly**.
- **India's forest and tree cover, over the decade, encompassed nearly 25% of its geographical area**. India had doubled its tiger count (from 2010) ahead of the prescribed deadline of 2022.
- **India had organised two major conventions on biodiversity — a global convention on desertification in 2019 and another in February on migratory species —** underlining the country's commitment to biodiversity.

Prakash Javadekar is the incumbent Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and Minister of Information and Broadcasting and also served as the Union Minister of Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India. He was elected to the upper house Rajya Sabha as a Member of Parliament from Maharashtra in 2018.

Scientists discover new damselfly species in Kannur

- **Scientists from the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) have identified a new damselfly species, *Platylestes kirani*, in the wetlands of Kannur district**. The species has been named after late C.G. Kiran, odonatologist and the author of the book *Dragonflies of Kerala (Keralathile Thumbikal)*. The specimen of the new species has been deposited in the national collections of the ZSI, Western Ghat Regional Centre, Kozhikode.

India's 1328th species of butterfly seen in Rajasthan: Wildlife Institute

- **India's 1328th species of butterfly was seen and photographed in Rajasthan six years ago**. It has been declared so by **Bhimtal-based Butterfly Research Centre**, and validated by Wildlife Institute of India.
- **There were 1,641 species and subspecies of butterfly in India until 2006**. In 2015, the number came down to 1,318 and with 10 more species added since, the number is now 1,328. ***Spialia Zebra*, the butterfly species** that is normally found in Pakistan, was photographed at Sangwara in Rajasthan's Dungarpur district in 2014.

Bhubaneswar's Nandankanan zoo revives 'adopt-an-animal' scheme

- **The Nandankanan Zoological Park (NZP) in Bhubaneswar, which suffered a huge loss following its closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic, has revived its innovative 'Adopt-An-Animal' programme** to mobilise resources for animals. **The NZP is one of the leading zoos in the country in terms of its fauna population and species diversity**. It had received a record 32 lakh footfall three years ago.

IIT Guwahati develops low-cost technology to produce psychoactive drugs from agricultural resources

- **Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati researcher has developed a low-cost membrane technology to produce psychoactive drugs and anti-aging compounds** from wide range of agricultural resources like camellia

sinensis, citrus fruits and peels especially orange peels, berries, ginkgo biloba, parsley, pulses, tea, sea buckthorn and onions.

- The technology is patented and developed by Prof Mihir Kumar Purkait, Head, Centre for the Environment, and Professor, Department of Chemical Engineering, IIT Guwahati along with his M Tech student Mr V L Dhadge. The low-cost technology doesn't use any organic solvents.

Asan Conservation Reserve becomes Uttarakhand's first Ramsar site

- Asan Conservation Reserve has become Uttarakhand's first Ramsar site, making it a 'Wetland of International Importance', announced the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- The Reserve is located on the banks of Yamuna river near Dehradun district in Garhwal region of the Himalayan state. "Ramsar declares Asan Conservation Reserve as a site of international importance. With this, the number of Ramsar sites in India goes up to 38, the highest in South Asia and Uttarakhand gets its first Ramsar site".

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: A bird which is both male and female

- Biologists have found a rare Rose-breasted Grosbeak, a bird with both female and male plumage colours, in the United States' Pennsylvania.
- The Rose-breasted Grosbeak gynandromorph was caught by biologists from Powdermill Nature Reserve of the Carnegie Museum of Natural History's environmental research centre in Rector. The Rose-breasted Grosbeak derives its name from the male of the species who have a ruby-red triangular marking on a white chest and dark black wings with pink wing pits.
- The females are much less showy, with no patches on its beige body, brown wings and yellow wing pits. Rose-breasted grosbeaks are sexually dimorphic, meaning they have both males and females have different colour plumage.
- A gynandromorph is an organism that has both male and female characteristics - or, a male-female chimera. It is often seen in insects, though gynandromorphic birds, snakes, lobsters and other animals have been observed, too.

Amur falcons, the longest flying migratory birds, begin to arrive in Manipur

- Amur falcons, capable of flying the longest distances in one go, have begun to arrive in Manipur's Tamenglong district following their routine annual migration course.
- Last year, a five-member team from the Wildlife institute of India led by Suresh Kumar had radio-tagged five Amur falcons, including two males, at Puching village and other Tamenglong areas in Manipur, with the support of the state forest department, Tamenglong district administration, rainforest club, Tamenglong and local villagers.
- The five radio-tagged pigeon-sized migratory birds were named 'Chiulon', 'Puching' and 'Phalong' (all names of villages in Manipur), 'Irang' and 'Barak' (both names of rivers of Manipur).

Heeng cultivation started for the first time in India with trial plantation in Himachal Pradesh

- Heeng, or Asafoetida, an essential spice in many Indian dishes, was planted for the first time in India. The cultivation of heeng started in India by its first plantation at Lahaul and Spiti district in Himachal Pradesh, at an altitude of about 11 thousand feet above sea level.

Scientists identify new potential groundwater 'arsenic hotspots' in India

- Scientists, including those from the National Institute of Hydrology (NIH), have found an increased probability of high arsenic levels in well waters in parts of India where previously arsenic hazard was generally not considered to be a major concern.
- Arsenic in drinking water obtained from wells is the cause of severe health outcomes, including premature deaths from cancers and cardiovascular disease in many parts of the world and particularly in the Indian subcontinent.

- Based on recent reported rates of household groundwater use for rural and urban areas, **they estimate that about 18–30 million people in India are currently at risk of high exposure to arsenic through their drinking water supply.** The researchers, including Biswajit Chakravorty, a senior scientist at NIH in Bihar, have constructed a prediction model focused solely on India.

Arsenic is a chemical element with the symbol As and atomic number 33. Arsenic occurs in many minerals, usually in combination with sulfur and metals, but also as a pure elemental crystal. **Arsenic is a metalloid.** The primary use of arsenic is in alloys of lead (for example, in car batteries and ammunition). **Arsenic contamination of groundwater is a problem that affects millions of people across the world. In Bihar, Groundwater in 13 districts have been found to be contaminated with arsenic with quantities exceeding 0.05 mg/L.** All these districts are situated close to large rivers like Ganga and Gandak.

Conservation centres in 5 states among host of ideas to protect vultures

- Uttar Pradesh, Tripura, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu will get a vulture conservation and breeding centre each,** according to the Action Plan for Vulture Conservation 2020-2025. The plan has also suggested that **new veterinary non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS) be tested on vultures before their commercial release.** NSAIDS often poisons cattle whose carcasses the birds prey on.
- The action plan was approved by the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) October 5, 2020,** its minutes showed. An earlier one was formulated in 2006 for three years. **The new plan has laid out strategies and actions to stem the decline in vulture population, especially of the three Gyps species: 1. Oriental white-backed vulture (Gyps bengalensis) 2. Slender-billed vulture (Gyps tenuirostris) 3. Long-billed vulture (Gyps indicus)**
- This would be done through both ex-situ and in-situ conservation.**

Antarctica yields fossils of giant birds with 21-foot wingspans

- Scientists at the University of California have identified the fossil of a giant bird that lived about 50 million years ago,** with wingspans of up to 21 feet that would dwarf largest bird, the wandering albatross.
- The fossils recovered from Antarctica in the 1980s represent the oldest giant members of an extinct group of birds that patrolled the southern oceans.**
- By comparison, **largest bird, the wandering albatross has a wingspan of 11 and-a-half-foot. Called Pelagornithids,** the birds filled a niche much like that of albatrosses and travelled widely over Earth's oceans for at least 60 million years.
- Though a much smaller pelagornithid fossil dates from 62 million years ago,** one of the newly described fossils — a 50 million-year-old portion of a bird's foot — **shows that the larger pelagornithids arose just after life rebounded from the mass extinction 65 million years ago,** when the relatives of birds, the dinosaurs, went extinct.

Extinct tree found after 180 years in Kollam grove

- A tree species, long believed extinct, has been rediscovered after a gap of more than 180 years from a sacred grove in Kollam district.**
- Scientists at the Jawaharlal Nehru Tropical Botanic Garden and Research Institute (JNTBGRI) at Palode** have identified the tree as *Madhuca diplostemon* (family Sapotaceae), a threatened species of the Western Ghats whose specimen was first collected in 1835.
- Only one mature tree has been found so far, which makes this remarkable rediscovery extremely valuable from a scientific, environmental and conservation point of view.** A paper on the finding authored by Shailajakumari S., Santhosh Kumar E.S., Sreekala A.K., and R. Prakashkumar of the JNTBGRI and Parthipan B. of S.T. Hindu College, Nagercoil, has been published in *Rheedea*, the journal of the Indian Association for Angiosperm Taxonomy.
- The lone mature tree was located at the Koonayil Ayiravilli Siva Temple at Paravur, Kollam.** Locally, it was erroneously believed to be the common *Attilippa*.

First elephant radio-collared in Uttarakhand with eye on Maha Kumbh 2021

- A 35-year-old male elephant was radio-collared in Uttarakhand for the first time in the state's history to monitor its movements ahead of Maha Kumbh 2021. Uttarakhand government had received permission from the Central government to radio-collar ten elephants and study their movement, as they usually stray in areas of human habitation.

In a first, Corbett Tiger Reserve to have women nature guides

- Corbett Tiger Reserve (CTR) will have women nature guides for the first time in its history. Seven women have been selected by the Corbett administration after holding a guide recruitment test. These selected women will be registered as guides and given responsibilities after a training and orientation programme.
- 488 candidates appeared in the guide recruitment test held in Ramnagar, out of which 102 were women. A total of 67 candidates cleared the test, including seven women.
- "This is the first-time women are getting a chance to become nature guides. Till now, males used to dominate this domain. This concept is being implemented to generate livelihood for local women villagers who live in the periphery of the CTR".

New coral species discovered on seabed marked for deep-sea mining

- Three species of black coral have been discovered on the seabed of the northern Pacific Ocean, an area where several countries have contracts to explore for metals including cobalt and nickel as they race to find new supplies of the key battery elements.
- The corals were discovered on deep seamounts and ridges in the mineral-rich Prime Crust Zone, which stretches from the Mariana Trench to the Hawaiian Islands.
- The new black coral species are so named because of their black skeletons, but they can appear pink, white, or various other colours because of the living tissues growing over the skeleton. Previous studies have found a black coral species more than 4,250 years old.

New species of Echinops found in Sahyadri Mountains

- A Mumbai University M.Sc. (Botany) student is reported to have discovered a new species of Echinops Sahyadricus (English Common Name — Sahyadri Globe Thistle) from the Rajgad Fort in the Sahyadri mountains in collaboration with researchers of Fabio Conti of the University of Camerino, Italy, and Harshal Bhosale of the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS).
- Echinops is a genus of about 130 species of flowering plants found in tropical and north Africa, the Mediterranean basin and West Asia, extending eastwards to China and Japan. The highest number of taxa (76) is concentrated in the Iranian plateau. Five species are found in India including two in Maharashtra.

World Bank sanctions Rs 3 crore for Goa to develop India's first sand dune parks

- India's first sand dune parks and interpretation centres are set to be developed in Goa. World Bank has sanctioned around Rs.3 crore under the programme. The Goa state biodiversity board has proposed the project, which will be implemented with financial assistance from the World Bank.

The World Bank is a vital source of financial and technical assistance to developing countries around the world. The World Bank Group comprises five institutions managed by their member countries. It was established in 1944, the World Bank Group is headquartered in Washington, D.C. David Robert Malpass is an American economic analyst and former government official serving as President of the World Bank Group since 2019. Together, IBRD and IDA form the World Bank, which provides financing, policy advice, and technical assistance to governments of developing countries. IDA focuses on the world's poorest countries, while IBRD assists middle-income and creditworthy poorer countries.

SPORTS



Sports Personalities in News

Kiren Rijiju launches new logo of Sports Authority of India

- **Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju launched the Sports Authority of India's (SAI) new logo at Delhi's Major Dhyan Chand Stadium.** The event was attended by Sports Secretary Ravi Mital, Indian Olympic Association President Narinder Batra and Director General SAI Sandip Pradhan, at the stadium.
- Many eminent athletes, coaches and other sports enthusiasts joined in from across the country through video conference. SAI has been the pivot of the sports ecosystem in the country since its establishment in 1982 and has been instrumental in identifying and developing grassroot talents across the country.
- The new logo signifies SAI's journey of metamorphosis from identifying and nurturing grassroot level sporting talent to creating sporting excellence in the country.

Visnu Shivaraj Pandian wins gold in 10 meter air rifle event of International Online Shooting Championship

- **India's Visnu Shivaraj Pandian won the 10m air rifle event at the fifth edition of the International Online Shooting Championship.** The 16-year-old Visnu shot 251.4 to win the title by a clear margin of two points.
- The second place was won by world no. 27 Etienne Germond of France while Olympic quota winner Martin Strempl of Austria took the third place. Shooters from 15 countries are participating in the two-day competition. The 10m air pistol event will be held. Leading India's challenge will be Olympic quota winner Yashaswini Singh Deswal.

Nihal Sarin emerges winner in Chess.com's 2020 Junior Speed Online Championship

- **In Chess, Young Indian player Nihal Sarin emerged winner in the Chess.com's 2020 Junior Speed Online Championship in Chennai,** beating Russia's world junior No. 6 Alexey Sarana 18-7 in the final.
- The title win earned the 16-year old Sarin 8,766 US Dollars and enabled him to qualify for the 2020 Speed Chess Championship Final which will feature the world's best players.
- Sarin had beaten American Andrew Tang, Australia's Anton Smirnov and Armenian Haik Martirosyan en route the title. Sarin, a former world Under-10 champion, will join the Indian men's team that is taking part in the Asian Online Nations (Regions) Cup Team Championship.

Polish teenager Iga Swiatek becomes the new French Open Champion

- In Tennis, Polish teenager Iga Swiatek has become the new French Open Champion. She beat the American Australian Open winner Sofia Kenin in the Women Singles final by 6-4, 6-1.

Rafael Nadal wins 13th French Open; ties Roger Federer at 20 Slams by beating Novak Djokovic

- **Rafael Nadal tied Roger Federer with 20 Grand Slam titles** by producing a nearly perfect performance against Novak Djokovic in the French Open final.

- Nadal equaled long-time rival Federer for the most major singles tennis championships won by a man and added to his own record at Roland Garros with No. 13 on the red clay, courtesy of a surprisingly dominant 6-0, 6-2, 7-5 victory over the No. 1-ranked Djokovic.

Lewis Hamilton takes 91st win to equal Schumacher's F1 record

- Lewis Hamilton equalled Michael Schumacher's all-time record 91 Formula One wins with an Eifel Grand Prix victory that catapulted the Mercedes driver closer to a seventh world championship.
- While the Briton triumphed at the Nuerburgring, the German circuit where Ferrari great Schumacher won five times, team mate Valtteri Bottas suffered a huge hit to his title hopes with a first retirement of the season.

Tokyo to host international gymnastics event in November

- Tokyo will host an international gymnastics tournament on November 8, 2020. The event is sanctioned by the International Gymnastics Federation and will feature 32 athletes from Japan, China, Russia and the United States.

Pakistan's Kamran Akmal becomes world's first wicket-keeper to effect 100 T20 stumpings

- Veteran Pakistani wicket-keeper Kamran Akmal became the world's first wicket-keeper to effect 100 stumpings in T20 cricket, the shortest format of the game.
- Former India skipper MS Dhoni is second in the list with 84 stumpings in T20 cricket. Former Sri Lanka captain Kumar Sangakkara is at the third spot with 60 stumpings and is followed by Dinesh Karthik (59) and Afghanistan's Mohammad Shahzad (52).

Mohun Bagan lifted the I-League trophy

- After the much-awaited I-League 2019/20 trophy was presented to Mohun Bagan, the Mariners will be engaged in pre-Durga Puja celebrations in Kolkata. Although Mohun Bagan had won the title with four matches to spare back in March, the trophy presentation had been delayed due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

KL Rahul becomes first Indian batsman to score more than 500 runs in 3 consecutive IPL seasons

- Kings XI Punjab (KXIP) captain KL Rahul achieved a new milestone as he became the first Indian batsman to have scored more than 500 runs in three consecutive IPL seasons. Rahul, who had started his IPL career with Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) in 2013.

Nozomi Okuhara clinches Women's Singles title at Denmark Open

- In Badminton, former World Champion Nozomi Okuhara clinched the Denmark Open title beating three-time world champion Carolina Marin by 21-19, 21-17, at Odense in women's singles. PV Sindhu of India opting to sit out the event, two of her biggest rivals made it through to the final.
- In the men's singles final, world number seven Anders Antonsen of Denmark defeated his compatriot Rasmus Gemke by 18-21, 21-19, 21-12. Antonsen recovered after losing the first game to defeat world number 11 Gemke. The win means Antonsen moves up to second in the world rankings with Gemke at number three.

MS Dhoni becomes first player to feature in 200 Indian Premier League games

- Chennai Super Kings (CSK) skipper MS Dhoni became the first cricketer to play 200 Indian Premier League (IPL) matches when his side took the field against Rajasthan Royals.

Abhinav Bindra launches sports medicine institute

- Olympic champion Abhinav Bindra has taken another big step towards strengthening Indian sports with the opening of a sports medicine and research institute in Bhubaneswar.
- The Abhinav Bindra Sports Medicine and Research Institute (ABSMARI) will offer four-year Bachelor of Physiotherapy and two-year Masters of Physiotherapy courses, with different specialisations. The objective of

the venture, which promises to combine theory with practical exposure, with an affordable fee structure, is to develop professionals who can serve in sports academies, hospitals and other related fields.

Kiren Rijiju launched 200-km ITBP ‘Fit India Walkathon’ in Rajasthan

- Union minister Kiren Rijiju has flagged off a 200-km long ‘Fit India Walkathon’ being organised by border guarding force ITBP in Rajasthan’s Jaisalmer. Personnel of various central armed police forces (CAPFs) and residents of the city will participate in the event between October 31 and November 2.

Lewis Hamilton overtakes Michael Schumacher with record 92nd F1 win

- Six-times world champion Lewis Hamilton became the most successful Formula One driver of all time in terms of race wins with a dominant 92nd career victory at the Portuguese Grand Prix.

Chris Gayle becomes first to hit 1,000 sixes in T20 cricket

- Chris Gayle became the first batsman to get to 1,000 sixes in T20 cricket history when he smashed the seventh of his eight sixes during his belligerent 99 against Kings XI Punjab in an Indian Premier League match. Gayle achieved the land mark during an IPL 2020 game between Kings XI Punjab and Rajasthan Royals.

Ritu Phogat wins third straight MMA title

- Indian wrestler-turned-Mixed Martial Arts fighter Ritu Phogat won her third consecutive MMA championship title in Singapore. Indian notched up a technical knockout win over Cambodia's Nou Srey Pov in the second round.

Former cricketer Shantha Rangaswamy to be conferred Lifetime Achievement Award

- Former India women’s cricket team captain Shantha Rangaswamy will be conferred the Lifetime Achievement award for 2019 by the Karnataka state government on November 2 for her contribution to Indian and Karnataka women’s cricket.
- Rangaswamy who was India’s first Test captain was a woman of many other firsts. She was the first test centurion and also hit the country’s first six in international cricket. In her 15-year long international career, Rangaswamy played a total of 16 Tests – captaining the side in as many as 12 – and 19 ODIs. She was at the helm of India’s first Test and ODI wins, and conceded just two defeats as skipper of the Test teams.

Anju Bobby George elected as AFI’s first female vice-president

- India’s only medallist in the World Athletics Championships and Olympian Anju Bobby George was elected unopposed as the Athletics Federation of India’s (AFI) first woman senior vice-president. She will serve till 2024. Anju won the long-jump bronze at the 2003 World Athletics Championships in Paris before finishing fifth in the long jump at the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens with a personal-best jump of 6.83m.

Sport Events

South Africa to host World Table Tennis Championships for first time

- **Durban** will become the first South African city to host the event after it enjoyed a commanding 90 votes to 39 victory over its German opponent.
- The 2023 World Table Tennis Championships will also be the first to take place in Africa since Cairo played host in 1939.
- The ITTF's flagship event in 2023 is among the first major competitions to be awarded to Durban since the city was stripped of the 2022 Commonwealth Games after failing to provide the required financial guarantees.

Saudi Arabia to make golf free for women in world-first initiative

- Saudi Arabia has announced a world-first initiative that will offer free golf to women across the Kingdom. To be launched at next month's debut Aramco Saudi Ladies International presented by Public Investment Fund, Golf Saudi's innovative 'Ladies First Club' will offer a complimentary membership inclusive of golf lessons, driving range access and full 18-hole rounds on three different courses.

Final grand slam of the year 'French Open' begins in Paris

- In Tennis, final grand slam of the year, the French Open got off in Paris with many changes in place amid COVID-19 pandemic. Rescheduled time slot of September instead of May has brought changes in weather conditions.
- The main court has roof so that rain doesn't stop matches. Official match ball has also changed from Babolat to Wilson. Organisers have restricted the spectators' size to one thousand per day from the earlier 5,000.

Indian Premier League 2020: Dubai to host final on November 10

- Dubai will host the Qualifier 1 and IPL final while the other two play-off games will be held in Abu Dhabi. The IPL, being played entirely in the UAE due to the surging cases of COVID-19 in India.
- The BCCI also announced the schedule of the Women's T20 Challenge which will take place in Sharjah from November 4 to 9. The final will be played on November 9. The teams -- Supernovas, Velocity and Trailblazer - will play each other once to decide the finalists.

Nine States, Union Territories selected for upgradation to KISCE

- Nine States and Union Territories have been selected for upgradation to Khelo India State Centre of Excellence (KISCE). The States and UTs include Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Chandigarh, Goa, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Puducherry, Tripura and Jammu and Kashmir.
- The centres have been selected based on their past performances, quality of infrastructure, management and sports culture in the State.
- Earlier this year, the Ministry had identified a total of 14 centres to be upgraded to Khelo India State Centre of Excellence. The overall number now stands at 24 KISCEs from 23 States and UTs.

AWARDS



Jal Shakti Minister gives away Swachh Bharat Awards-2020

- **Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat gave away the Swachh Bharat Awards-2020** to States, Districts, Blocks and Village Panchayats. The awards were given particularly under the drinking water and cleanliness categories.
- The Union Government had earlier launched three missions under Swachh Sundar Samudayik Shouchalaya, Samudayik Shouchalaya Abhiyan and Gandagi Mukth Bharat.
- Under the Swachh Sundar Samudayik Shouchalaya category Gujarat bagged the first position at state level whereas Tirunelveli in Tamil Nadu got the Award for cleanliness at District Level. Khachrod block in Ujjain district in Madhya Pradesh was awarded the first position and Chinnanur Village in Tamil Nadu bagged the top slot at Gram Panchayat level.
- Under the Samudayik Shouchalaya Abhiyan, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh were awarded as the best performing states whereas Prayagraj and Bareilly got it for being the best performing districts. Under the Gandagi Mukth Bharat Mission, Haryana and Telangana were awarded the top slot.

Maha govt announces Gan Samragini Lata Mangeshkar award for 2020-21 to Usha Mangeshkar

- The Maharashtra government announced the Gan Samragini Lata Mangeshkar award for the year 2020-21 to veteran female playback singer Usha Mangeshkar.
- The award is given by the cultural department of the state government. The award include cash prize of five lakh rupees, a certificate and a memento. The veteran singer has sung songs in Marathi, Hindi and several other Indian language films.

India's Sehgal Foundation selected co-runner up for U.S. Citizen Diplomacy Award

- India's Sehgal Foundation has been selected as a co-runner up of the prestigious Citizen Diplomacy Award for its human rights and women empowerment work in rural Indian communities. Tempe Sister Cities is the other co-runner up of the prestigious annual award.

Prince William launches Earthshot Prize to fund environmental solutions

- Britain's Prince William, the Duke of Cambridge, launched a new 50-million pound Earthshot Prize, aimed at funding the most innovative solutions to some of the world's most pressing environmental challenges.
- The 38-year-old and second in line to the British throne said that five prizes worth 1 million pounds each will be awarded each year for the next 10 years, providing at least 50 solutions to the world's greatest environmental problems by 2030.
- The launch, backed by popular British broadcaster and conservationist David Attenborough, comes after two years of work by Prince William and the Royal Foundation of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, his wife Kate Middleton, to develop a project which will support the global effort to protect and restore the environment.

American poet Louise Glück wins the 2020 Nobel Prize in Literature

- American poet Louise Glück won the 2020 Nobel Literature Prize on October 8, an unexpected choice known for themes of childhood and family life that draw inspiration from myths and classical motifs.
- Prof. Glück, 77, was honoured “for her unmistakable poetic voice that with austere beauty makes individual existence universal,” the Academy said. Prof. Glück won the Pulitzer Prize in 1993 for her collection “The Wild Iris” and the National Book Award for her latest collection, “Faithful and Virtuous Night”, in 2014.
- He is the fourth woman to win the Nobel Literature Prize in the past decade — after Olga Tokarczuk, Svetlana Alexievich and Alice Munro — and only the 16th since the Nobel prizes were first awarded in 1901. A professor of English at Yale University, Louise Glück “seeks the universal, and in this she takes inspiration from myths and classical motifs, present in most of her works”.

The Nobel Prize in Literature is a Swedish literature prize that has been awarded annually, since 1901, to an author from any country who has, in the words of the will of Swedish industrialist Alfred Nobel, produced “in the field of literature the most outstanding work in an ideal direction”. It is one of the five Nobel Prizes established by the 1895 will of Alfred Nobel, which are awarded for outstanding contributions in chemistry, physics, literature, peace, and physiology or medicine. The first Nobel Prize in Literature was awarded in 1901 to Sully Prudhoe of France. In 2017, the Swedish Academy awarded Kazuo Ishiguro the Nobel Prize in Literature. Rabindranath Tagore was the first Indian citizen to be awarded Nobel Prize in Literature for his poem Gitanjali and Mother Teresa is the only woman in the list.

Kerala Tourism bags PATA Grand Award

- Kerala Tourism’s internationally acclaimed ‘Human by Nature’ campaign has bagged the prestigious PATA Grand Award 2020 for marketing.
- The award, one of the three PATA grand awards, will give a stimulus to the tourism industry in the State that is in a crisis for over six months due to the pandemic. The awards were announced at a virtual presentation ceremony in Beijing.

Afghan woman leader makes it to Nobel frontrunner list

- Afghanistan’s first women Deputy Speaker in Parliament and member of the team of negotiators engaging the Taliban in talks in Doha, Fawzia Koofi has been named one of the “favourites” among nominees for this year’s Nobel Peace Prize, due to be announced on October 9. Ms. Koofi, who has survived at least two assassination attempts, including one just two months ago before talks began, said the nomination itself was a “recognition” for the peace process, and would “empower” the role of Afghan women at Doha in particular.
- Ms. Koofi, one of Afghanistan’s most prominent politicians, was first elected to Parliament in 2005 when she was also elected the Deputy Speaker of Parliament. Her bid to stand for President was thwarted after new age rules disqualified her, but she has been a strong votary for women’s rights, piloting a Bill on the eradication of violence against women, and has campaigned for the inclusion of women in the reconciliation process.

World Food Programme wins Nobel Peace Prize for fight against ‘hunger as a weapon of war’

- This year’s Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded to the World Food Programme (WFP) for its “efforts to combat hunger” and its “contribution to bettering conditions for peace in conflict-affected areas.” In awarding the prize, committee chair Berit Reiss-Andersen noted the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on global food supplies and criticized the politics of populism.

World Food Program Awarded Nobel Peace Prize for Work during Pandemic

- The 2020 Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded to the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP). The agency was given the prize for its efforts to combat hunger and improve conditions for peace. In awarding the prize, committee chair Berit Reiss-Andersen noted the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on global food supplies and criticized the politics of populism.
- The WFP, the 101st winner of a prize now worth 10m Swedish krona (\$1.1m; £875,000), said it was “deeply humbled” to have won. Some 107 organisations and 211 individuals were nominated for the award this year.

- The Nobel Peace Prize 2019 was awarded to Abiy Ahmed Ali “for his efforts to achieve peace and international cooperation, and in particular for his decisive initiative to resolve the border conflict with neighbouring Eritrea.”
- Kailash Satyarthi along with Malala Yusuf-Zai received the Nobel peace prize in 2014 for their struggle against the suppression of children and young people and for the right of all children to education.

World Food Programme (WFP) is the food-assistance branch of the United Nations. It is the world’s largest humanitarian organization, the largest one focused on hunger and food security, and the largest provider of school meals. Founded in 1961, it is headquartered in Rome and has offices in 80 countries.

Indian-origin philanthropist Harish Kotecha wins lifetime achievement award in US

- Indian-origin philanthropist Harish Kotecha has been awarded the prestigious Sandra Neese Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of his work in the US for meeting the needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness.
- The lifetime achievement award from the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY) was presented to Kotecha, who is founder and president of Hindu Charities for America (HC4A), at its 32nd annual conference on October 9. Sandra Neese Lifetime Achievement Award is presented annually to honour people who have tirelessly worked to ensure that all children may have what most take for granted: safety, shelter.

Economics Nobel goes to Paul R. Milgrom, Robert B. Wilson for their work on auction theory

- The Nobel Prize 2020 in Economic Sciences was awarded to Paul R. Milgrom and Robert B. Wilson “for improvements to auction theory and inventions of new auction formats.”
- Their work on commercial auctions, including for goods and services difficult to sell in traditional ways such as radio frequencies. The winners will share the prize sum of 10 million Swedish kronor (about \$1.1 million).
- In 2019, the award was shared by Indian-American economist Abhijit Banerjee, Esther Duflo and Michael Kremer. The trio was awarded for their experimental approach to alleviating global poverty.

The Nobel Prize 2020 in Economic Sciences is technically known as the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel. Since its establishment in 1968, it has been awarded 51 times and is now widely considered one of the Nobel prizes. Amartya Sen was the winner of the 1998 Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences. He was rewarded “for his contributions to welfare economics”. Jan Tinbergen was awarded the first Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences in 1969.

Aishwarya Sridhar becomes first Indian woman to win Wildlife Photographer of the Year award

- Making India proud, Aishwarya Sridhar became the first Indian to win the Wildlife Photographer of the Year award. The announcement was made on October 13 at the Natural History Museum in London. It is the 56th year of the prestigious award.
- Aishwarya Sridhar’s photo won among 50,000 entries from over 80 countries across the world. Only 100 images were shortlisted and she won the award for her photograph in the Behaviour Invertebrates category.

EU awards human rights prize to Belarus opposition

- The European Union has awarded its top human rights prize to the Belarus opposition movement and its leader, Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, for their challenge to President Alexander Lukashenko’s long, hard-line reign.
- “It is an honour to announce that the women and men of the democratic opposition in Belarus are the 2020 Sakharov Prize laureates,” European Parliament president David Sassoli said.
- Mr. Lukashenko won his sixth term in office in a presidential election widely seen as rigged. Since the Aug. 9 polls that handed Mr. Lukashenko a victory with 80% of the vote, mass protests have rocked the ex-Soviet nation sandwiched between Poland and Russia.

- **Ms. Tsikhanouskaya, Mr. Lukashenko's main challenger, got 10% of the vote.** She and her supporters refused to recognise the results, saying the outcome of the vote was manipulated.
- **Ms. Tsikhanouskaya shares the prize with several leading members of the opposition's Coordination Council,** which was created after the election in a bid to facilitate talks on a transition of power.
- **The EU award, named after Soviet dissident Andrei Sakharov, was created in 1988 to honor individuals or groups who defend human rights and fundamental freedoms. Last year's winner was economist Ilham Tohti for his work defending China's Uighur minority.**

Dr Jajini Varghese, Indian-origin oncoplastic surgeon honored Outstanding Young Person 2020

- **Dr Jajini Varghese, a UK-based Indian-origin plastic surgeon, has been named an 'Outstanding Young Person of the World 2020' by a non-profit NGO for her "incredible" scientific contributions to diagnosing and treating breast cancer.**
- **The 39-year-old Consultant in Oncoplastic Breast Surgery at Royal Free Hospital and University College London is one of 10 nominations from the UK for the international award,** which honours outstanding young people under the age of 40 every year from across 110 countries for extraordinary accomplishments in various fields.
- **Varghese has been recognised in the "Medical Innovation" category for making it her personal mission to attempt to restore the lives of millions of women affected by breast cancer and will be presented with the award at a ceremony at the 2020 Junior Chamber International (JCI) World Congress in Yokohama, Japan.**

India's Global Himalayan Expedition wins UN award for efforts to fight climate change amid Covid-19

- **An Indian organisation that leverages tourism and technology to help remote communities access solar energy has won a prestigious UN award for its efforts to combat climate change amid the Covid-19 pandemic. The Global Himalayan Expedition (GHE) is among the winners of the 2020 UN Global Climate Action Award.**
- **GHE is one of the world's first organisations using tourism and technology to bring solar energy to remote communities. The recipients of the 2020 United Nations Global Climate Action Awards bring focus to the best examples of what people across the globe are doing "to combat climate change in a year that has cast darkness upon so many."**
- **According to a statement on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) website, GHE is the one of the world's first outfit using tourism and technology to bring solar energy to remote communities as recognised by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) and the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO).**
- **In the Hindu Kush Region, there are more than 16 million people without access to basic energy mainly due to their geographic remoteness.**
- **GHE conducts "Impact Expeditions" to remote Himalayan villages and uses a portion of the expedition fee to fund the capital cost of the hardware, transportation, installation and training of village-scale solar micro-grids. The micro-grid infrastructure set up by GHE is owned and operated by the community.**

Young Bangladeshi boy wins special prize in Global Art Competition conducted by ICCR

- **A six year old Bangladeshi boy Anzar Mustaeen Ali won a special prize of USD 1000 for his artwork in the global art competition organised by the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR).**
- **The ICCR had launched a global painting competition named 'United Against CORONA- Express through Art' which attracted 8000 artwork entries from around the world. After the first round of competition 210 artworks were shortlisted.**
- **The final jury evaluated and decided the winners from each category such as Indian and Foreign, Professional/Amateur/Children in four different sections: Contemporary Art; Folk and Tribal Art; Cartoons and Illustrations and Digital and New Age Art.**

Aruba lodging first in world to win Global United Nations 2020 Climate Neutral Now Award

- The Caribbean's most eco-certified hotel is now setting the world standard as Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort in Aruba is the first-ever hotel in the world to win the prestigious Global United Nations 2020 Climate Action Award for Climate Neutral Now.

Global awards for Victor Banerjee

- Actor Victor Banerjee won two global awards in two days for his role as a priest, Father O'Hara, in the 2019 film, **Josef - Born in Grace**. The first was for Best Actor at the India International Film Festival of Boston on October 27; and the second, a day later, was best supporting actor, at the Ontario International Film Festival.
- **Josef - Born in Grace** has made waves since its release in 2019. It was in the race for contention at the Oscars earlier this year. In September, it won Best Set Design at the Madrid International Film Festival; and it also won a second award at the Ontario International Film Festival this week, when Sudheer Palsane was declared Best Cinematographer.
- Directed by Susant Misra, **Josef - Born in Grace** is an adaptation of a short story titled **Joseph**, written by well-known Odia author Umakanta Mahapatra.



PERSONS IN NEWS

Former Union Minister Jaswant Singh passes away

- **Former Union Minister Jaswant Singh passed away** in New Delhi following a prolonged illness. One of the founding members of BJP Jaswant Singh served as **Minister of Defence, External Affairs and Finance** and also **Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission**.
- He was elected to the Lok Sabha four times and to Rajya Sabha five times and served as **Leader of Opposition** in the Upper House. He was NDA's nominee in the Vice Presidential election in 2012.

Noted filmmaker Shekhar Kapur appointed president of FTII Society & chairman of FTII Governing Council

- **Noted Filmmaker Shekhar Kapur has been named as the President of Film and Television Institute of India, (FTII) Society and Chairman of Governing Council of FTII.** Mr Kapur has directed several films, many of which are critically acclaimed. The Movies include Masoom, Mr. India, Bandit Queen and Elizabeth.

Cambridge University academic makes history as first Indian-origin department head

- An academic from Newnham College at the University of Cambridge, **Dr Manali Desai**, has made history as the **first woman of Indian heritage to take over as the Head of the Sociology Department of the prestigious UK varsity** in its over 800-year history.
- **Desai, a Reader in Comparative and Historical Sociology and Fellow of Newnham College** whose work focuses on social movements, ethnic and gendered violence and post-colonial studies, took over as Chair of the department this month.

Assam's only woman CM Syeda Anwara Taimur passes away in Australia at 83

- **Assam's first and only woman chief minister Syeda Anwara Taimur passed away in Australia.** Taimur was in the news in 2018 when her name didn't appear in the Assam National Register of Citizens. She later informed that her family members may not have applied to get her name included in the list.

Senior IAS PD Vaghela appointed as new TRAI chairman

- **Senior Indian Administrative Service Officer Dr P. D. Vaghela has been appointed as the Chairman of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India- TRAI.**
- **The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved his appointment.** He will replace **R.S. Sharma**. Mr Vaghela will hold the post for a period of three years or until he attains the age of 65 years. Mr Vaghela, a 1986-batch officer of Gujarat Cadre, is currently Secretary, Department of Pharmaceuticals.

President, PM, other senior leaders pay their last respects to Union Minister & LJP leader Ram Vilas Paswan

- **President Ram Nath Kovind and Prime Minister Narendra Modi have paid their last respects to Union Minister and LJP leader Ram Vilas Paswan.** Mr Kovind visited the residence of the departed leader this morning to pay tributes.
- **The Lok Janshakti Party founder and Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution was elected to Lok Sabha eight times and also held the record of winning his constituency, Hajipur in Bihar with the highest margin for several years.**

PM Modi pays tributes to Bhai Taru Singh on his 300th Birth Anniversary

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid tributes to Bhai Taru Singh on his 300th Birth Anniversary.** In a tweet, Mr Modi said, Bhai Taru Singh's name will always be synonymous with courage and fearlessness.
- He said, always proud of his culture as well as ethos, Bhai Taru Singh never bowed to injustice. The Prime Minister said, he continues to inspire millions. **Born in 1720 in Amritsar, Bhai Taru Singh was martyred protecting Sikh values.**

China commemorates 110th birth anniversary of Dr. Dwarkanath Kotnis

- China commemorated the 110th birth anniversary of Indian doctor Dwarkanath Kotnis who served in the country during the Chinese revolution headed by Mao Zedong and the World War II.
- Dr. Kotnis, who hailed from Sholapur in Maharashtra, came to China in 1938 as part of a five-member team of doctors sent by the Indian National Congress to help the Chinese during the World War II. He joined the Communist Party of China in 1942 and died the same year at the age of 32.

Bapu - The unforgettable: Delhi's Deputy CM Manish Sisodia launches coffee-table book on Gandhi Jayanti

- On the occasion of the 151st birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, Deputy Chief Minister of Delhi Manish Sisodia launched a coffee-table book "Bapu - The unforgettable".
- "In today's times when there are a lot of stories about the social decline, we are in dire need of Gandhian philosophies. If Gandhiji would have been here today, he would have been playing a crucial role in directing us towards the upliftment of our society," Sisodia said while speaking at the virtual launch.
- "This book cannot fulfil the void created by the absence of Bapu but can certainly make us think, give us ideas, give us a glimpse of his philosophy. There are several untouched aspects of history in this book, a lot of photographs, epigraphs, and several other details about Delhi which we usually do not get to see," he added.

India's first Oscar winner Costume designer Bhanu Athaiya passes away

- India's first Oscar winner Costume designer Bhanu Athaiya died at her home in Mumbai after prolonged illness. She was 91. Athaiya, who won an Oscar for her work in the 1983 epic film "Gandhi", passed away peacefully in her sleep.

Dr. Jitendra Singh lays foundation stone of Pt. Madan Mohan Malviya Shiksha Bhawan in Jammu

- In the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, Union Minister in PMO, Dr. Jitendra Singh laid the foundation stone of Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya Shiksha Bhawan at Central University of Jammu, Rahya-Sucahni in district Samba in the presence of Vice chancellor Prof. Ashok Aima and others.
- The proposed building is being constructed with the financial assistance provided by the Ministry of Education, Government of India, under Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya National Mission on Teachers and Teaching (PMMMNTT).
- The key objective of the scheme is to enhance the quality of teachers and teaching learning. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Singh said that the construction of the new building in the name of Mahamana Malviya will give an impetus to strengthening of School Education and Teacher Education in the region and benefit not only Jammu and Kashmir but also the adjoining States and the entire country.

PM Narendra Modi released Rs 100 commemorative coin in honour of Vijaya Raje Scindia

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a commemorative coin of 100 rupees in honour of Vijaya Raje Scindia through a virtual ceremony. One of the founder members of BJP, Vijaya Raje Scindia is popularly known as the Rajmata of Gwalior. The coin is being released in celebration of birth centenary of Vijaya Raje Scindia.
- The special commemorative coin was minted by the Finance Ministry as a part of these celebrations. This coin will be released by the Prime Minister on her birth anniversary. Vijaya Raje Scindia was elected to Lok Sabha 7 times and twice to the Rajya Sabha.

France appoints first envoy for Indo-Pacific, to focus on cooperation with India

- In a sign of France's greater focus on the Indian Ocean and the increasingly assertive behaviour of China across the region, President Emmanuel Macron has appointed the country's first ambassador for the Indo-Pacific. Christophe Penot, one of France's most senior diplomats who till recently was the envoy to Australia, will take over the new position from October 15, people familiar with developments said on condition of anonymity.

India-born US Judge Amit Mehta assigned Justice Department's lawsuit against Google

- India-born US District Judge Amit Mehta will preside over the Justice Department's crucial lawsuit against internet search giant Google.
- Mr. Mehta was appointed to the United States District Court for the District of Columbia by former US president Barack Obama.
- Born in Patan, Gujarat, Mr. Mehta received his BA in Political Science and Economics from Georgetown University in 1993 and his JD from the University of Virginia School of Law in 1997.
- After law school, Mr. Mehta worked in a law firm in San Francisco before clerking for Susan Graber of the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.
- Following his clerkship, Mr. Mehta worked at a Washington, DC-based law firm. In 2002, Mr. Mehta joined the District of Columbia Public Defender Service as a staff attorney.

War memorial of 1962 braveheart, Sub Joginder Singh inaugurated at Bum La

- Under the patronage of Arunachal Government and with efforts of Pema Khandu, Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, a War Memorial has been constructed at Bum La, where Sub Joginder Singh, 1st Battalion the Sikh Regt made the supreme sacrifice.
- Sub Joginder Singh, 1st Battalion the Sikh Regt received the highest gallantry award, Param Vir Chakra in the Eastern Theatre during the 1962 Sino- India War.
- Indian Army organised the Inauguration Ceremony of Joginder War Memorial at Bum La on 23 October 2020 coinciding with the day on which the Battle of Tongpen La (Bum La) took place in 1962.

Aman Singh becomes first turbaned Sikh to be elected to British Columbia assembly

- Despite having elected Harjit Sajjan to the House of Commons leading to him becoming Canada's defence minister, the province of British Columbia had never elected a turbaned Sikh to its own legislative assembly.
- That changed, with human rights lawyer Aman Singh making history as he was projected to win the riding (as constituencies are called in Canada) of Richmond-Queensborough.

Yashvardhan Kumar Sinha to be next Chief Information Commissioner

- Former diplomat and Central Information Commissioner Yashvardhan Kumar Sinha is tipped to be appointed as the country's next Chief Information Commissioner (CIC), two months after the position at the top transparency watchdog fell vacant.
- The decision was taken after meeting of the high-powered selection panel headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. However, Congress Leader in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, who is also a member of the panel, is learnt to have submitted a dissent note.

Edward Snowden granted permanent residency in Russia

- Former U.S. security contractor Edward Snowden has been granted permanent residency in Russia. Mr. Snowden, a former contractor with the U.S. National Security Agency, has been living in Russia since 2013 to escape prosecution in the U.S. after leaking classified documents detailing government surveillance programs.

PM Modi to release autobiography of Dr. Balasaheb Vikhe Patil

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi released the autobiography of Dr. Balasaheb Vikhe Patil and rename Pravara Rural Education Society as 'Loknete Dr. Balasaheb Vikhe Patil Pravara Rural Education Society', through video conferencing.
- Dr. Balasaheb Vikhe Patil served as Member of Lok Sabha for multiple terms. His autobiography is titled 'Deh Vechwa Karani' which means 'dedicating one's life for a noble cause'. Dr. Patil is known for his path-breaking work in various fields, including agriculture and cooperatives.

- **Pravara Rural Education Society** was established in 1964 at Loni in Ahmednagar district, with the aim to provide world class education to the rural masses and empower the girl child. The Society is currently serving with the core mission of educational, social, economical, cultural, physical and psychological development of students.

Manipuri teenager becomes first Indian footballer to feature in The Guardian's next generation list

- Manipuri's 17-year-old defender **Bikash Yumnam** has become the first Indian footballer to make it to **The Guardian's Next Generation List** – a list of the best young footballers from across the globe.
- The list is published annually by the newspaper and it has been running since 2014 and has featured some of the most exciting football talents from across the world.

Amy Coney Barrett takes oath to join Supreme Court

- **Amy Coney Barrett** officially took the first of two oaths that will allow her to join the Supreme Court, shortly after being confirmed by a deeply divided Senate.
- **Justice Clarence Thomas** administered the Constitutional Oath to Barrett before a crowd of about 200. She will be able to participate in the court after taking the judicial oath administered by Chief Justice John Roberts in a private ceremony at the court.

New President elected for World Sailing

- **Quanhai Li** has been elected as World Sailing President, announced at World Sailing's Virtual General Assembly. Li unseats incumbent **Kim Andersen (DEN)** who was seeking his second and final 4-year term.
- Four Presidential candidates were up for election in the first round and no candidate received more than 50% of votes.

Indian airline appoints a female CEO for the first time

- For the first time ever, a woman has become the CEO of an Indian carrier, with the government appointing **Harpreet A De Singh** as the CEO of Air India's (AI) regional subsidiary **Alliance Air**.

MISCELLANEOUS

Andhra Pradesh's 'YSR Jalakala' scheme to bring more land under cultivation

- Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy launched YSR Jalakala, a scheme to dig borewells free of cost for farmers, and bring an additional five lakh acres under cultivation through groundwater irrigation. With this, the YSRC government has fulfilled another election promise made under Navaratnalu.
- In the next four years, the government plans to spend Rs 2,340 crore on drilling two lakh borewells to benefit upland farmers, who are predominantly dependent on rains. Jagan also promised to set up motors free of cost for all small and marginal farmers, which will require an additional expenditure of Rs 1,600 crore.

Assam govt to start 'Kritagyata' scheme

- Assam chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal directed the Pension and Public Grievances department to ensure the receipt of pension by the state government employees on the same day of retirement. The employees to receive pension on the day of retirement through a web based scheme named 'Kritagyata'.

UP becomes first state in India to conduct 1 crore Covid-19 tests

- Uttar Pradesh became the first state in the country to be undertaking over 1 crore tests to screen coronavirus. Uttar Pradesh's share in the total tests conducted in the country now stands at 13.6%. Data from Indian Council of Medical Research stated that 7,41,96,729 Covid tests have been conducted in the country. Also, nearest contenders Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu are several lakh tests away.

Harijan Sevak Sangh Foundation Day

- The Harijan Sevak Sangh was established on September 30, 1932. It was founded by Gandhiji. He founded it when he was in Yervada Jail, Pune.
- The legend was fasting when he founded the Sangh. It was founded to eliminate untouchability in India. It is headquartered in Kingsway Camp, Delhi. The Sangh helped depressed classes in the Indian society to access public places such as schools, temples, roads and water resources. It also conducted inter caste marriages. Kingsway Camp is one of Gandhian Heritage Sites. These sites are maintained by the Ministry of Culture, GoI.

Akshay's Bellbottom First in the World to start and finish Shoot in Pandemic

- Akshay Kumar's 'Bell bottom' becomes the first film in the world to start and finish shooting during the pandemic. *Bell Bottom* is a movie directed by Ranjit M Tewari featuring Akshay Kumar, Vaani Kapoor.

The revised guidelines on 'ideal' weight and diet

- The National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), the Hyderabad-based premier research body of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), has released a new set of guidelines, updating norms on recommended dietary allowances (RDA), which is the average daily intake needed for a nutritious diet. Besides several other recommendations, a salient point in the report released this week is the upward revision of the 'ideal' weight of Indian men and women.
- For the latest report, NIN looked at nationally representative data from the National Family Health Survey-4 (NFHS-4, 2015-16), the National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau (2015-16), the World Health Organization (2006-07) and the Indian Academy of Paediatrics (IAP, 2016) to "derive acceptable reference body weight values through the lifespan." The definition for a reference Indian adult man and woman were modified with regard to age (19-39 years) instead of (20-39 years) and a body weight of 65 kg and 55 kg respectively were fixed for a normal Body Mass Index (BMI). Though termed 'ideal', it is more appropriately a measure of the average weight of Indians.

- For children, the requirement is over 60 ml per kg body mass, and for adolescent boys it ranges from 47-60 ml per kg body mass, while for girls, it is 39-49 ml per kg body mass. For a pregnant woman, based on the working intensity, the water required from beverages ranges from 2.1 litres to 3.2 litres per day.
- **National Nutrition Month (previously called National Nutrition Week) is celebrated in India every year during September** to spread awareness about nutritional needs, deficiencies and malnutrition.

Strong Tropical Storm Gamma drenches Cancun area of Mexico

- **Tropical Storm Gamma hit the resort-dotted coast of Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula at near-hurricane force**, flooding streets, knocking down vulnerable buildings and stranding people trying to return from outlying islands.
- **The storm came ashore near Tulum with maximum sustained winds of nearly 70 mph (110 kph)** 4 mph (9 kph short of hurricane force), according to the US National Hurricane Centre in Miami. By night, winds had dipped to 60 mph (95 kph), and it was centred about 85 miles (135 km) north-northwest of Tulum, moving to the northwest at 7 mph (11 kph).

Railway Minister Piyush Goyal virtually inaugurates Phoolbagan Station of Kolkata's East West Metro corridor

- **Railway Minister Piyush Goyal virtually inaugurated the Phoolbagan Station of Kolkata's East West Metro corridor, and flagged off the first train** from there to Salt Lake Sector-V.
- Mr Goyal also said the entire stretch of the corridor, **connecting Sector-V and Howrah Maidan, is likely to be completed by December 2021**. The minister said, by the end of next year, the entire East West Corridor project of 16.55 km is expected to be completed.
- Mr Goyal said the project, which has suffered delays owing to several issues, has been **fast-tracked since 2015 because of the personal intervention and monitoring by Prime Minister Narendra Modi**.

J&K LG Manoj Sinha dedicates Ashthal Bridge to public in Kulgam

- **Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha during his visit to Panchayat Halqa Ashthal, Kulgam in connection with Back to Village-3 programme, dedicated Ashthal Bridge to the public**. The Ashthal Bridge connects village Ashthal with adjoining areas while benefitting about 10,000 souls residing in 13 habitations.
- The Lt Governor also laid the **foundation stone for a Solid Waste Management plant. It is going to benefit 239 households**. To maintain the high sanitation standards, atleast two dustbins in every panchayat are to be installed for solid and liquid waste management.

Only 41 districts in country with severe or extreme dry conditions: Report by IMD

- At the end of this monsoon season, **only 4.15 per cent of the country's area – which covers 41 districts – is experiencing either severe or extremely dry conditions**.
- This was stated in the Standardised Precipitation Index (SPI) report on wet and dry conditions observed from June to September, released by the India Meteorological Department (IMD). **This time last year, a total of 122 districts were facing such dry conditions – about 9.13 per cent area of the country**.
- **The SPI is a key advance indicator projecting the possibility of drought conditions**, if at all, looming over a district or region. It is an important parameter that guides state governments in their water management planning towards agriculture and other purposes during the post-monsoon season. The IMD monitors SPI on a weekly basis.
- Rainfall recorded during this year's monsoon, which ended on September 30, was **8.7 per cent above the seasonal normal over the country**.

Emission norms for tractors to be applicable from October 2021

- Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has said that emission norms for tractors will be **applicable from October 2021 and for Construction Equipment Vehicles, the norms will be applicable from April 2021**.

- The Ministry has **notified amendment to Central Motor Vehicle Rules 1989 on 30th September, 2020** deferring the applicability date for implementing the next stage of emission norms for tractors and Construction Equipment Vehicles.

Minister for DoNER Dr Jitendra Singh releases Coffee Table Book on Discovering Heritage of Assam

- Minister for Development of North Eastern Region, DoNER, Dr Jitendra Singh released a **Coffee Table Book on Discovering the Heritage of Assam**, with foreword by Amitabh Bachchan and published by Penguin.
- The voluminous coffee table book with pictures and photographs presents an absorbing compilation of heritage, faith, beliefs and traditions of different ethnic tribes and subtribes living in the largest State of the North Eastern Region. While releasing the book, Dr Singh congratulated its author IRS officer Padampani Bora who has over the years established himself as an accomplished author, specializing in the subjects reflecting diverse nuances of the North Eastern Region of India.

PM Modi launches 'Jan Andolan' campaign for COVID-19 Appropriate Behaviour

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched a campaign by way of a Tweet on Jan Andolan for COVID-19 Appropriate Behaviour. The campaign has been launched in view of the upcoming festivals and winter season as well as the opening up of the economy.
- In a tweet, Mr Modi appealed to the people to unite to fight Corona. He urged the people to always remember to wear a mask, wash hands, follow social distancing and practice 'Do Gaz Ki Doori.' He said, together, we will succeed and win against COVID-19.

Uttar Pradesh to get its first womens mental health council

- Equipped with an admirable network of entrepreneurs and absolute will power, WICCI bring up India's first Creative-arts mental health council in Uttar Pradesh.
- As we observed the world mental health day, October 10th 2020. We also witnessed the grand launch of the women's Indian chamber of commerce and Industry- UP Mental health council.

ISLRTC, NCERT sign MoU to convert educational materials into Indian Sign Language

- A historic Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Indian Sign Language Research and Training Center and NCERT to make education materials accessible for Deaf children in their preferred format of communication, Indian Sign Language. This MoU was signed in the virtual presence of Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Thaawarchand Gehlot and Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank.
- Addressing on the occasion, Mr Gehlot said that the signing of this MoU is a historic step as availability of NCERT textbooks in Indian Sign Language will ensure that Hearing Impaired children can also now access educational resources in Indian Sign Language. He said, it will be a useful and much needed resource for Hearing Impaired students, teachers, teacher educators and parents. The Minister said that this MoU is a step towards achieving common goal of fulfilling needs of Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 and New Education Policy, 2020.

Prayagraj to house state's first, world's tallest solar tree

- Prayagraj to house Uttar Pradesh state's first solar tree and perhaps the tallest in the world will be erected in Sangam city under the Smart City project. The Two city parks would be chosen for installing the hi-tech tree which would harness around 0.5 kilowatt (KW) of electricity.

RKA starts nation-wide campaign to celebrate Kamdhenu Deepawali Abhiyan this year

- Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog (RKA) has started a nation-wide campaign to celebrate Kamdhenu Deepawali Abhiyan this year on the occasion of Deepawali festival. Through this campaign, the RKA is promoting extensive use of cow-dung and products during this Diwali Festival.

- **Manufacture of Cow dung-based Diyas, Candles, Dhoop, Swastik, Wall-piece, Paper-weight, Havan Samagri, Idols of Lord Ganesha and Goddess Lakshmi** for this year's Diwali festival has already started. Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying said that RKA aims at reaching 11 crore families to ignite 33 crore Diyas made of cow-dung during this year's Deepawali festival.

Kerala CM inaugurates operations of 1st phase of IIAV at Thonakkal, Thiruvananthapuram

- In Kerala, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurated the operations of the first phase of International Institute of Advanced Virology at the life sciences park at Thonakkal, Thiruvananthapuram through video conference.

Amid Chinese threat, Japan Coast Guard tests unmanned aircraft SeaGuardian

- Amid tensions between Beijing and Tokyo, Japan, began test flights of an unmanned aerial vehicle SeaGuardian in a bid to learn whether it can carry out key duties, including search, rescue and maritime surveillance.

J&K L-G announces 'My Town My Pride' programme

- Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor (L-G) Manoj Sinha announced the 'My Town My Pride' programme, a part of the public outreach initiative "in J&K's towns to deliver services at doorsteps to the urban population". "We have three main objectives — public outreach in towns, strengthening grassroots democracy, and service delivery at doorsteps."

NS Tomar virtually inaugurates the India - International Food & Agri Week

- Food Processing Industries Minister Narendra Singh Tomar virtually inaugurated the India - International Food and Agri Week. Mr Tomar said Indian food processing sector is 32 per cent of India's food market.

Indian Navy Ships Sahyadri and Kora adjudged as Best Ships in FAF 2020

- Fleet Award Function (FAF), 2020 was organised to mark the successful culmination of the Operational Cycle of the Eastern Fleet of the Indian Navy at Visakhapatnam. FAF is of great significance as it acknowledges the resilience and perseverance of Men-in-Whites appointed onboard ships of 'Poorvi Beda' or colloquially called the 'Sword Arm' of ENC.

Modi released commemorative coin of Rs. 75 denomination to mark 75th Anniversary of FAO

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a commemorative coin of Rs. 75 denomination to mark the 75th Anniversary of Food and Agriculture Organization, FAO.

One in six children living in extreme poverty, figure set to rise during pandemic: UN

- An estimated one in six children — or 356 million globally — were living in extreme poverty before the COVID-19 pandemic began, and this is set to worsen significantly, according to a new World Bank Group and UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) analysis.
- 'Global Estimate of Children in Monetary Poverty: An Update', notes that sub-Saharan Africa, with its limited social safety nets, accounts for two-thirds of children living in households that struggle to survive on an average of \$1.90 a day or less per person — the international measure for extreme poverty, while South Asia accounts for nearly a fifth of these children.
- The analysis shows that the number of children living in extreme poverty decreased moderately, by 29 million, between 2013 and 2017. However, UNICEF and the World Bank Group warn that any progress made in recent years, has been "slow-paced, unequally distributed, and at risk" due to the economic impact of the pandemic.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is a United Nations (UN) agency headquartered in New York City that provides humanitarian and developmental assistance to children and mothers in developing countries. It was created by the United Nations General Assembly on 11 December 1946, to provide emergency food and healthcare to children in countries that had been devastated by World War II.

CRPF, IIT-Delhi and DRDO sign MoU

- The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) has signed an agreement with the Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi and the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) to create a pool of officials who will work to find technology solutions for its operational challenges.
- The about 3.25 lakh-strong force has about 500 officers and sub-officers who hold professional degrees in engineering and technology. The Memorandum of Understanding will enable these officers to undertake short-term specialised courses at these institutions and also pursue research work.

Union Minister Jitendra Singh inaugurates Katra festival in Jammu

- Union Minister Jitendra Singh inaugurated the nine-day Navratra festival at Katra in Jammu. The festival was organised by the Directorate of Tourism, Jammu, in collaboration with the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, Katra and the Hotel, Restaurant & Travel Associations of Katra.
- The Navratra Festival was started in 1996 to promote pilgrimage tourism and has now become an annual event, which is held during the auspicious nine days of the Sharad Navratras.

SC Railway starts 3rd Kisan rail from Zone to reach Adarsh Nagar Station in New Delhi

- With the successful run of the previous two Kisan Rails, the South Central Railway has started the third Kisan rail from the Zone to reach Adarsh Nagar Station in New Delhi.
- This is the third Rail continuously starting from the district of Anantapur. A total of 242.6 tonnes of commodities have been transported by this train.

Kerala first water taxi service launches in backwaters of Alappuzha

- Kerala's first water taxi service launched in the backwaters of Alappuzha. The water taxi is set to ferry passengers.
- The water taxi, a catamaran diesel-powered craft with a seating capacity for 10 passengers, is 1st in a series of 4 boats. The State Water Transport Department is planning to introduce more boats.

PM Narendra Modi delivered virtual keynote address at inaugural function of GCAM 2020

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered a virtual keynote address at the inaugural function of Grand Challenges Annual Meeting GCAM 2020. GCAM has fostered international innovation collaborations to address challenges in health and development for the last 15 years.
- The GCAM 2020 convened virtually from 19th to 21st of this month, bringing together policymakers and scientific leaders, calling for deepened scientific collaborations in solving global health problems, with great emphasis on COVID-19 with an "India for the World" framing.
- World leaders, eminent scientists and researchers from all over the globe have joined this meeting to discuss key priorities for accelerating progress in the post-pandemic world and elaborate on addressing the challenges to manage COVID-19.

PM Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated three key projects in Gujarat

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated three key projects in Gujarat. He also launched the Kisan Suryodaya Yojana for the farmers of Gujarat.
- He also inaugurated the Paediatric Heart Hospital attached with UN Mehta Institute of Cardiology and Research Centre and a Mobile Application for tele-cardiology at the Ahmedabad Civil Hospital in Ahmedabad.

Northern Railways to launch 'Bags on Wheels' to ferry passenger luggage

- Passengers travelling from Delhi, Ghaziabad and Gurugram will be the first to avail the soon-to-begin 'Bags on Wheels' service of the Railways through which their luggage will be transported to their homes from the railway station upon their arrival in trains and vice versa.

- The Northern Railways' Delhi Division announced the 'App-Based Bags on Wheels', a first of its kind service available for railway passengers in India. While the contract has been awarded, the services are expected to begin soon.
- Initially, the firm to which the contract is awarded will provide its services for the passengers boarding trains from New Delhi, Delhi Jn., Hazrat Nizamuddin, Delhi Cantt., Delhi Sarai Rohilla, Ghaziabad and Gurgaon railway stations.

In a world first, iodine sanitisers to hit Indian market

- The world's first iodine-based sanitisers, which are said to be more effective and long-lasting than alcohol-based hand cleansers, will be launched in India over the next two weeks.
- Moreover, India would be the manufacturing hub for supplying the iodine sanitiser, which will be named as I2Cure, to other parts of the world, said Anil Kejriwal, Global President of the Singapore-based biotechnology firm I2Pure, which holds the patents for this molecular iodine-based product. I2 in the name stands for molecular iodine, the active ingredient in the product.

Culture & Tourism Minister virtually launches Life in Miniature project

- Culture and Tourism Minister Prahlad Singh Patel virtually launched Life in Miniature project. The project is collaboration between the National Museum, New Delhi, Ministry of Culture, and Google Arts and Culture.
- Several hundred miniature paintings from the National Museum can be viewed online on Google Arts and Culture by people around the world. The project uses technologies like machine learning, augmented reality and digitization with high-definition robotic cameras, to showcase these special works of art in a magical new way.

Maharashtra becomes first state in country to cap prices of masks

- Maharashtra has become the first state in the country to cap the prices of masks. N95 masks will now be available at Rs 19 to Rs 49, while two-layer and three-layer masks will be available for Rs 3 to 4.
- This maximum selling price limit will be applicable to all mask manufacturing companies / distributors / retailers in the state. All mask manufacturers / distributors / retailers in the state will be required to display the quality of the mask and its fixed maximum selling price.

'Pride Station': North India's first Metro station dedicated to transgenders in Noida

- In a first for Metro services in north India, the Noida Metro Rail Corporation (NMRC) officially renamed the Sector 50 station as "Pride Station" dedicating it to the transgender community.
- This initiative was inspired by the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019, passed by the Centre for the protection of the rights of the transgender people.
- As per Census 2011, there are 4.9 lakh transgenders in India, out of whom around 35,000 are staying in NCR. These numbers may have increased manifold in the present scenario".

PM Modi inaugurates Sardar Patel Zoological Park & Arogya Van in Gujarat; Lays foundation stone for various projects at Kevadia

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated Sardar Patel Zoological Park and Geodesic Aviary Dome in the Statue of Unity complex near Kevadia in Narmada district of Gujarat. He dedicated to the nation 17 projects under integrated development of Kevadia and laid the foundation stone for 4 new projects.
- The projects include Navigation Channel, New Gora Bridge, Garudeshwar Weir, Government Quarters, Bus Bay Terminus, Ekta Nursery, Khalwani Eco Tourism, and Tribal Home Stay. He also flagged-off the Ekta Cruise Service to the Statue of Unity.
- The Sardar Patel Zoological Park has been completed in record time. This state-of-art Zoological Park is spread over 375 acre of land and built at seven different levels.

Railways launch 'Meri Saheli' initiative for security of women passengers

- Railways has launched Meri Saheli initiative for focused action on security of women passengers across all zones. The objective of this mission is to provide safety and security to lady passengers travelling by trains for their entire journey from starting station to destination station.
- Meri Saheli initiative was started as a pilot project in South Eastern Railway in September this year and after getting encouraging response from lady passengers.

Indian Railways (IR) is the fourth-largest railway network in the world by size. There are a total of 18 Railway zones. South Coast Railway Zone is the newest and 18th railway zone, headquartered at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. Piyush Vedprakash Goyal is currently serving as the Minister of Railways and Commerce in the Government of India. He was elected as the BJP candidate from Maharashtra for the Rajya Sabha on 3 June 2016. The practice of a separate Railway Budget was started by the British in 1924 under the recommendation of a 10-member Acworth Committee headed by British economist William Mitchell Acworth in 1920-21. On 21 September 2016, Government of India approved the merger of the Railway Budget with the Union budget of India, and thus came to end — a 92-year-old practice of separate rail and general budgets.

Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda launched two Centers of Excellence for Tribal Welfare

- Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda has launched two Centers of Excellence for Tribal Welfare through video conference.
- The first initiative strengthening Panchayati Raj institutions was launched in five districts covering 30 Gram Panchayats and 150 villages of Jharkhand.
- The model is designed to create the youth volunteers among the tribal youths by giving them personality development training who will work for their community in spreading the awareness.

Assam Becomes First State to Add 'Transgender' as Gender Option in Exam Application

- Assam has become the first state in the country to add a 'transgender' option in the gender category of the civil service examination form. A total of 42 transgender persons have applied for the combined competitive (preliminary) examination (CCE), 2020, which is conducted by the Assam Public Service Commission (APSC).

V Prez Venkaiah Naidu launches virtual festival of 'Parampara Series 2020-National Festival of Music and Dance'

- Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu said that music and dance can provide relief from the anxiety caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Launching the virtual festival of 'Parampara Series 2020-National Festival of Music and Dance' organized by Natya Tarangini in partnership with the United Nations, the Vice President said that music and dance make lives more fulfilling by rejuvenating and energising. He added that they bring harmony into lives and nourish inner spirit by dispelling gloom and despair.
- He appreciated Natya Tarangini for organising the 'Parampara Series' continuously since past 23 years, and adopting innovative efforts to make it happen for the 24th year.

Polish city names square after Harivansh Rai Bachchan

- Megastar Big B, took to Twitter to share his happiness with 44.5 million Twitter followers over a city in Poland, Wroclaw, naming a square after his late father and celebrated poet, Harivansh Rai Bachchan. The 78-year-old took to Twitter and posted a picture of a signboard of the square embossed with Harivansh Rai Bachchan's name.

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Day for Universal Access to Information 28 September

- On 17 November 2015, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) **declared 28 September as International Day for Universal Access to Information.**
- The theme for International Day for Universal Access to Information (IDUAI) 2020 is **“Saving lives, Building Trust, Bringing Hope”.**

First International Day of Food Loss and Waste Awareness

- On 29th September marks the first observance of the **International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste across the globe.** In the US, though food is lost and wasted at every stage of the food supply chain, food waste has become an overlooked part of our normal lives and business as usual.
- The first theme for the new Observance will be **“Stop food loss and waste. For the people. For the planet.”**

World Heart Day being observed

- World Heart Day**, aimed at drawing people’s attention to heart ailments and the whole range of associated health issues. **This initiative was launched in 2000 by the World Heart Federation as an annual event and gets celebrated on 29th day of September ever since.**
- In 2020, in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, the World Heart Federation urges people around the world to **‘Use Heart to Beat CVD’**, saying that, **“In the time of Covid-19, taking care of your heart is more important than ever before”.**

International Day of Older Persons: 1 October

- The year 2020 marks the **75th Anniversary of the United Nations and the 30th Anniversary of the International Day of Older Persons.** This year has also seen an emergence of COVID-19, that has caused an upheaval across the world.

International Day of Non-Violence: 2 October

- The **International Day of Non-Violence is observed on 2 October, the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi**, leader of the Indian independence movement and pioneer of the philosophy and strategy of non-violence.
- According to **General Assembly resolution International Day is an occasion to “disseminate the message of non-violence, including through education and public awareness”.** The resolution reaffirms **“the universal relevance of the principle of non-violence”** and the desire **“to secure a culture of peace, tolerance, understanding and non-violence”.**

World Teachers’ Day

- Held annually on 5 October since 1994, World Teachers’ Day commemorates the anniversary of the adoption of the 1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers.**

WORLD TEACHERS’ DAY – October 5

- World Teachers’ Day is held annually on 5 October since 1994;** World Teachers’ Day commemorates the anniversary of the adoption of the 1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers.
- With the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goal 4 on education, and the dedicated target (SDG 4.c) recognizing teachers as key to the achievement of the Education 2030 agenda,** WTD has become the occasion to mark progress and reflect on ways to counter the remaining challenges for the promotion of the teaching profession.
- World Teachers’ Day is co-convened in partnership with UNICEF, the International Labour Organization and Education International. In 2020, World Teachers’ Day will celebrate teachers **with the theme “Teachers: Leading in crisis, reimagining the future”.**

World Habitat Day

- **The United Nations designated the first Monday of October of every year as World Habitat Day** to reflect on the state of our towns and cities, and on the basic right of all to adequate shelter.
- The Day is also intended to remind the world that we all have the power and the responsibility to shape the future of our cities and towns. **Theme for the 2020 is: Housing For All — A Better Urban Future.**

PM Modi greets India Post Office team on World Post Day

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi greeted **India Post Office Team and their families on World Post Day**. In a tweet, Mr Modi said, the country is extremely proud of the India Post Office Team for their efforts to connect India. He said, they bring happiness to countless lives.
- **World Post day happens each year on October 9**, the anniversary of the Universal Postal Union, which started in 1874 in Switzerland.

World Migratory Bird Day

- **World Migratory Bird Day is celebrated by people across the world on 10 October** with the theme **“Birds Connect Our World”**.
- The theme highlights the **importance of conserving and restoring the ecological connectivity and integrity of ecosystems** that support the natural movements of migratory birds and that are essential for their survival and well-being.

World Post Day 2020

- **World Post Day 2020 is celebrated on October 9**, to mark the anniversary of the establishment of Universal Postal Union (UPU) across the world. **World Post Day 2020's theme is “We Have Always Delivered”**.

International Day of the Girl Child: 11 October

- **On International Day of the Girl Child, 11 October, amplify the voices and rights of girls everywhere**. The **theme for this year, “My voice, our equal future”**, reimagines a better world inspired and led by adolescent girls, as part of the global Generation Equality movement. The International Day of the Girl Child focuses attention on the need to address the challenges girls face and to promote girls' empowerment and the fulfilment of their human rights.

National Philately Day is celebrated across country

- **The National Philately Day is being celebrated on 13th October throughout the country**. The Philately is the study of postage stamps and postal history. **The day also marks the collection, appreciation and research activities on stamps and other philatelic products**. The celebration of the National Philately Day involves more than just stamp collecting or the study of postage.

International E-Waste Day - 14 October 2020

- **International E-Waste Day was developed in 2018 by the WEEE Forum with the support of its members**.
- **A record 53.6 million metric tonnes (Mt) of electronic waste was generated worldwide in 2019**, up 21 per cent in just five years, according to the UN's Global E-waste Monitor 2020. It is estimated that by 2030 this number will reach 74 Mt! Only 17.4 per cent of 2019's e-waste was collected and recycled.

International Day of Rural Women is observed on 15th October

- **This year on International Day of Rural Women (15 October)**, the spotlight or theme is on the urgent need for **Building rural women's resilience in the wake of COVID-19**, for **“building back better”** by strengthening rural women's sustainable livelihoods and wellbeing.

Global Handwashing Day is observed

- **The day is observed on October 15 each year to raise awareness and highlight the importance of handwashing** as an effective means of disease prevention. Handwashing has always been one of the most effective

ways of keeping diseases at bay and is also one of the key cornerstones of COVID-19 prevention. The theme of Global Handwashing Day 2020 is “Hand Hygiene for All”.

International Day for the Eradication of Poverty: 17 October

- This year marks the 27th anniversary of the declaration by the General Assembly of 17 October as the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.
- The theme for this year is “Acting together to achieve social and environmental justice for all”.

World Statistics Day- 20 October

- The third World Statistics Day celebrated around the globe on 20 October 2020 with the theme “Connecting the world with data we can trust.” This theme reflects the importance of trust, authoritative data, innovation and the public good in national statistical systems.
- The celebration of World Statistics Day 2020 is a global collaborative endeavour, organized under the guidance of the United Nations Statistical Commission.

Police Commemoration Day

- The day is observed on 21st October every year to honor the loyalty and supreme sacrifice of police personnel for the nation. It was on this day in 1959 when CRPF led a saga of valour and sacrifice in the inaccessible, inhospitable terrain of Hot Springs in Ladakh.
- A patrol party of twenty personnel of CRPF and Intelligence Bureau had gone to search for a missing reconnaissance party when it was ambushed by the Chinese Army. In spite of the sudden attack and disadvantageous tactical position, they fought valiantly against the Chinese army personnel who were in large numbers and heavily armed. In this battle, ten CRPF men were martyred in defense of the country.

World Development Information Day- 24 October

- The General Assembly in 1972 established World Development Information Day to draw the attention of the world to development problems and the need to strengthen international cooperation to solve them.
- The Assembly decided that the date for the Day should coincide with United Nations Day, 24 October, which was also the date of the adoption, in 1970, of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade.

United Nations Day 24 October

- UN Day marks the anniversary of the entry into force in 1945 of the UN Charter. With the ratification of this founding document by the majority of its signatories, including the five permanent members of the Security Council, the United Nations officially came into being. 24 October has been celebrated as United Nations Day since 1948.
- The theme for UN Day 2020 is ‘The Future We Want, the UN We Need: Reaffirming our Collective Commitment to Multilateralism’.

World Polio Day

- World Polio Day (October 24) provides an opportunity to highlight global efforts toward a polio-free world and honor the tireless contributions of those on the frontlines in the fight to eradicate polio from every corner of the globe.
- 2020 theme for World Polio Day is “A win against polio is a win for global health.” As of August 2020, Afghanistan and Pakistan are the only two nations which remain with the continued transmission of wild poliovirus.

World Day for Audiovisual Heritage 27 October

- The World Day for Audiovisual Heritage takes place every 27 October. The World Day for Audiovisual Heritage (WDAH) provides an occasion to raise general awareness of the need to take urgent measures and to acknowledge the importance of audiovisual documents. 2020 Theme: Your Window to the World.

World Cities Day- 31 October

- **The United Nations General Assembly has designated the 31st of October as World Cities Day.** The Day is expected to greatly promote the international community's interest in global urbanization, push forward cooperation among countries in meeting opportunities and addressing challenges of urbanization, and contributing to sustainable urban development around the world.
 - **The impact of COVID-19 has re-shaped urban life around the world. Local communities have played a key role** in contributing to keeping people safe and maintaining some economic activities.
 - **This year's theme is "Valuing Our Communities and Cities".**
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QUESTIONS

1. Recently, Union Government unveiled the first look of India's first Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) train which can attain a top speed of 180 kilometres per hour and whose design is inspired by _____.
(a) Delhi's iconic Red Fort (b) Delhi's iconic Lotus Temple
(c) Mumbai's iconic Victoria terminus (d) Jaipur's iconic Hawa Mahal
2. Recently, the fourth edition of India-Japan Maritime bilateral exercise (JIMEX) begins in _____.
(a) North Arabian Sea (b) North Japan Sea (c) Bay of Bengal (d) South China Sea
3. Which of the following countries will be the first country in the world to use facial verification in its national identity scheme?
(a) Singapore (b) France (c) Saudi Arabia (d) Russia
4. Recently, One of the founding members of BJP Jaswant Singh passed away in New Delhi following a prolonged illness. He never held the post of _____.
(a) Minister of Defence (b) Minister of External Affairs
(c) Vice President of India (d) Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission
5. According to the Nature Index rankings based on output in 82 top journals and chosen by 58 natural-sciences researchers, which of the following cities is world top science city?
(a) Beijing (b) Kolkata (c) Tokyo (d) New York
6. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) declared _____ as International Day for Universal Access to Information.
(a) 25th September (b) 26th September
(c) 27th September (d) 28th September
7. The Reserve Bank came out with a five-pillared strategic approach _____ to deal with cyber security threats being faced by Urban Cooperative Banks (UCBs).
(a) 'GUARD' (b) 'HELPER' (c) 'SOLDIER' (d) 'PROTECTOR'
8. The world first' floating green hydrogen project is coming up in:
(a) Abuja (b) Aberdeen (c) Digboi (d) Calgary
9. The world's first shipment of blue ammonia is on its way from Saudi Arabia to _____ where it will be used in power stations to produce electricity without carbon emissions.
(a) China (b) USA (c) Japan (d) South Korea
10. In tennis, which of the following Grand Slams is generally held at the last in a year?
(a) Australian Open (b) French Open (c) Wimbledon (d) US Open
11. For the first time in its over ten-year history, the G20 summit this year will take place virtually amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Which of the following countries will hold the 17th summit in 2022?
(a) Italy (b) France (c) Germany (d) India
12. The Prime Minister will inaugurate "Ganga Avalokan", the first museum on Ganga dedicated to showcase the culture, biodiversity and rejuvenation activities done in Ganga River located at:
(a) Haridwar (b) Varanasi (c) Prayagraj (d) Patna

13. The world's first hydrogen-powered yacht unveiled in:
(a) Monaco (b) Mexico (c) Brazil (d) Argentina
14. Recently, India and _____ decided to elevate their bilateral ties to a "green strategic partnership", the first of its kind, during a virtual summit.
(a) Norway (b) Denmark (c) Finland (d) Sweden
15. Which of the following countries has now declared that the world-famous samba carnival parade will be postponed due to Covid-19?
(a) Argentina (b) Brazil (c) Mexico (d) Chile
16. Which of the following countries is all set to send out the world's first mining robot NEO-1 into space by November 2020?
(a) Japan (b) Russia (c) China (d) Israel
17. Which of the following countries is set to host World Table Tennis Championships for first time in 2023?
(a) Nigeria (b) Zimbabwe (c) South Africa (d) Egypt
18. Who has been appointed as the Chairman of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI)?
(a) Krishna Kant Jha (b) Dr P. D. Vaghela (c) Dr. A.K. Sachan (d) Dr. V.K. Makhija
19. Recently, which of the following Indian state's first and only woman chief minister Syeda Anwara Taimur passed away in Australia?
(a) West Bengal (b) Tripura (c) Assam (d) Meghalaya
20. Recently, Maharashtra government announced the Gan Samragini Lata Mangeshkar award for the year 2020-21 to veteran female playback singer _____.
(a) Sunidhi Chauhan (b) Usha Mangeshkar (c) Neha Kakkar (d) Shreya Ghosal
21. Which of the following states has launched YSR Jalakala, a scheme to dig borewells free of cost for farmers, and bring an additional five lakh acres under cultivation through groundwater irrigation?
(a) Telangana (b) Karnataka (c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Kerala
22. Which of the following are the first two cities in the world to introduce an open Artificial Intelligence (AI) register that updates its residents about the city's use of AI in public services?
(a) Amsterdam and Helsinki (b) Seoul and Hong Kong
(c) Munich and Madrid (d) Lisbon and Ottawa
23. Which of the following banks has become the first lender to enable document embedding feature on a structured financial messaging system managed by Indian Financial Technology and Allied Services?
(a) UCO Bank (b) Union Bank of India (c) IDBI Bank (d) HDFC Bank
24. Recently, Leading stock exchange BSE has signed a pact with private sector lender _____ to empower the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) listed on the platform.
(a) Yes Bank (b) RBL Bank (c) Federal Bank (d) ICICI Bank
25. Recently, Scientists from the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) have identified a new damselfly species, *Platylestes kirani*, in the wetlands of _____ district.
(a) Kannur (b) Vijayawada (c) Kurnool (d) Amravati

26. Who has been named as the President of Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) Society and Chairman of Governing Council of FTII?
(a) Pahlaj Nihlani (b) Ramesh Sippi (c) Shatrughan Sinha (d) Shekhar Kapur
27. The Harijan Sevak Sangh was established on September 30 in year _____.
(a) 1905 (b) 1907 (c) 1919 (d) 1932
28. Recently, the first observance of the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste across the globe was on:
(a) 25th September (b) 26th September (c) 29th September (d) 30th September
29. Which of the following state's tourism's internationally acclaimed 'Human by Nature' campaign has bagged the prestigious PATA Grand Award 2020 for marketing?
(a) Kerala (b) Karnataka (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Andhra Pradesh
30. World Heart Day, aimed at drawing people's attention to heart ailments and the whole range of associated health issues is celebrated every year on:
(a) 11th September (b) 17th September (c) 25th September (d) 29th September
31. Which of the following states got its first pine needle power generation plant?
(a) Uttarakhand (b) Punjab (c) Rajasthan (d) Himachal Pradesh
32. The first movie in the world to start and finish its shoot in pandemic is
(a) Tiger Exist-3 (b) Jugnoo (c) Bellbottom (d) Sahar-Ek Subah
33. ISRO is scheduled to launch its Venus mission in 2025 and _____ will participate in it.
(a) Germany (b) France (c) Portugal (d) Mexico
34. Which of the following states became the first state in the country to be undertaking over 1 crore tests to screen coronavirus?
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Maharashtra (c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Gujarat
35. Who among the following has launched CSIR technologies for rural development?
(a) Narendra Modi (b) Dr. Harsh Vardhan (c) Amit Shah (d) Narendra Singh Tomar
36. The BrahMos Land-Attack Cruise Missile cruised at a top speed of _____.
(a) Mach 1.5 (b) Mach 2.0 (c) Mach 2.5 (d) Mach 2.8
37. Recently, Punjab-based start-up SeguraMAX Global (SeguraMAX) has announced the launch of _____ a pathbreaking, first-of-its-kind technology in the world, which will aid in achieving significant reduction of viruses on surfaces of their products.
(a) 'Keep-U-Safe' (b) 'Keep-U-Secured' (c) 'Secured & Safe' (d) 'Controlled and Safe'
38. Recently, Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al Ahmad Al Sabah became new ruling emir of:
(a) Saudi Arabia (b) Oman (c) Kuwait (d) Jordan
39. India plans to restore 26 million hectares of degraded land by year _____.
(a) 2022 (b) 2025 (c) 2030 (d) 2035
40. The 30th Anniversary of the International Day of Older Persons is/was held on:
(a) 25th September (b) 28th September (c) 30th September (d) 1st October

41. Indian embassy in _____ to become the first Indian mission globally to become clean and green with this installation.
(a) Suriname (b) Mexico (c) South Sudan (d) Madagascar
42. Recently, Indian Railways' electric locomotive manufacturing unit Chittaranjan Locomotive Works (CLW) has turned out first batch of Tejas Express locomotives. The Tejas locomotive is capable to run at _____.
(a) 80 kmph (b) 110 kmph (c) 130 kmph (d) 160 kmph
43. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) announced that it would hold a day-long webinar with speakers from 12 countries on textile traditions. The present President of ICCR is:
(a) Amit Mudgal (b) Vijay Anand (c) Vinay Sahasrabudhe (d) Deepak Malhotra
44. Which of the following states employees to receive pension on the day of retirement through a web based scheme named 'Kritagyata'?
(a) Meghalaya (b) Assam (c) Madhya Pradesh (d) Uttar Pradesh
45. Which of the following countries is on track to become the first country in the world to have its own hospitality loyalty program?
(a) Malaysia (b) Maldives (c) Indonesia (d) Singapore
46. Recently, Reserve Bank of India has approved a three-member panel till the new managing director and chief executive officer take charge of which of the following banks?
(a) Dhanlaxmi Bank (b) Federal Bank (c) Yes Bank (d) IDFC Bank
47. Recently, RBI has excluded six public sector banks, including OBC and Allahabad Bank, from the Second Schedule of the RBI Act following their merger with other banks. Which of the following is not among the six?
(a) Corporation Bank (b) Canara Bank (c) United Bank of India (d) Andhra Bank
48. Which of the following IIT's launched telemedicine software which facilitates critical health care support to patients at their doorsteps through remote consultation by a physician?
(a) IIT Kharagpur (b) IIT Kanpur (c) IIT Hyderabad (d) IIT Roorkee
49. International Day of Non-Violence is observed every year on:
(a) 25th September (b) 27th September (c) 1st October (d) 2nd October
50. A commercial cargo spacecraft bound for the International Space Station (ISS) launched carrying the name of deceased NASA astronaut _____ the first Indian-born woman to enter space, for her key contributions to human spaceflight.
(a) Gupreet Dhillon (b) Kalpana Chawla (c) Sunita Williams (d) Amita Nangia
51. Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the world's longest highway tunnel, Atal tunnel at Rohtang in Himachal Pradesh. The _____ long tunnel connects Manali to Lahaul-Spiti valley throughout the year.
(a) 7.05 Km (b) 8.10 Km (c) 9.02 Km (d) 9.60 Km
52. The Happiness Research Institute has opened the world's first museum dedicated to that now-fleeting feeling in:
(a) Finland (b) Sweden (c) Denmark (d) Switzerland
53. The 2nd edition of _____ Navy Bilateral Exercise Bongosagar is scheduled to commence in Northern Bay of Bengal.
(a) India and China (b) India and Bangladesh
(c) Bhutan and Bangladesh (d) India and Nepal

54. Name the Indian who has made history as the first woman of Indian heritage to take over as the Head of the Sociology Department of the prestigious UK varsity in its over 800-year history?
(a) Dr. Anamika Duggal (b) Dr. Kritika Kapoor (c) Dr. Alankrita Srivastava (d) Dr Manali Desai
55. IFAD is the first fund in the United Nations system to receive a public credit rating. The _____ rating was announced by Fitch Ratings, which also assigned IFAD a short-term rating of F1+.
(a) AA+ (stable) (b) AB+(less stable) (c) BB+(less stable) (d) CC-(unstable)
56. In India, Investment banking firm Goldman Sachs has opened its second office in:
(a) New Delhi (b) Lucknow (c) Mumbai (d) Hyderabad
57. Recently, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development, NABARD regional office in _____ launched the Sanitation Literacy Campaign to promote literacy on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, (WASH) under Swach Bharath Mission.
(a) Karnataka (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Kerala (d) Tamil Nadu
58. A team of researchers at _____ is ready with a prototype of suture thread made of nanofiber yarns that is bio-absorbable and can deliver a higher load of antibiotics and/or therapeutics at the site itself.
(a) IIT Madras (b) IIT Bombay (c) IIT Roorkee (d) IIT Delhi
59. Which of the following IIT's announced the receipt of NVIDIA DGX A100 to be installed at the Central Computing Facility systems for students, from all departments, including the School of AI and Data Science?
(a) India Indian Institute of Technology, Jodhpur
(b) India Indian Institute of Technology, Mumbai
(c) India Indian Institute of Technology, Varanasi
(d) India Indian Institute of Technology, Mandi
60. World Teachers' Day is celebrated on:
(a) 1st October (b) 3rd October (c) 5th October (d) 8th October
61. The world's first 'plastic-to-petrol' making unit established in:
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Gujarat (d) Tamil Nadu
62. Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat gave away the Swachh Bharat Awards-2020 to States, Districts, Blocks and Village Panchayats. Under the Swachh Sundar Samudayik Shouchalaya category, _____ bagged the first position at state level.
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Gujarat (d) Tamil Nadu
63. In a bid to make a Guinness World Record, which of the following cities is all set to unveil the world's largest fountain on October 22, 2020?
(a) Singapore (b) Mali (c) Dubai (d) New York
64. Voters in New Caledonia turned out in large numbers to decide whether the archipelago in the South Pacific should get independence from _____ and break ties that were first established in the mid-19th century.
(a) UK (b) Germany (c) France (d) Portugal
65. The Ministry of Defence has decided to altogether scrap the offset clause from inter-government and single vendor deals for procurement of defence platforms. Under the offset clause, the manufacturer is mandated to invest _____ per cent of the contract amount in the Indian defence sector.
(a) 25 (b) 30 (c) 50 (d) 75

66. The magnetic field of the Sun is unique in that, unlike many other celestial bodies, it reverses its polarity roughly every _____ years.
(a) 11 (b) 16 (c) 20 (d) 25
67. India and _____, in a formal submission to the World Trade Organization (WTO) on October 2, sought a waiver on certain provisions of the international agreements that regulate intellectual property rights to speed up efforts to prevent, treat and contain the COVID-19 pandemic.
(a) South Africa (b) South Korea (c) Australia (d) Austria
68. The Nagorno-Karabakh is a disputed region between which of the following two countries?
(a) India and China (b) Azerbaijan and Armenia (c) Russia and China (d) China and Japan
69. National Nutrition Month (previously called National Nutrition Week) is celebrated in India every year during _____ to spread awareness about nutritional needs, deficiencies and malnutrition.
(a) July (b) August (c) September (d) October
70. A tree species, long believed extinct, has been rediscovered after a gap of more than 180 years from a sacred grove in:
(a) Kerala (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Uttarakhand
71. Who among the following inaugurated the Summit RAISE 2020 – ‘Responsible AI for Social Empowerment 2020 on 5th October 2020?
(a) Prime Minister Narendra Modi
(b) President Ram Nath Kovind
(c) Defence Minister Rajnath Kovind
(d) Home Minister Amith Shah
72. Railway Minister Piyush Goyal virtually inaugurated the Phoolbagan Station of _____ East West Metro corridor, and flagged off the first train from there to Salt Lake Sector-V.
(a) Chennai (b) Vishakhapatnam (c) Kolkata (d) Bhubaneswar
73. The second edition of Indian and _____ Navy Bilateral Exercise Bongosagar is concluded in Northern Bay of Bengal on 5 October 2020.
(a) Bangladesh (b) Nepal (c) Bhutan (d) Myanmar
74. Fawzia Koofi has been named one of the “favourites” among nominees for this year’s Nobel Peace Prize, due to be announced on October 9, 2020. She belongs to which of the following countries?
(a) South Sudan (b) Afghanistan (c) Eritrea (d) Mexico
75. The United States and Russia will hold a round of nuclear arms control talks in the Finland’s capital _____.
(a) Helsinki (b) Turku (c) Espoo (d) Vantaa
76. What is the full form of BRI with regard to Chinese President Xi Jinping?
(a) Belt and Railway Initiative
(b) Belt and Road Initiative
(c) Border and Road Initiative
(d) Build and Road Initiative
77. Northrop Grumman launched another flight to the International Space Station, this time named after late astronaut ‘_____’.
(a) Edward Higgins (b) Gus Grissom (c) Kalpana Chawla (d) Alan Bartlett

78. India successfully test fired a new version of the nuclear-capable hypersonic Shaurya missile with a range of 750 kilometres from a defence facility off the _____ coast.
(a) Odisha (b) West Bengal (c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Kerala
79. Name the Indian who won the 10m air rifle event at the fifth edition of the International Online Shooting Championship.
(a) Vijay Kumar (b) Jitu Rai (c) Om Prakash Mitharwal (d) Visnu Shivaraj Pandian
80. According to the latest report released by the India Meteorological Department (IMD), how many districts in India are experiencing either severe or extremely dry conditions at the end of this monsoon season?
(a) 25 (b) 41 (c) 52 (d) 72
81. Foreign ministers of all four Quad countries have met in which of the following countries on 6th October 2020?
(a) India (b) Japan (c) Australia (d) USA
82. Ashthal Bridge is located in:
(a) Jammu and Kashmir (b) Sikkim (c) Manipur (d) Himachal Pradesh
83. India and _____ have agreed to work towards the operationalisation of the Sittwe port in the Rakhine state in the first quarter of 2021.
(a) Sri Lanka (b) Bhutan (c) Nepal (d) Myanmar
84. The 12th BRICS Summit will be held on 17th November 2020 via video conference. The theme of the Meeting of the Leaders of BRICS countries is
(a) BRICS Partnership for Global Stability, Shared Security and Innovative Growth
(b) BRICS Partnership for Global Stability and Combat Global Pandemic
(c) BRICS for Global Economic Stability
(d) BRICS for Inclusive Economic Growth and Stability
85. Revenue Secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey informed that starting from 1st January next year, taxpayers with less than Rs. _____ annual turnover will not be required to file monthly GSTR-1 and GSTR-3B returns.
(a) One crore (b) Five crore (c) Ten crore (d) Twenty crore
86. According to the latest Forbes' list, who is the highest-paid female actor in the world?
(a) Nicole Kidman (b) Sofia Vergara (c) Angelina Jolie (d) Meryl Streep
87. Scientists once again discovered substantial signs of water present in the Mars, where a rigorous research is going on to find life-supporting evidences. The team of scientists utilized the MARSIS – Mars Advanced Radar for Subsurface and Ionosphere Sounding to carry out their probe on the southern polar region of the planet. MARSIS spacecraft belong to _____.
(a) NASA (b) European space agency (c) JAXA (d) ISRO
88. Solar observations recorded between 1915 and 1965 were gathered from Kodaikanal Solar Observatory (KoSO) run by the _____.
(a) Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) (b) NASA
(c) ISRO (d) CERN
89. The emission norms for tractors will be applicable from _____ and for Construction Equipment Vehicles, the norms will be applicable from April 2021.
(a) January 2021 (b) June 2021 (c) October 2021 (d) December 2021

90. World Teachers' Day is held annually on _____.
(a) 5 June (b) 5 August (c) 5 September (d) 5 October
91. Which of the following countries has successfully flight-tested its indigenously developed SMART torpedo system in October 2020?
(a) India (b) China (c) Japan (d) USA
92. The mega anti-air pollution campaign "Yudh Pradushan ke Virudh" launched in:
(a) Sikkim (b) Odisha (c) Haryana (d) Delhi
93. The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has entered into an MoU with _____, one of the leading food delivery platforms, to onboard street food vendors on its e-commerce platform.
(a) Swiggy (b) Facebook (c) Paytm (d) Amazon
94. Sabah Al Khalid Al Sabah is the Prime Minister of:
(a) Iran (b) Iraq (c) Kuwait (d) Mongolia
95. Which of the following countries is not a member in QUAD?
(a) India (b) Japan (c) Australia (d) South Africa
96. Which of the following airports has become the first airport of the Airports Authority of India (AAI) which is entirely solar-powered?
(a) The Puducherry airport (b) The Delhi airport (c) The Kochi airport (d) The Hyderabad airport
97. In Gujarat, the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development -NABARD has inked three Memoranda of Understanding with Public Sector Bank _____ to extend credit support for various projects.
(a) State Bank of India (b) Punjab National Bank (c) Canara Bank (d) Union Bank of India
98. The Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2020 was awarded jointly to Harvey J. Alter, Michael Houghton and Charles M. Rice "for the discovery of _____.
(a) Hepatitis C Virus (b) Vaccine for COVID-19 (c) Vaccine for HIV (d) Vaccine for Malaria
99. Following a successful launch of Northrop Grumman Cygnus spacecraft, dubbed as the S.S. Kalpana Chawla, NASA in a recent update informed that the cargo ship arrived at the International Space Station for 'rendezvous and capture' on October 5. Kalpana Chawla died on:
(a) February 1, 2000 (b) February 1, 2001 (c) February 1, 2003 (d) February 1, 2004
100. The United Nations designated the first _____ of October of every year as World Habitat Day to reflect on the state of our towns and cities, and on the basic right of all to adequate shelter.
(a) Monday (b) Tuesday (c) Thursday (d) Friday
101. Who among the following has launched a campaign by way of a Tweet on Jan Andolan for COVID-19 Appropriate Behaviour?
(a) Prime Minister Narendra Modi
(b) President of India Ram Nath Kovind
(c) Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu
(d) Home Minister Amit Shah

102. Who among the following has launched the first ever Brand and Logo for Indian Cotton on Second World Cotton Day (7 October 2020) through video conferencing?
- (a) President of India Ram Nath Kovind
(b) Prime Minister Narendra Modi
(c) Vice President *M. Venkaiah Naidu*
(d) Minister of Textiles Smriti Irani
103. The Union Cabinet of India gave its approval for signing a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) in the field of cyber-security between India and _____.
(a) Japan (b) UK (c) Germany (d) Singapore
104. Dinesh Kumar Khara has assumed charge as the new Chairman of the _____.
(a) Punjab National Bank (b) Canara Bank (c) State Bank of India (d) Union Bank of India
105. Who among the following has/have been appointed as new members of the rate-setting Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)?
(a) Ashima Goyal (b) Jayanth R Varma (c) Shashanka Bhide (d) All of the above
106. The Reserve Bank of India has said that the _____ per cent interest subvention scheme for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) on loans offered by co-operative banks has been extended till 31st of March next year.
(a) Two (b) Three (c) Five (d) Seven
107. Nobel Prize in Physics 2020 awarded, with one half to Roger Penrose, University of Oxford, UK & the other half jointly to Reinhard Genzel (Max Planck Institute for Extraterrestrial Physics, Garching, Germany and University of California, Berkeley, USA) and Andrea Ghez (University of California, Los Angeles, USA) for their discoveries about _____.
(a) Black hole (b) Fifth state of Matter
(c) New Quantum Computers (d) Gravitational waves
108. French scientist Emmanuelle Charpentier and American Jennifer A. Doudna have won the Nobel Prize in chemistry for developing a method of genome editing known as _____.
(a) MRISPR (b) DRISPR (c) CRISPR (d) GRISPR
109. The Indian Air Force, IAF, is celebrated its 88th anniversary on:
(a) 5 October 2020 (b) 6 October 2020 (c) 7 October 2020 (d) 8 October 2020
110. Which of the following states has announced Digital Seva Setu Programme for the rural areas?
(a) Gujarat (b) Andhra Pradesh
(c) Bihar (d) Uttar Pradesh
111. Which of the following will be commissioning India's largest HPC-AI supercomputer 'PARAM Siddhi – AI'?
(a) NITI Aayog
(b) Wipro Ltd
(c) Reliance Ltd
(d) The Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC)
112. Guidance, nodal investment promotion and facilitation agency of the state of Tamil Nadu has partnered with the _____ to establish India's first advanced manufacturing hub (AMHUB) in Tamil Nadu.
(a) World Economic Forum (b) World Bank
(c) IMF (d) WTO

113. In a first step to pave the way for holding the long pending Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) elections, the Centre approved the appointment of _____ as Chief Commissioner, Gurdwara Elections.
(a) Justice S S Saron (ret'd) (b) Justice Subramanyam Shatri (ret'd)
(c) Justice Ramana Murthy (ret'd) (d) Justice Abhishek Singhvi (ret'd)
114. The Election Commission has revised the norms concerning star campaigners for all ongoing and future elections during the period of pandemic COVID-19. The maximum limit on the number of star campaigners for recognized National and State political parties will be _____ in place of 40.
(a) 15 (b) 20 (c) 25 (d) 30
115. Which of the following countries has successfully tested a new hypersonic anti-ship cruise 'Tsirkon' missile in October 2020?
(a) India (b) France (c) Russia (d) USA
116. Who among the following launched a new 50-million pound Earthshot Prize, aimed at funding the most innovative solutions to some of the world's most pressing environmental challenges?
(a) Prince William (b) Narendra Modi
(c) Emmanuel Macron (d) Donald Trump
117. Who has been named as the fourth deputy governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)?
(a) M Rajeshwar Rao (b) D Sailender Singh (c) S Bhaskara Rao (d) Upendra Kumar
118. Shri Durga Shanker Mishra, Secretary, Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs launched the Application Programming Interface (API) integration between the PM SVANidhi Portal and the _____ portal.
(a) State Bank of India (b) Punjab National Bank (c) Canara Bank (d) Union Bank of India
119. The World Bank said that India's GDP is expected to contract by _____ per cent this fiscal which is reflective of the national lockdown and the income shock experienced by households and firms due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
(a) 6.6 (b) 7.6 (c) 8.6 (d) 9.6
120. As per the research conducted by the team led by scientist Dirk Schulze-Makuch of Washington State University and published in the journal Astrobiology, the research found out that there are at least _____ Superhabitable planets which may support life better than the Earth.
(a) 24 (b) 30 (c) 44 (d) 54
121. Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered the keynote address at the Invest India Conference in _____ through video conferencing on 8th October 2020.
(a) Canada (b) Mexico (c) UK (d) Germany
122. Who has been given additional charge of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution following the demise of Ram Vilas Paswan?
(a) Smriti Irani (b) Uma Bharati
(c) Nitin Gadkari (d) Piyush Goyal
123. Louise Gluck won the 2020 Nobel Literature Prize, she a poet from _____.
(a) USA (b) France (c) UK (d) Italy
124. In Nepal, which of the following countries has constructed a new building of Shree Saraswati Secondary School in Tikapur, Kailali District?
(a) Pakistan (b) Myanmar (c) China (d) India

125. The Reserve Bank of India in its bi-monthly Monetary Policy statement issued today has maintained a status quo keeping the key interest rates unchanged. The reverse repo rate remains unchanged at _____ per cent, the repo rate at four per cent.
(a) 4.35 (b) 3.35 (c) 4.75 (d) 5.00
126. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman launched in Chennai _____'s mentoring programme that aims to support 1,500 entrepreneurs across India in small businesses.
(a) Indian Bank (b) SBI (c) HDFC Bank (d) Bank of Baroda
127. A Cabinet panel appointed _____ as managing director (MD) and chief executive officer (CEO) of India Post Payments Bank for three years.
(a) J Venkatramu (b) Shiva Prasad (c) Ramesh Nimmala (d) Rupesh Kumar
128. Vistara and _____ launched a co-branded forex card that can load up to 16 currencies.
(a) State Bank of India (b) Punjab National Bank (c) Axis Bank (d) Union Bank of India
129. World Post day happens each year on:
(a) October 6 (b) October 7 (c) October 8 (d) October 9
130. The Lok Janshakti Party founder and Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution was elected to Lok Sabha _____ times and also held the record of winning his constituency, Hajipur in Bihar with the highest margin for several years.
(a) Five (b) Six (c) Seven (d) Eight
131. India's First Lichen Park is to come up in _____.
(a) Himachal Pradesh (b) Uttarakhand (c) Arunachal Pradesh (d) Ladakh
132. The first Indian union territory / state to approve the 'Tree Transplantation Policy' for the preservation of trees is
(a) Delhi (b) Puducherry (c) Madhya Pradesh (d) Sikkim
133. WICCI brings up INDIAS FIRST Creative-arts mental health council in:
(a) West Bengal (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Madhya Pradesh (d) Maharashtra
134. Recently, Foreign ministers of Japan and _____ have agreed to cooperate in promoting a Free and Open Indo-Pacific.
(a) Malaysia (b) Mauritius (c) Mongolia (d) Madagascar
135. What is the name of the first national brand of Indian cotton?
(a) Kasturi (b) Kaustubh (c) Ujjawal (d) Khara Heera
136. India's first Hydrogen Fuel Cell (HFC) electric hybrid car successfully completed its maiden test run in _____.
(a) Mumbai (b) Pune (c) Hyderabad (d) Bengaluru
137. In Chess, Young Indian player _____ emerged winner in the Chess.com's 2020 Junior Speed Online Championship in Chennai.
(a) Chetan Vashisth (b) Gurdayal Singh (c) Nihal Sarin (d) Akshat Makhija
138. Who among the following has equalled Michael Schumacher's all-time record 91 Formula One wins with an Eifel Grand Prix victory?
(a) Lewis Hamilton (b) Valtteri Bottas (c) Andrej Michel (d) Max Verstappen

139. Which of the following countries has commemorated the 110th birth anniversary of Indian doctor Dwarkanath Kotnis who served in the country during the World War II?
(a) Japan (b) China (c) United Kingdom (d) Russia
140. In 2020, World Migratory Bird Day was celebrated by people across the world on _____ with the theme “Birds Connect Our World”.
(a) 5th October (b) 7th October (c) 9th October (d) 10th October
141. The first state in India to provide 100 per cent tap water connections in rural areas covering 2.30 lakh households is
(a) Goa (b) Manipur (c) Arunachal Pradesh (d) Nagaland
142. How many Indian beaches recommended by Government of India gets coveted International Blue flag Certification recently?
(a) Four (b) Six (c) Eight (d) Twelve
143. Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a commemorative coin of _____ in honour of Vijaya Raje Scindia through a virtual ceremony.
(a) 20 rupees (b) 30 rupees (c) 50 rupees (d) 100 rupees
144. According to a study published in the medical journal Lancet, India is likely to overtake _____ as the third largest economy in the world by 2050.
(a) Russia (b) Japan (c) Indonesia (d) Canada
145. According to the latest ‘Commitment to Reducing Inequality Index 2020’ by international charity Oxfam, Afghanistan and India set aside the same share for health in their budgets i.e. _____.
(a) 2% (b) 4% (c) 6% (d) 8%
146. In Tennis, who has become the new French Open women singles title champion?
(a) Serena Williams (b) Sofia Kenin (c) Lara Nauritz (d) Iga Swiatek
147. Recently, Rafael Nadal tied _____ with 20 Grand Slam titles by producing a nearly perfect performance in the French Open final.
(a) Roger Federer (b) Novak Djokovic (c) Andy Murray (d) Pete Sampras
148. World Post Day 2020 is celebrated on _____ to mark the anniversary of the establishment of Universal Postal Union (UPU) across the world.
(a) October 9 (b) October 7 (c) October 5 (d) October 3
149. Recently, Fleet Award Function (FAF), 2020 was organised to mark the successful culmination of the Operational Cycle of the Eastern Fleet of the Indian Navy at _____.
(a) Bengaluru (b) Mysuru (c) Hyderabad (d) Visakhapatnam
150. The 2020 Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded to the _____.
(a) Abiy Ahmed
(b) Denis Mukwege and Nadia Murad
(c) United Nations World Food Programme
(d) International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons
151. Recently, _____ is poised to feature on India’s aviation map with a Greenfield airport at Hollongi.
(a) Manipur (b) Mizoram (c) Arunachal Pradesh (d) Tripura

152. Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a scheme to distribute property cards under the Svamitva scheme through video conference. The Svamitva scheme was launched from:
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Chhattisgarh (d) Jharkhand
153. The Seventh Meeting of Ministers of Justice of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Member States was hosted by:
(a) Union Minister of Law and Justice Ravi Shankar Prasad
(b) Union Minister of Home Amit Shah
(c) Union Minister of Finance Nirmala Sitharaman
(d) Union Minister of Railway Piyush Goyal
154. Recently, which of the following telemedicine initiatives is rapidly gaining popularity amongst patients and doctors?
(a) E-Sanjeevani (b) E-Divya (c) E- Deepa (d) E- Ferguson
155. National Institute of Technology_____ has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), Pune for installing a state of the art super computer in the process of becoming part of the National Super Computing Mission of the Government of India.
(a) Warangal (b) Jammu (c) Tiruchirappalli (d) Patna
156. Who has been appointed as the deputy governor of Reserve Bank of India?
(a) Viral Narayan (b) Deepak Malhotra (c) Amit Tyagrajan (d) M Rajeshwar Rao
157. Name the Indian-origin philanthropist who has been awarded the prestigious Sandra Neese Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of his work in the US for meeting the needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness.
(a) Harish Kotecha (b) Deepak Luthra (c) Amish Devgan (d) Devraj Malhotra
158. Recently, Two women scientists won the 2020 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for creating genetic 'scissors' that can rewrite the code of life. The two scientists belong to:
(a) USA and France (b) Germany and Canada (c) Ireland and Japan (d) Denmark and China
159. International Day of the Girl Child, to recognize girls' rights and the unique challenges girls face around the world is celebrated on:
(a) 5th October (b) 7th October (c) 9th October (d) 11th October
160. Name the former MP of Lok Sabha whose autobiography is titled 'Deh Vechwa Karani' which means 'dedicating one's life for a noble cause'?
(a) Dr. Balasaheb Vikhe Patil (b) Sunil Dutt
(c) Ram Vilas Paswan (d) Vilasrao Deshmukh
161. Which of the following has become the first mobile service provider in the country to cross 40 crore customers mark?
(a) VI (b) Bharati Airtel
(c) Reliance Jio (d) BSNL
162. Recently, International Monetary Fund (IMF) slashed the growth forecast for India for the second time this year saying that the country's economy will contract _____ in FY21.
(a) 4.8% (b) 7.3% (c) 10.3% (d) 13.8%
163. Which of the following countries lost the seat on the U.N.'s premiere human rights body?
(a) Saudi Arabia (b) Cuba (c) Russia (d) China

164. Which of the following countries has ranked first worldwide on the Digital Accessibility Rights Evaluation Index 2020 (DARE Index 2020) released by the Global Initiative for Inclusive Information and Communication Technologies (G3ict)?
(a) Qatar (b) UAE (c) Saudi Arabia (d) Canada
165. Recently, India has proposed to construct a petroleum refinery in Thanlyn region in _____ and is planning to invest USD 6 billion.
(a) Thailand (b) Myanmar (c) Russia (d) Mongolia
166. Name the first country to be awarded Blue Flag certification for 8 beaches in a single attempt.
(a) Morocco (b) Russia (c) India (d) Japan
167. Recently, The multi-national food and beverage major PepsiCo is setting up a Greenfield potato chips production unit in _____ with an investment of Rs. 814 crore.
(a) Haryana (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Maharashtra (d) Uttar Pradesh
168. Which of the following IIT's researchers have developed a biodegradable wrapping material, with a built-in anti-bacterial compound to prevent food contamination, and to reduce plastic waste?
(a) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT Madras)
(b) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT Delhi)
(c) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT Bombay)
(d) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT Kanpur)
169. Which of the following companies and Soft Bank successfully tested the world's first LTE internet connectivity from a solar-powered unmanned aircraft flying above 62,000 feet recently?
(a) Facebook (b) Oracle (c) Yahoo (d) Alphabet
170. Who won the Nobel Economics Prize for work on commercial auctions, including for goods and services difficult to sell in traditional ways such as radio frequencies in 2020?
(a) Thomas Buch and Jonathan Matthews (b) Paul Milgrom and Robert Wilson
(c) Ronald Fedinand and Issac Huty (d) Arthur Came and Mary Theodore
171. Which of the following countries has been re-elected as the President of the International Solar Alliance (ISA)?
(a) France (b) USA (c) India (d) Japan
172. Recently, The Union Cabinet has approved World Bank supported Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States _____.
(a) STARS project (b) STATIC project (c) LIGHTENING project (d) OUTSTAR project
173. According to Arton Capital's Passport Index which of the following countries now has the Most Powerful Passport in the World?
(a) Australia (b) New Zealand (c) Ireland (d) Denmark
174. In a sign of greater focus on the Indian Ocean which country has recently appointed the country's first ambassador for the Indo-Pacific?
(a) Germany (b) France (c) Ireland (d) Finland
175. Recently, India has contributed one million dollars to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for _____ in Near East.
(a) Rohingya Refugees (b) Palestine Refugees (c) Uighur Refugees (d) Sudan Refugees

176. The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has asked all NGOs seeking foreign donations to open a designated FCRA account at the _____ branch by March 31, 2021.
(a) State Bank of India's New Delhi (b) Punjab National Bank's Mumbai
(c) Bank of Baroda's Kolkata (d) Syndicate Bank's Mysuru
177. Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises- MSME Ministry has introduced Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning for strengthening its single window system portal _____ to assist the MSMEs in the country.
(a) 'Champions' (b) 'Winners' (c) 'Triumph' (d) 'Pioneer'
178. Recently, Scientists at the _____ at Manoa Institute for Astronomy (IfA) produced the world's largest 3D astronomical imaging catalog of stars, galaxies and quasars using Artificial Intelligence (AI).
(a) University of Hawai (b) University of Oxford
(c) University of Cambridge (d) University of Pennsylvania
179. Recently, An experimental satellite developed by three students of _____ has been selected for launch in sub-orbital space by NASA.
(a) Karur (b) Kadappa (c) Chennai (d) Vishakhapatnam
180. Recently, International E-Waste Day was celebrated on:
(a) 5th October (b) 7th October (c) 11th October (d) 14th October
181. In Ladakh Union Territory, Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Mr Nitin Gadkari initiated Asia's longest _____ works virtually, by igniting ceremonial blasts.
(a) ZojiLa Tunnel (b) ShipkiLa Tunnel (c) Atal Tunnel (d) Rihang Dibang Tunnel
182. According to the annual rankings for 2018-19 recently released by the office of controller general of patents, designs and trademarks, which Indian university has emerged as the top varsity in India which filed the highest number of patents in a year?
(a) Sikkim Manipal University (b) Punjab University
(c) JNU (d) Chandigarh University
183. Recently, Vedanta Group firm Hindustan Zinc Ltd (HZL) has signed a pact with _____ government to set up a greenfield zinc smelter in the state.
(a) Rajasthan (b) Gujarat (c) Maharashtra (d) Odisha
184. Which of the following countries President Sooronbai Jeenbekov announced his resignation in a bid to end the turmoil that has engulfed the Central Asian nation after a disputed parliamentary election?
(a) Kyrgyzstan (b) Turkmenistan (c) Kazakhstan (d) Afghanistan
185. Which of the following countries has been designated the Vice-Chair of Good Laboratory Practice, GLP Working Group of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)?
(a) China (b) Japan (c) India (d) Indonesia
186. India will be delivering a Kilo Class submarine INS Sindhuvir to _____ Navy as part of defence cooperation.
(a) Thailand (b) Myanmar (c) Indonesia (d) Maldives
187. Which of the following national parks / zoological parks has revived its innovative 'Adopt-An-Animal' programme to mobilise resources for animals?
(a) Nehru Zoological Park (b) Sri Chamarajendra Zoological Gardens
(c) Nandankanan Zoological Park (d) Arignar Anna Zoological Park

188. Which of the following has recently become Uttarakhand's first Ramsar site, making it a 'Wetland of International Importance'?
- (a) East Kolkata Wetlands (b) Asan Conservation Reserve
(c) Nandur Madhameshwar (d) Keshopur-Miani Community Reserve
189. Recently, who became the world's first wicket-keeper to effect 100 stumpings in T20 cricket, the shortest format of the game?
- (a) Mahendra Singh Dhoni (b) Kamran Akmal (c) Kumara Sangakara (d) Jos Butler
190. Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a commemorative coin of _____ denomination to mark the Anniversary of Food and Agriculture Organization, FAO.
- (a) Rs. 20 (b) Rs. 50 (c) Rs. 75 (d) Rs. 100
191. Which of the following countries recently began test flights of an unmanned aerial vehicle Sea Guardian in a bid to learn whether it can carry out key duties, including search, rescue and maritime surveillance?
- (a) Japan (b) China (c) India (d) Russia
192. Which of the following Indian union territories announced the 'My Town My Pride' programme?
- (a) Ladakh (b) Jammu & Kashmir (c) Lakshadweep (d) Andaman & Nicobar islands
193. What percent of foreign direct investment (FDI) is allowed in the 'news digital media sector' through the approval route?
- (a) 26% (b) 50% (c) 75% (d) 100%
194. Which of the following countries hosted the virtual Summit of Ministers of Justice of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, SCO recently?
- (a) Russia (b) Turkmenistan (c) Kazakhstan (d) India
195. Recently, Food Processing Industries Minister Narendra Singh Tomar virtually inaugurated the India - International Food and Agri Week According to him Indian food processing sector is _____ per cent of India's food market.
- (a) 12 (b) 18 (c) 27 (d) 32
196. According to the Global Hunger Index 2020, India ranked _____ out of 107 countries in the Index.
- (a) 54th (b) 61st (c) 78th (d) 94th
197. Which of the following will conduct its first-ever Open Market Operation (OMO) purchase of State Developments Loans (SDLs) on 22nd October?
- (a) Ministry of Finance (b) Ministry of Corporate Affairs
(c) Reserve Bank of India (d) State Bank of India
198. Recently, Amur falcons, capable of flying the longest distances in one go, have begun to arrive in _____ Tamenglong district following their routine annual migration course.
- (a) Manipur's (b) Nagaland's (c) Arunachal Pradesh's (d) Sikkim's
199. Global Handwashing Day is observed every year on:
- (a) 3rd October (b) 7th October (c) 10th October (d) 15th October
200. Recently, A 35-year-old male elephant was radio-collared in _____ for the first time in the state's history to monitor its movements ahead of Maha Kumbh 2021.
- (a) Himachal Pradesh (b) Uttarakhand
(c) Jammu & Kashmir (d) Arunachal Pradesh

201. Which of the following Uttar Pradesh cities will have state's first solar tree and perhaps the tallest in the world under the Smart City project?
(a) Lucknow (b) Gautam Buddh Nagar (c) Prayagraj (d) Varanasi
202. The first-ever SCO Startup Forum will be launched on 27th October 2020 ahead of the SCO trade ministers meeting on 28th October. The SCO Heads of Government meeting will be hosted by:
(a) Russia (b) Pakistan (c) Turkmenistan (d) India
203. Recently, who became the first Indian to win the Wildlife Photographer of the Year award?
(a) Deepika Mathur (b) Anjali Rawat (c) Meenakshi Sharma (d) Aishwarya Sridhar
204. Which of the following Indian state governments has launched a 6-month long women empowerment campaign 'Mission Shakti' to raise awareness and tackle crime against women in the state?
(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Haryana (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Bihar
205. Recently, Dr. Jitendra Singh laid the foundation stone of Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya Shiksha Bhawan at Central University of _____.
(a) Jammu (b) Sri Nagar (c) Garhwal (d) Darjeeling
206. Recently, Russian President Vladimir Putin proposed a one-year extension without conditions of the last major nuclear arms reduction accord, New START deal between Russia and _____.
(a) Canada (b) USA (c) France (d) Japan
207. Who has been recently elected as the chairman of Indian Banks' Association (IBA) for the term 2020-21?
(a) K Sreedharan (b) Amish Gupta (c) Rajkiran Rai G (d) Pushpkant Raj Khanna
208. Recently, The cultivation of Heeng started in India by its first plantation in _____ at an altitude of about 11 thousand feet above sea level.
(a) Jammu & Kashmir (b) Himachal Pradesh (c) Arunachal Pradesh (d) Uttarakhand
209. Recently, how many States and Union Territories have been selected for upgradation to Khelo India State Centre of Excellence (KISCE)?
(a) Four (b) Six (c) Eight (d) Nine
210. This year International Day for the Eradication of Poverty was celebrated on:
(a) 12th October (b) 14th October (c) 15th October (d) 17th October
211. The 8th annual joint exercise between Indian and Sri Lankan navies 'SLINEX-20' is held in _____.
(a) Marmugao Coast (b) Paradip Coast (c) Andaman Coast (d) Trincomalee coast
212. Recently, _____ held their first joint commission meeting and agreed to add new momentum to their relations in a wide range of fields including trade and commerce, agriculture, health and social security, defence and space.
(a) India and Chile (b) India and Argentina (c) India and Brazil (d) India and Mexico
213. Recently, Kerala's first water taxi service launched in the backwaters of _____.
(a) Kochi (b) Kottayam (c) Alappuzha (d) Wayanad
214. Who won in New Zealand's general elections recently?
(a) Helen Clark (b) John Key (c) Thomas Bach (d) Jacinda Ardern

215. Which of the following banks has recently announced for its customers the launch of services like creating fixed deposits (FDs), payment of utility bills and accessing details of trade finance on WhatsApp?
(a) HDFC Bank (b) Axis Bank (c) ICICI Bank (d) RBL Bank
216. Recently, Brahmos, the supersonic cruise missile was successfully test fired from Indian Navy's indigenously-built stealth destroyer _____ hitting a target in the Arabian Sea.
(a) INS Chennai (b) INS Kolkata (c) INS Virat (d) INS Chakra
217. Name the Indian player who achieved a new milestone as he became the first Indian batsman to have scored more than 500 runs in three consecutive IPL seasons.
(a) Virat Kohli (b) KL Rahul (c) Rohit Sharma (d) Mayank Aggarwal
218. Who clinched the Denmark Open title beating three-time world champion Carolina Marin in women's singles final?
(a) P V Sindhu (b) Saina Nehwal (c) Nozomi Okuhara (d) Tae In Min
219. Most food crops depend on C3 photosynthesis where carbon is fixed into sugar inside cells called _____ where oxygen is abundant.
(a) 'mesophyll' (b) 'neophyll' (c) 'tredophyll' (d) 'ensophyll'
220. The third World Statistics Day will be celebrated around the globe on _____ with the theme "Connecting the world with data we can trust".
(a) 20 October 2020 (b) 21 October 2020 (c) 24 October 2020 (d) 27 October 2020
221. Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari will virtually lay the foundation stone for the first-ever multi-modal logistic park of the country in _____.
(a) Nagaland (b) Meghalaya (c) Arunachal Pradesh (d) Assam
222. Recently, which of the following announced the establishment of a Frontier Technologies Cloud Innovation Centre, CIC with Amazon Web Services, AWS?
(a) Ministry of Finance (b) NITI Aayog
(c) Ministry of Corporate Affairs (d) Ministry of Home Affairs
223. In any inflation index, the base year is the first year of an inflation index, with an index value of _____.
(a) 50 (b) 70 (c) 80 (d) 100
224. Recently, Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar launched _____ scheme.
(a) AYUSHMAN JAHAN (b) AYUSHMAN SAHAYATA
(c) AYUSHMAN SAHAKAR (d) AYUSHMAN INDIA
225. Recently, which of the following countries will join 'Malabar naval exercise' involving India, US and Japan?
(a) USA (b) France (c) Australia (d) United Kingdom
226. MCX launched India's first real-time base metal index in the country, MCX iCOMDEX Base Metal or _____.
(a) METLDEX (b) BULLIONDEX (c) IRONDEX (d) GOLDEX
227. Recently, World Bank sanctions Rs 3 crore for _____ to develop India's first sand dune parks.
(a) Haryana (b) Goa (c) Rajasthan (d) Sikkim

228. Recently, Gene-edited wheat is to be grown in _____ as the country becomes the first in the world to give the green light on the use of the drought-resistant crop.
(a) Brazil (b) Argentina (c) Mexico (d) Chile
229. Recently, United Nations Day is celebrated every year on _____.
(a) 9th October (b) 14th October (c) 19th October (d) 24th October
230. The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) has signed an agreement with the _____ and the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) to create a pool of officials who will work to find technology solutions for its operational challenges.
(a) Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi
(b) Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay
(c) Indian Institute of Technology-Madras
(d) Indian Institute of Technology-Kharagpur
231. Union Minister Jitendra Singh inaugurated the nine-day Navratra festival at _____.
(a) Leh in Ladakh (b) Pahalgam in Kashmir (c) Katra in Jammu (d) Anantnag in Kashmir
232. Which of the following Indian states has become the first state in the country to cap the prices of masks?
(a) Haryana (b) Gujarat (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Maharashtra
233. Recently, In an historic first visit by a Gulf Arab nation, a _____ delegation reached Israel.
(a) United Arab Emirates (b) Saudi Arabia (c) Kuwait (d) Qatar
234. Recently, the poll spending limit for candidates contesting Lok Sabha and Assembly elections has been enhanced by _____ percent.
(a) 5 (b) 10 (c) 15 (d) 25
235. Which of the following countries was ranked first in the Arab world for issuing scientific papers on the coronavirus?
(a) Oman (b) Jordan (c) Saudi Arabia (d) UAE
236. The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has set up a panel to explore possibility of a basic standard product structure to provide insurance cover for individuals and establishments to manage their cyber risks. Who is head of this panel?
(a) M Mahendranath (b) S Devesh (c) P Umesh (d) Ashwin Kumar Singh
237. Which of the following banks has been authorised to issue and encash Electoral Bonds?
(a) Bank of Baroda (b) Punjab National Bank (c) Bank of Baroda (d) Canara Bank
238. Recently, Dehradun situated Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology noted that the tectonic faultline is moving _____.
(a) Northward (b) Southward (c) Eastward (d) Westward
239. Recently, who became the first cricketer to play 200 Indian Premier League (IPL) matches?
(a) Virat Kohli (b) Mahendra Singh Dhoni (c) K L Rahul (d) Rohit Sharma
240. The Police Commemoration Day is observed on _____ every year to honor the loyalty and supreme sacrifice of police personnel for the nation.
(a) 14th October (b) 16th October (c) 19th October (d) 21st October

241. Which of the following two countries signed 'world first' carbon offset deal under Paris Agreement recently?
(a) Peru and Switzerland (b) Chile and Portugal (c) Latvia and Lithuania (d) Bhutan and Nepal
242. Recently, which of the following state governments has announced to provide financial assistance to labourers for historical and religious tour in a unique step towards welfare of the labourers in state?
(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Haryana (d) Rajasthan
243. India has hosted the Third India-US 22 Ministerial Dialogue in _____.
(a) New Delhi (b) Lucknow (c) Hyderabad (d) Jaipur
244. Which of the following countries has issued world's first Central Bank Digital Currency recently?
(a) Suriname (b) The Gambia (c) The Bahamas (d) Egypt
245. Which has hosted companies introduced the first open-source multi-lingual machine translation model M2M-100 that can translate between any pair of 100 languages without relying on English data?
(a) Google (b) Facebook (c) Oracle (d) Adobe
246. Recently, Minister of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises- MSME, Nitin Gadkari launched India's first-ever high quality _____ designed by Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) through Video Conference.
(a) Khadi Fabric Shawl (b) Khadi Fabric Footwear
(c) Khadi Fabric Toothbrush (d) Khadi Fabric Doormat
247. According to a new World Bank Group and UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) analysis, an estimated _____ in six children or 356 million globally were living in extreme poverty before the COVID-19 pandemic began, and this is set to worsen significantly.
(a) One (b) Two (c) Three (d) Four
248. Researchers from the Netherlands Cancer Institute in Amsterdam have identified a previously unknown set of _____ in the upper part of the throat, discovering what could be the first set of major glands to be found in the human body in 300 years.
(a) Pituitary glands (b) Adrenal glands (c) Salivary glands (d) Thyroid glands
249. Which of the following has announced a world-first initiative that will offer free golf to women across the Kingdom?
(a) Saudi Arabia (b) Qatar (c) Oman (d) Jordan
250. Recently, which of the following has been chosen by Snap Inc for a unique collaboration, which will be providing breaking news and premium content to Snapchat's users in the country?
(a) NDTV (b) Zee News (c) Star News (d) Republic News
251. Which of the following districts has bagged top position among 30 districts of the country in successful implementation of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)?
(a) Mandi (b) Jammu (c) Kullu (d) Dehradun
252. Recently, Government of Jammu and Kashmir has introduced certain substitutes in _____ Article of Jammu and Kashmir Civil Service Regulations, on the orders of Lieutenant Governor.
(a) 222(1) (b) 223(2) (c) 226(2) (d) 228(4)
253. The Kisan Suryodaya Yojana for the farmers is launch in:
(a) Maharashtra (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Odisha (d) Gujarat

254. Recently, _____ virtually launched Life in Miniature project. The project is collaboration between the National Museum, New Delhi, Ministry of Culture, and Google Arts and Culture.
- (a) Culture and Tourism Minister Prahlad Singh Patel
(b) Home Minister Amit Shah
(c) Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman
(d) Railway Minister Piyush Goyal
255. The signature creation of legendary cartoonist R.K. Laxman will be built to mark his birth centenary and commemorate his special connection with _____.
- (a) Jaipur (b) Hyderabad (c) Pune (d) Kochi
256. Recently, Labour Minister Santosh Gangwar released the new series of Consumer Price Index for industrial workers (CPI-IW) with _____ Base Year in New Delhi.
- (a) 2011 (b) 2013 (c) 2016 (d) 2018
257. Name the India-born US District Judge who will preside over the Justice Department's crucial lawsuit against internet search giant Google?
- (a) Deepak Luthra (b) Amit Mehta (c) Lalit Shah (d) Bhaskar Narain
258. Recently, The European Union has awarded its top human rights prize to the _____.
- (a) Belarus opposition movement and its leader, Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya
(b) Democratic Opposition in Venezuela
(c) Ilham Tohti
(d) Lamiya Aji Bashar
259. Which of the following came first among Indian PSUs under World's Best Employer this year in a list published by Forbes?
- (a) BHEL (b) ONGC (c) NTPC Ltd (d) GAIL
260. Pakistan is preparing to contest India's claim in the European Union that _____ sold in the bloc is genuine only if it originates from specific areas of India.
- (a) Saffron (b) Basmati Rice (c) Kashmiri Lavender (d) Pashmina Shawls
261. Which of the following railway zones will be the first to avail the soon-to-begin 'Bags on Wheels' service of the Railways through which their luggage will be transported to their homes from the railway station upon their arrival in trains and vice versa?
- (a) Western Railways (b) North Central Railways
(c) Southern Railway (d) Northern Railways
262. Recently, European Union environment ministers struck a deal to make the bloc's _____ net zero emissions target legally binding.
- (a) 2025 (b) 2030 (c) 2040 (d) 2050
263. Who has been recently renamed as the Prime Minister of Lebanon?
- (a) Hasan Diab (b) Tammam Salam (c) Saad Hariri (d) Najib Mikati
264. Recently, Indian Navy has operationalized the first batch of three Women Pilots on _____ by the Southern Naval Command (SNC) at Kochi.
- (a) Tejas Aircraft (b) Dornier Aircraft
(c) Avalanche Aircraft (d) Devas Aircraft

265. Recently, Prime Minister Modi e-dedicated country's biggest cardiac hospital at U.N. Mehta Institute of Cardiology and Research Center in _____.
(a) Pune (b) Ahmedabad (c) Bhopal (d) Ranchi
266. Recently, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, Dr. M. Rajeevan dedicated Flash Flood Guidance services, first of its kind for South Asian countries namely India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, _____ and _____.
(a) Nepal and Sri Lanka (b) Mauritius and Seychelles
(c) Maldives and Seychelles (d) Myanmar and Laos
267. Recently, Britain and _____ formally signed a trade agreement marking Britain's first big post-Brexit deal on trade, as it continues to struggle to agree on a deal with its closest trading partners in the European Union.
(a) France (b) Japan (c) Germany (d) Portugal
268. Recently which of the following countries agreed to take steps to normalize relations with Israel in a deal brokered with the help of the United States, making Khartoum the third Arab government to set aside hostilities with Israel?
(a) Sudan (b) Egypt (c) Jordan (d) Lebanon
269. Which of the following IIT's has developed a novel Industry 4.0 technology for remotely controlled factory operations and real-time quality correction during industrial production in India's advanced manufacturing sector?
(a) IIT Kanpur (b) IIT Kharagpur (c) IIT Madras (d) IIT Kanpur
270. Which of the following has become the first wetland from Uttarakhand to be included in the prestigious Ramsar sites list?
(a) Asan Conservation Reserve (b) Kedarnath Wildlife Sanctuary
(c) Rajaji National Park (d) Jhilmil Jheel Wetland
271. Which of the following has become the first union territory in the country to operationalise public financial management system (PFMS) at the district level?
(a) Jammu & Kashmir (b) Andaman & Nicobar Islands
(c) Lakshadweep (d) Puducherry
272. Under the patronage of Arunachal Government, a War Memorial has been constructed at _____ where Sub Joginder Singh, 1st Battalion the Sikh Regt made the supreme sacrifice.
(a) Sela Pass (b) Baralacha La Pass (c) Bum La Pass (d) Jelep La Pass
273. Recently, Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh digitally laid the foundation stone of Punjab's first dedicated sports university in _____.
(a) Amritsar (b) Patiala (c) Ludhiana (d) Firozepur
274. In October 2020, India's maiden seaplane service is likely to take off from _____.
(a) Tapi Riverfront (b) Sabarmati Riverfront (c) Mahi Riverfront (d) Narmada Riverfront
275. Name the first turbaned Sikh who has been elected to British Columbia assembly in Canada.
(a) Deep Singh Dhillon (b) Aman Singh (c) Maninder Sirsa (d) Bhupinder Singh Lodha
276. Recently, Indian-origin opposition candidate Wavel Ramkalawan, whose great grandfather was an indentured labourer from Bihar, has won _____ presidential election with a solid majority.
(a) Mauritius (b) Suriname (c) Seychelles (d) Trinidad and Tobago

277. The world's first iodine-based sanitisers, which are said to be more effective and long-lasting than alcohol-based hand cleansers, will be launched in _____.
(a) USA (b) Italy (c) India (d) Canada
278. According to findings from a team of Canadian and Indian researchers, dairy production in India began as far back as in the _____ and may have been a factor behind sustaining the Indus Valley Civilisation.
(a) 1st millennium BCE (b) 2nd millennium BCE
(c) 3rd millennium BCE (d) 5th millennium BCE
279. Union minister Kiren Rijiju flagged off a 200-km long 'Fit India Walkathon' being organised by border guarding force ITBP in _____.
(a) Haryana's Ambala (b) Rajasthan's Jaisalmer (c) Punjab's Amritsar (d) Gujarat's Surat
280. Recently, World Development Information Day was celebrated on:
(a) 12 October (b) 15 October (c) 19 October (d) 24 October
281. Recently, who has been elected as the Chairperson of the Governing Body of the ILO for the period October 2020- June 2021?
(a) Aditi Singh (b) Deepika Mahajan (c) Apurva Chandra (d) Nikita Chandel
282. Which of the following Indian states has secured the first rank in central government's one of the most ambitious schemes - the PM Atmanirbhar Nidhi Scheme (SVANidhi Scheme) by approving the highest number of loans under the scheme in the country?
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Gujarat (d) Haryana
283. Recently, Jammu and Kashmir High Court's Chief Justice, Gita Mittal inaugurated the first Family Court in the Union Territory at _____.
(a) Srinagar (b) Jammu (c) Ramban (d) Anantnag
284. The first transport project under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was inaugurated in _____.
(a) Lahore (b) Karachi (c) Islamabad (d) Sialkot
285. According to Indian Tourism Statistics (ITS), 2020 which Indian state has emerged as the top destination for attracting the highest number of domestic tourists in 2019?
(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Himachal Pradesh
286. Which of the following countries will remain on the grey list of global terror financing watchdog, Financial Action Task Force (FATF) as it has not been able to fulfill six out of the 27 mandates to check terror funding?
(a) Bangladesh (b) Myanmar (c) Pakistan (d) Iraq
287. The former U.S. security contractor Edward Snowden has been granted permanent residency in _____.
(a) Germany (b) Russia (c) China (d) Cuba
288. Recently, The United Nations announced that 50 countries have ratified a UN treaty to ban nuclear weapons triggering its entry into force in 90 days. Which is the 50th country to ratify the UN treaty?
(a) Honduras (b) Panama (c) Mexico (d) Canada
289. Name the cellular company which has been chosen by NASA to build the first ever cellular network on the moon.
(a) Motorola (b) Samsung (c) Nokia (d) Huawei

290. Name the Formula One who had his career's 92nd victory at the Portuguese Grand Prix.
(a) Lewis Hamilton (b) Valtteri Bottas (c) Max Verstappen (d) Carlos Leclerc
291. Who will be the chairperson of the conglomerate known as People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) formed recently?
(a) Farooq Abdullah (b) M.Y. Tarigami (c) Mehbooba Mufti (d) Hasnain Masoodi
292. Recently, Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari laid the foundation stones of nine National Highway projects in _____.
(a) Tripura (b) Meghalaya
(c) Nagaland (d) West Bengal
293. The Vigilance Awareness Week, 2020 is being observed from 27th October till 2nd of November. Vigilance Awareness Week is observed every year during the week in which the birthday of _____ falls on 31st of October.
(a) Madan Mohan Malviya (b) Dr Rajendra Prasad
(c) Lal Bahadur Shastri (d) Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
294. Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda launched two Centers of Excellence for Tribal Welfare through video conference. The first initiative strengthening Panchayati Raj institutions will be launched in five districts covering 30 Gram Panchayats and 150 villages of _____.
(a) Odisha (b) Jharkhand (c) Bihar (d) Uttar Pradesh
295. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres welcomed the joint statement by the United States, Armenia and Azerbaijan announcing cease-fire agreement. Armenia and Azerbaijan have been at loggerheads over the mountainous region of Nagorno-Karabakh since _____.
(a) 1954 (b) 1962 (c) 1988 (d) 1996
296. Recently, Amy Coney Barrett officially took oath that will allow her to join the Supreme Court of _____.
(a) Australia (b) New Zealand (c) USA (d) Great Britain
297. Recently, Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga announced that his country will achieve zero carbon emissions by _____.
(a) 2025 (b) 2032 (c) 2038 (d) 2050
298. According to the latest data from Ookla, which of the following countries has the best mobile internet speed of 121 Mbps in the world in September 2020?
(a) South Korea (b) Japan
(c) USA (d) Singapore
299. Recently, The postgraduate programme in enterprise management (PGPEM), offered by which of the following IIM's has been ranked in the top 100 in the Financial Times (FT) EMBA 2020 ranking?
(a) Indian Institute of Management-Bangalore (IIM-B)
(b) Indian Institute of Management-Ahmadabad (IIM-A)
(c) Indian Institute of Management-Lucknow (IIM-L)
(d) Indian Institute of Management-Calcutta (IIM-C)
300. Recently, The NASA's Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA) has confirmed, for the first time, water on the sunlit surface of the _____.
(a) Mercury (b) Venus
(c) Moon (d) Jupiter

301. In a first for Metro services in north India, the _____ officially renamed the Sector 50 station as “Pride Station” dedicating it to the transgender community.
(a) Noida Metro Rail Corporation (NMRC)
(b) Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC)
(c) Gurugram Metro Rail Corporation (GMRC)
(d) Meerut Metro Rail Corporation (MMRC)
302. Recently, which of the following Indian states launched a web portal ‘Sumangal’ to promote inter-caste marriages that would help inter-caste couples get an incentive within 60 days of application?
(a) West Bengal (b) Odisha (c) Chhattisgarh (d) Karnataka
303. Recently, India and US held the 3rd bilateral two plus two Ministerial Dialogue in _____ and signed the landmark defence pact BECA.
(a) New York (b) Washington D.C (c) New Delhi (d) Bengaluru
304. The BRICS Parliamentary Forum will be held in virtual format. It will be chaired by Chairman of _____.
(a) Chinese Parliament (b) Brazilian Parliament (c) Russian Parliament (d) South African Parliament
305. Recently, In a breakthrough towards “green electronics”, researchers at _____ have developed transistors with biodegradable gelatin as an electrical insulator, which may be utilised as breath analyser.
(a) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Kanpur
(b) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Guwahati
(c) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Mandi
(d) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Jodhpur
306. The first state in India to fix the floor price for vegetables is
(a) Karnataka (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Kerala
307. Recently, _____ researcher has developed a low-cost membrane technology to produce psychoactive drugs and anti-aging compounds from wide range of agricultural resources.
(a) Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad (b) Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur
(c) Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (d) Indian Institute of Technology Madras
308. Recently, Aditya Puri stepped out of _____ corporate headquarters after handing over charge to Sashidhar Jagdishan as the new chief executive and managing director of the largest private sector lender.
(a) HDFC Bank (b) Yes Bank (c) ICICI Bank (d) Axis Bank
309. The World Day for Audiovisual Heritage (WDAH) on _____ provides an occasion to raise general awareness of the need to take urgent measures and to acknowledge the importance of audiovisual documents.
(a) 25th October (b) 27th October (c) 29th October (d) 30th October
310. Recently, A six year old boy from _____, Anzar Mustaeen Ali won a special prize of USD 1000 for his artwork in the global art competition organised by the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR).
(a) Afghanistan (b) Nepal (c) Bangladesh (d) Maldives
311. Recently which of the following along with Ministry of Power, Rockefeller Foundation and Smart Power India launched the ‘Electricity Access in India and Benchmarking Distribution Utilities’ report?
(a) Ministry of Corporate Affairs (b) BHEL
(c) NITI Aayog (d) NTPC

312. In which of the following states, the Mobile Polling Units are going door-to-door for the first time for collection of ballot papers?
(a) Bihar (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Rajasthan (d) Madhya Pradesh
313. India's largest power producer _____ entered into foreign currency loan agreement with Japanese government's financial institution for about Rs 3,582 crore.
(a) BHEL (b) NTPC (c) GAIL (d) Power grid Corporation Ltd
314. According to the Action Plan for Vulture Conservation 2020-2025, which of the following states will not get a vulture conservation and breeding centre?
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Rajasthan (d) Maharashtra
315. Scientists have identified the fossil of a giant bird that lived about 50 million years ago, with wingspans of up to 21 feet that would dwarf largest bird, the wandering _____.
(a) Ostrich (b) Albatross (c) Siberian Crane (d) Eagle
316. United Arab Emirates will issue foreign direct investment (FDI) licences to allow foreign investors to own _____ of projects in the emirate in sectors including agriculture, industry and service.
(a) 49% (b) 51% (c) 70% (d) 100%
317. The Foreign Minister of Central Asian Countries welcomed the provision by India of _____ Line of Credit for priority developmental projects in fields such as energy, IT, healthcare, education and agriculture in the region.
(a) fifty million US dollar (b) one billion US dollar
(c) two billion US dollar (d) five billion US dollar
318. The 1.8 kilometre long Feni Bridge connecting Sabrum in India with Ramgarh in _____ will be completed by December 2020.
(a) Nepal (b) Myanmar
(c) Bhutan (d) Bangladesh
319. The United Kingdom has entered into a strategic partnership to develop India's fledgling international financial services centre GIFT City, and agreed to set up a new Fund of Funds to be managed by the _____ group in order to route U.K.'s future capital investments into India.
(a) Punjab National Bank (b) State Bank of India
(c) Bank of Baroda (d) Canara Bank
320. Who among the following is the winner of the 2020 UN Global Climate Action Award?
(a) Bachpan Bachao Andolan (b) Thar Desert Protection Expedition
(c) Global Himalayan Expedition (d) Dibakar Bannerjee & Aditi Thapa
321. Which of the following states has become the first state in the country to add a 'transgender' option in the gender category of the civil service examination form?
(a) Arunachal Pradesh (b) Assam
(c) Meghalaya (d) West Bengal
322. Recently, Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd and Tech Mahindra signed a contract worth Rs 400 crore for implementation of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) to support HAL's _____.
(a) 'Project Parivartan' (b) 'Project Prarthna'
(c) 'Project Prayatna' (d) 'Project Pardarshita'

323. Which of the following countries is building the world's highest-altitude cloud computing data centre that will meet the data storage needs of the country and South Asian nations like Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan?
(a) China (b) India (c) Japan (d) South Korea
324. Which of the following Indian banks announced that it has entered into a strategic partnership with trusted global non-profit education platform edX in order to offer its Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)?
(a) Bank of Baroda (b) Punjab National Bank (c) State Bank of India (d) Canara Bank
325. Which of the following airports becomes India's first airport to start e-boarding facilities for international flights?
(a) Delhi Airport (b) Hyderabad Airport (c) Jaipur Airport (d) Mumbai Airport
326. Recently, _____ and Quality Council of India (QCI) launched the 'National Program and Project Management Policy Framework' (NPPMF), with the aim of bringing radical reforms in the way infrastructure projects are executed in India.
(a) NITI Aayog (b) Ministry of Corporate Affairs
(c) Ministry of Finance Affairs (d) Both (a) and (c)
327. Name the actor who won the award for best supporting actor, at the Ontario International Film Festival.
(a) Naseeruddin Shah (b) Pankaj Kapoor (c) Victor Banerjee (d) Vimal Mishra
328. Recently, Olympic champion Abhinav Bindra opened a sports medicine and research institute in _____.
(a) Bhopal (b) Bhubaneswar (c) Meerut (d) Jaipur
329. Recently, Three species of black coral have been discovered on the seabed of the northern _____.
(a) Pacific Ocean (b) Atlantic Ocean (c) Indian Ocean (d) Arctic Ocean
330. Which is the first-ever hotel in the world to win the prestigious Global United Nations 2020 Climate Action Award for Climate Neutral Now?
(a) Palm Beach Resort in Havana (b) Rose and Lotus Beach Resort in Japan
(c) Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort in Aruba (d) Lavendor Resort in New Zealand
331. Recently, which of the following states was adjudged the best governed State in the large States category in the Public Affairs Index-2020 released by the Public Affairs Centre?
(a) Kerala (b) Karnataka (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Maharashtra
332. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated Sardar Patel Zoological Park and Geodesic Aviary Dome in the Statue of Unity complex in _____.
(a) Maharashtra (b) Gujarat (c) Karnataka (d) Kerala
333. Recently, Railways has launched _____ initiative for focused action on security of women passengers across all zones.
(a) Meri Dost (b) Meri Mitra (c) Meri Saheli (d) Meri Saathi
334. Who has been recently appointed as India's next Chief Information Commissioner (CIC)?
(a) Yashvardhan Kumar Sinha (b) Vipin Chandra Rathi
(c) Anoop Kumar Mathur (d) Deepak Talreja
335. The first phase of the Malabar Naval exercise including Australia along with Japan and the U.S. is scheduled to be held off the _____ coast.
(a) Paradip (b) Visakhapatnam (c) Panaji (d) Port Blair

336. Who has recently proposed to set up a subsidiary to provide a guarantee for loans under agriculture and rural development?
(a) Reserve Bank of India (b) NABARD
(c) SIDBI (d) Punjab National Bank
337. Which of the following companies has been ranked among the Top 5 Global Biotech Employers for 2020 in the U.S.-based Science magazine's annual 'Science Careers Top 20 Employers' list?
(a) Lupin (b) Reliance (c) Glaxo Smithline (d) Biocon
338. Name the Indian wrestler-turned-Mixed Martial Arts fighter who won her third consecutive MMA championship title in Singapore.
(a) Geeta Phogat (b) Babita Phogat (c) Vinesh Phogat (d) Ritu Phogat
339. Recently, who became the first batsman to get to 1,000 sixes in T20 cricket history?
(a) Rohit Sharma (b) Chris Gayle (c) Kieron Pollard (d) AB de Villiers
340. Recently, The _____ has developed and launched a secure messaging application, Secure Application for the Internet or SAI.
(a) Indian Army (b) Indian Navy (c) Indian Air force (d) All of the above
341. Recently, Kabartal, a freshwater marsh of _____ is designated as Ramsar Site. With this the network of Indian Ramsar Sites becomes the largest in South Asia.
(a) South West Bengal (b) North Bihar (c) Eastern Uttar Pradesh (d) Bundelkhand, Uttar Pradesh
342. India's first defence park is inaugurated in _____.
(a) Karnataka (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Maharashtra (d) Kerala
343. Recently, _____ has been elected as World Sailing President, announced at World Sailing's Virtual General Assembly.
(a) Quanhai Li (b) Li Hunchai (c) Jetling Lin (d) Housie Li
344. Which of the following banks has gone live as a 'Financial Information Provider' (FIP) under the new 'Account Aggregator Framework' of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), making it the first bank in the country to do so?
(a) IndusInd Bank (b) Axis Bank (c) IDFC First Bank (d) RBL Bank
345. The Reserve Bank will evaluate the impact of multi-media public awareness campaign 'RBI Kehta Hai', which was launched in _____ languages to educate the public about safe banking and financial practices.
(a) 7 (b) 9 (c) 12 (d) 14
346. A five-member team of researchers at the _____ have developed the world's first specific reliable bacterial biosensor to detect the presence of common environmental pollutant- Sodium Dodecyl Sulphate /Sodium Lauryl Sulfate (SDS).
(a) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee
(b) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay
(c) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi
(d) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras
347. Which of the following tiger reserves will have women nature guides for the first time in its history?
(a) Nagarjunsagar-Srisailem Tiger Reserve
(b) Bor Tiger Reserve
(c) Corbett Tiger Reserve
(d) Simlipal Tiger Reserve

- 348.** Who will be conferred with the Lifetime Achievement award for 2019 by the Karnataka state government for her contribution to Indian and Karnataka women's cricket?
- (a) Shantha Rangaswamy (b) Deepika Niar
(c) Diana Eduljee (d) Anjum Chopra
- 349.** Who has been recently elected unopposed as the Athletics Federation of India's (AFI) first woman senior vice-president?
- (a) Karnam Malleshwari (b) Geeta Phogat
(c) Anju Bobby George (d) Meera Nahata
- 350.** Who has become the first Indian footballer to make it to The Guardian's Next Generation List – a list of the best young footballers from across the globe?
- (a) Ngangom Bala Devi (b) Bikash Yumnam
(c) Dalima Chhibber (d) Oinam Bembem Devi



Career
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ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

1. **b** The government unveiled the first look of India's first Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) train which can attain a top speed of 180 kilometres per hour and whose design is inspired by Delhi's iconic Lotus Temple.
2. **a** The fourth edition of India-Japan Maritime bilateral exercise (JIMEX) begins in North Arabian Sea.
3. **a** Singapore will be the first country in the world to use facial verification in its national identity scheme.
4. **c** One of the founding members of BJP Jaswant Singh served as Minister of Defence, External Affairs and Finance and also Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission.
5. **a** At the top of the rankings is Beijing, followed by New York Boston, San Francisco and Shanghai.
6. **d** The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) declared 28 September as International Day for Universal Access to Information.
7. **a** The Reserve Bank came out with a five-pillared strategic approach 'GUARD' to deal with cyber security threats being faced by Urban Cooperative Banks (UCBs).
8. **b** The "pioneering" Dolphyn project in Aberdeen will sit 15 km off the coast, allowing the UK to harness the power of the superfuel using floating wind turbines.
9. **c** The world's first shipment of blue ammonia is on its way from Saudi Arabia to Japan, where it will be used in power stations to produce electricity without carbon emissions.
10. **d** The Grand Slam itinerary consists of the Australian Open in mid January, the French Open (also known as Roland Garros) from around late May to early June, Wimbledon in June–July, and the US Open in August–September.
11. **d** India will hold the 17th summit in 2022.
12. **a** The Prime Minister will also inaugurate "Ganga Avalokan", the first museum on Ganga dedicated to showcase the culture, biodiversity and rejuvenation activities done in Ganga river. The museum is located at Chandi Ghat, Haridwar.
13. **a** World's first hydrogen-powered yacht unveiled in Monaco.
14. **b** India and Denmark decided to elevate their bilateral ties to a "green strategic partnership", the first of its kind, during a virtual summit.
15. **b** Brazil has now declared that the world-famous samba carnival parade will be postponed.
16. **c** China is all set to send out the world's first mining robot into space by November this year.
17. **c** Durban will become the first South African city to host the event after it enjoyed a commanding 90 votes to 39 victory over its German opponent.
18. **b** Senior Indian Administrative Service Officer Dr P. D. Vaghela has been appointed as the Chairman of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India- TRAI.

19. c Assam's first and only woman chief minister Syeda Anwara Taimur passed away in Australia.
20. b The Maharashtra government announced the Gan Samragini Lata Mangeshkar award for the year 2020-21 to veteran female playback singer Usha Mangeshkar.
21. c Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy launched YSR Jalakala, a scheme to dig borewells free of cost for farmers, and bring an additional five lakh acres under cultivation through groundwater irrigation.
22. a Amsterdam and Helsinki became the first two cities in the world to introduce an open Artificial Intelligence (AI) register that updates its residents about the city's use of AI in public services.
23. c IDBI Bank has become the first lender to enable document embedding feature on a structured financial messaging system managed by Indian Financial Technology and Allied Services.
24. a Leading stock exchange BSE has signed a pact with private sector lender Yes Bank to empower the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) listed on the platform.
25. a Scientists from the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) have identified a new damselfly species, *Platylestes kirani*, in the wetlands of Kannur district.
26. d Noted Filmmaker Shekhar Kapur has been named as the President of Film and Television Institute of India, FTII Society and Chairman of Governing Council of FTII.
27. d The Harijan Sevak Sangh was established on September 30, 1932. It was founded by Gandhiji. He founded it when he was in Yervada Jail, Pune.
28. * On 29th September marks the first observance of the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste across the globe.
29. a Kerala Tourism's internationally acclaimed 'Human by Nature' campaign has bagged the prestigious PATA Grand Award 2020 for marketing.
30. d This initiative was launched in 2000 by the World Heart Federation as an annual event and gets celebrated on 29th day of September ever since.
31. a Chief minister Trivendra Singh Rawat inaugurated Uttarakhand's first project for generating power through pine needles with 25 KW capacity made at a cost of Rs 25 lakh in Dunda block of Uttarkashi district.
32. c Bellbottom starring Akshay Kumar is the first movie in the world to start and finish shoot in pandemic
33. b ISRO is scheduled to launch its Venus mission in 2025 and France will participate in it.
34. a UP became the first state in the country to be undertaking over 1 crore tests to screen coronavirus.
35. b Science and Technology Minister Harsh Vardhan has launched CSIR technologies for rural development.
36. d The BrahMos Land-Attack Cruise Missile was cruising at a top speed of Mach 2.8. It is one more major step in enhancing the indigenous content.

- 37. a** Punjab-based start-up SeguraMAX Global (SeguraMAX) has announced the launch of 'Keep-U-Safe', a pathbreaking, first-of-its-kind technology in the world, which will aid in achieving significant reduction of viruses on surfaces of their products.
- 38. c** Kuwait's Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al Ahmad Al Sabah became the oil-rich nation's new ruling emir, reaching the highest post in the country after decades in its security services.
- 39. c** India plans to restore 26 million hectares of degraded land by 2030.
- 40. d** The year 2020 marks the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations and the 30th Anniversary of the International Day of Older Persons.
- 41. d** The Indian embassy in Madagascar will go solar on October 2, on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, becoming the first Indian mission globally to become clean and green with this installation.
- 42. d** The Tejas locomotive is capable to run at 160 kmph.
- 43. c** Mr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe has been appointed as President of Indian Council for Cultural Relations by President of India.
- 44. b** Assam chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal directed the Pension and Public Grievances department to ensure the receipt of pension by the state government employees on the same day of retirement.
- 45. b** Maldives is on track to become the first country in the world to have its own hospitality loyalty program.
- 46. a** Dhanlaxmi Bank said that the Reserve Bank of India has approved a three-member panel till the new managing director and chief executive officer take charge.
- 47. b** The six banks are Syndicate Bank, Oriental Bank of Commerce (OBC), United Bank of India, Andhra Bank, Corporation Bank, and Allahabad Bank.
- 48. a** IIT Kharagpur launched telemedicine software which facilitates critical health care support to patients at their doorsteps through remote consultation by a physician.
- 49. d** The International Day of Non-Violence is observed on 2 October, the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, leader of the Indian independence movement and pioneer of the philosophy and strategy of non-violence.
- 50. b** A commercial cargo spacecraft bound for the International Space Station (ISS) launched carrying the name of deceased NASA astronaut Kalpana "K.C." Chawla, the first Indian-born woman to enter space, for her key contributions to human spaceflight.
- 51. c** The 9.02 Km long tunnel connects Manali to Lahaul-Spiti valley throughout the year.
- 52. c** The Copenhagen-based Happiness Research Institute has opened the world's first museum dedicated to that now-fleeting feeling.
- 53. b** The 2nd edition of Indian and Bangladesh Navy Bilateral Exercise Bongosagar is scheduled to commence in Northern Bay of Bengal.
- 54. d** An academic from Newnham College at the University of Cambridge, Dr Manali Desai, has made history as the first woman of Indian heritage to take over as the Head of the Sociology Department of the prestigious UK varsity in its over 800-year history.

- 55. a** IFAD is the first fund in the United Nations system to receive a public credit rating. The AA+ (stable) rating was announced by Fitch Ratings, which also assigned IFAD a short-term rating of F1+.
- 56. d** “The new Hyderabad office will be the second location for Goldman Sachs Services in India, and will complement the Bengaluru office footprint in terms of both execution and support that it will provide to the firm’s businesses globally.
- 57. a** National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development, NABARD regional office in Karnataka launched the Sanitation Literacy Campaign to promote literacy on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, (WASH) under Swach Bharath Mission.
- 58. a** A team of researchers at IIT Madras is ready with a prototype of suture thread made of nanofiber yarns that is bio-absorbable and can deliver a higher load of antibiotics and/or therapeutics at the site itself.
- 59. a** India Indian Institute of Technology, Jodhpur (IITJ) announced the receipt of NVIDIA DGX A100 to be installed at the Central Computing Facility systems for students, from all departments, including the School of AI and Data Science.
- 60. c** Held annually on 5 October since 1994, World Teachers’ Day commemorates the anniversary of the adoption of the 1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers.
- 61. a** Guntur Municipal Corporation (GMC) has entered the final lap of establishing what is claimed to be the world’s first ‘plastic-to-petrol’ making unit. Trials have been completed at the newly set up plant where young engineers-turned- entrepreneurs converted plastic waste into reusable fuels including diesel, petrol and kerosene. The GMC expects that the ‘plastic-to-petrol’ plant would produce fuel required to run its vehicles.
- 62. c** Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat gave away the Swachh Bharat Awards-2020 to States, Districts, Blocks and Village Panchayats. The awards were given particularly under the drinking water and cleanliness categories. The Union Government had earlier launched three missions under Swachh Sundar Samudayik Shouchalaya, Samudayik Shouchalaya Abhiyan and Gandagi Mukth Bharat. Under the Swachh Sundar Samudayik Shouchalaya category Gujarat bagged the first position at state level whereas Tirunelveli in Tamil Nadu got the Award for cleanliness at District Level.
- 63. c** In a bid to make a Guinness World Record, Dubai is all set to unveil the world’s largest fountain on October 22. The fountain will be located at the Pointe, a lifestyle and dining destination, and will be spread over 14,000 sq ft of sea water while its super shooter will be 105-metre tall and have over 3,000 LED lights.
- 64. c** Voters in New Caledonia turned out in large numbers on Sunday to decide whether the archipelago in the South Pacific should get independence from France and break ties that were first established in the mid-19th century.
- 65. b** CAG, in its recent defence offset report tabled in Parliament, made stern observations about foreign firms such as Dassault Aviation not meeting obligations of domestic investment undertaken at the time of securing procurement contracts. The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has now decided to altogether scrap the offset clause from inter-government and single vendor deals for procurement of defence platforms. With the offset clause, like in the case of procurement of 36 Rafale jets from France, the manufacturer Dassault Aviation and MBDA were mandated to invest 30 per cent of the contract amount in the Indian defence sector.
- 66. a** The magnetic field of the Sun is unique in that, unlike many other celestial bodies, it reverses its polarity roughly every 11 years. Regular observations of the Sun’s magnetic field begin in 1967, and, so far, we have data for the period from 1967 almost to the present, spanning the solar cycles 20-24.

- 67. a** India and South Africa, in a formal submission to the World Trade Organization (WTO) on October 2, sought a waiver on certain provisions of the international agreements that regulate intellectual property rights to speed up efforts to prevent, treat and contain the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 68. b** The Azerbaijani Army has lost more than 3,000 servicemen since the eruption of hostilities in conflict-torn Nagorno-Karabakh, the press secretary of the president of the self-proclaimed Republic of Artsakh.
- 69. c** The National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), the Hyderabad-based premier research body of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), has released a new set of guidelines, updating norms on recommended dietary allowances (RDA), which is the average daily intake needed for a nutritious diet. The definition for a reference Indian adult man and woman were modified with regard to age (19-39 years) instead of (20-39 years) and a body weight of 65 kg and 55 kg respectively were fixed for a normal Body Mass Index (BMI). Though termed 'ideal', it is more appropriately a measure of the average weight of Indians. National Nutrition Month (previously called National Nutrition Week) is celebrated in India every year during September to spread awareness about nutritional needs, deficiencies and malnutrition.
- 70. a** A tree species, long believed extinct, has been rediscovered after a gap of more than 180 years from a sacred grove in Kollam district, Kerala. Scientists at the Jawaharlal Nehru Tropical Botanic Garden and Research Institute (JNTBGRI) at Palode here have identified the tree as *Madhuca diplostemon* (family Sapotaceae), a threatened species of the Western Ghats whose specimen was first collected in 1835.
- 71. a** Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Summit RAISE 2020 – 'Responsible AI for Social Empowerment 2020' on 5th October 2020. The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and NITI Aayog are organizing the Mega Virtual Summit on Artificial Intelligence from today to 9th of October.
- 72. c** Railway Minister Piyush Goyal virtually inaugurated the Phoolbagan Station of Kolkata's East West Metro corridor, and flagged off the first train from there to Salt Lake Sector-V.
- 73. a** The 2nd edition of Indian and Bangladesh Navy Bilateral Exercise Bongosagar is concluded in Northern Bay of Bengal on 5 October 2020. This edition of Exercise Bongosagar assumes greater significance since it is being conducted during Mujib Barsho, the 100th birth anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.
- 74. b** Afghanistan's first women Deputy Speaker in Parliament and member of the team of negotiators engaging the Taliban in talks in Doha, Fawzia Koofi has been named one of the "favourites" among nominees for this year's Nobel Peace Prize, due to be announced on October 9.
- 75. a** The United States and Russia will hold a round of nuclear arms control talks in the Finland's capital, Helsinki, to follow up on negotiations in Austria this summer, the Finnish president's office said.
- 76. b** Chinese President Xi Jinping said he stands ready with Bangladesh leaders to better align the two countries' strategies and jointly promote the construction of his multi-billion dollar Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) to take the strategic partnership of the two countries to new heights.
- 77. c** The International Space Station (ISS) is gearing up to receive the flight which will supply thousands of kilograms essential space supplies and related equipments to the astronauts. Northrop Grumman launched another flight to the International Space Station, this time named after late astronaut 'Kalpana Chawla'. The Cygnus vehicle S.S Kalpana Chawla along with Antares rocket for NG-14 mission was launched on October 2nd.
- 78. a** India successfully test-fired a new version of the nuclear-capable hypersonic Shaurya missile with a range of 750 kilometres from a defence facility off the Odisha coast, officials said.

- 79. d** India's Visnu Shivaraj Pandian won the 10m air rifle event at the fifth edition of the International Online Shooting Championship.
- 80. b** At the end of this monsoon season, only 4.15 per cent of the country's area – which covers 41 districts – is experiencing either severe or extremely dry conditions. This was stated in the Standardised Precipitation Index (SPI) report on wet and dry conditions observed from June to September, released by the India Meteorological Department (IMD).
- 81. b** Foreign ministers of all four Quad countries have met in the Japanese capital Tokyo on 6th October 2020. External Affairs Ministry said, Foreign Ministers have discussed the post-COVID-19 international order and the need for a coordinated response to the various challenges emerging from the pandemic.
- 82. a** Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha during his visit to Panchayat Halqa Ashthal, Kulgam in connection with Back to Village-3 programme, dedicated Ashthal Bridge to the public. The Ashthal Bridge connects village Ashthal with adjoining areas while benefitting about 10,000 souls residing in 13 habitations.
- 83. d** India and Myanmar have agreed to work towards the operationalisation of the Sittwe port in the Rakhine state in the first quarter of 2021.
- 84. a** The 12th BRICS Summit will be held on 17th November 2020 via video conference. The theme of the Meeting of the Leaders of BRICS countries which includes Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa is "BRICS Partnership for Global Stability, Shared Security and Innovative Growth".
- 85. b** The Centre disbursed nearly Rs. 20,000 crore among the states from the amount collected as compensation cess this year. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman made the announcement to this effect after the 42nd GST Council meet. Revenue Secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey who was also present during the media briefing informed that starting from 1st January next year, taxpayers with less than Rs. five crore annual turnover will not be required to file monthly GSTR-1 and GSTR-3B returns.
- 86. b** Sofia Vergara is the highest-paid female actor in the world, according to Forbes' latest list. She made \$43 million in a one-year period, which is the equivalent of Rs 315 crore. Also included in the top 10 are Angelina Jolie (\$35.5 million), Gal Gadot (\$31 million), Melissa McCarthy (25 million), Meryl Streep (\$24 million), Emily Blunt (\$22.5 million), Nicole Kidman (\$22 million), Ellen Pompeo (\$19 million), Elisabeth Moss (\$16 million) and Viola Davis (\$15.5 million).
- 87. b** Scientists once again discovered substantial signs of water present in the Mars, where a rigorous research is going on to find life-supporting evidences. The team of scientists utilized the European space agency's 'Mars Express Spacecraft' which has a radar instrument called MARSIS – Mars Advanced Radar for Subsurface and Ionosphere Sounding to carry out their probe on the southern polar region of the planet. Eventually, MARSIS sends out signal to the surface of the planet and gets reflected back which is then intercepted indicating the composition of surface at the origin such as ice, rock and water, as in the journal 'Nature'.
- 88. a** In possibly a first, the Sun's magnetic field recorded over five decades of the 20th century have been digitally mapped, which will facilitate solar physicists to better understand the Sun's behaviour in future. Solar observations recorded between 1915 and 1965 were gathered from Kodaikanal Solar Observatory (KoSO) run by the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA).
- 89. c** Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has said that emission norms for tractors will be applicable from October 2021 and for Construction Equipment Vehicles, the norms will be applicable from April 2021.

- 90. d** World Teachers' Day is held annually on 5 October since 1994, World Teachers' Day commemorates the anniversary of the adoption of the 1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers. In 2020, World Teachers' Day will celebrate teachers with the theme "Teachers: Leading in crisis, reimagining the future".
- 91. a** India successfully flight-tested its indigenously developed SMART torpedo system, with the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) hailing it as a "game changer" in anti-submarine warfare.
- 92. d** Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal launched a mega anti-air pollution campaign, saying polluted air can be life threatening in view of the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the campaign "Yudh Pradushan ke Virudh", separate plans have been prepared for each of the 13 pollution hotspots in the city.
- 93. a** The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has entered into an MoU with Swiggy, one of the leading food delivery platforms, to onboard street food vendors on its e-commerce platform. The MoU aims at giving the street food vendors online access to thousands of consumers and help them grow their businesses. The arrangement has been facilitated under the Prime Minister Street Vendor's Atmanirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) Scheme.
- 94. c** Kuwait's government, chaired by Prime Minister Sabah Al Khalid Al Sabah, has submitted its resignation to Emir Nawaf Al Ahmed Al Jaber Al Sabah in anticipation of the upcoming general elections.
- 95. d** External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar asserted that as vibrant and pluralistic democracies with shared values, the four QUAD member nations have collectively affirmed the importance of maintaining a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific. A group of four nations which was conceptualised in 2007 for Quadrilateral security dialogues, better known as QUAD, received a fresh impetus in 2017 when Prime Minister Narendra Modi, American President Donald Trump and their Australian and Japanese counterpart rejoined on the sidelines of the ASEAN summit.
- 96. a** The Puducherry airport has become the first airport of the Airports Authority of India (AAI) which is entirely solar-powered.
- 97. a** In Gujarat, the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development -NABARD has inked three Memoranda of Understanding with Public Sector Bank- State Bank of India to extend credit support for various projects.
- 98. a** The Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2020 was awarded jointly to Harvey J. Alter, Michael Houghton and Charles M. Rice "for the discovery of Hepatitis C virus."
- 99. c** Following a successful launch of Northrop Grumman Cygnus spacecraft, dubbed as the S.S. Kalpana Chawla, NASA in a recent update informed that the cargo ship arrived at the International Space Station for 'rendezvous and capture' on October 5. Chawla died on February 1, 2003, in the Space Shuttle Columbia disaster along with her other crew members. Columbia disintegrated over Texas while it was re-entering into the Earth's atmosphere.
- 100. a** The United Nations designated the first Monday of October of every year as World Habitat Day to reflect on the state of our towns and cities, and on the basic right of all to adequate shelter.
- 101. a** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched a campaign by way of a Tweet on Jan Andolan for COVID-19 Appropriate Behaviour. The campaign has been launched in view of the upcoming festivals and winter season as well as the opening up of the economy.
- 102. d** Minister of Textiles Smriti Irani launched the first ever Brand and Logo for Indian Cotton on Second World Cotton Day (7 October 2020) through video conferencing.

- 103. a** The Union Cabinet of India gave its approval for signing a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) in the field of cyber-security between India and Japan.
- 104. c** Dinesh Kumar Khara has assumed charge as the new Chairman of the country's largest lender State Bank of India.
- 105. d** The government appointed economists Ashima Goyal, Jayanth R Varma and Shashanka Bhide as members of the rate-setting Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- 106. a** The Reserve Bank of India has said that the two per cent interest subvention scheme for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) on loans offered by co-operative banks has been extended till 31st of March next year.
- 107. a** Nobel Prize in Physics 2020 awarded, with one half to Roger Penrose, University of Oxford, UK & the other half jointly to Reinhard Genzel (Max Planck Institute for Extraterrestrial Physics, Garching, Germany and University of California, Berkeley, USA) and Andrea Ghez (University of California, Los Angeles, USA) for their discoveries about Black hole.
- 108. c** French scientist Emmanuelle Charpentier and American Jennifer A. Doudna have won the Nobel Prize in chemistry for developing a method of genome editing known as CRISPR.
- 109. d** The Indian Air Force, IAF, is celebrated its 88th anniversary on 8 October 2020. The IAF was founded on October 8, 1932.
- 110. a** Gujarat Government has announced Digital Seva Setu Programme for the rural areas. Under this programme, the citizens will be able to get benefit from various public welfare services at the Panchayat level.
- 111. d** The Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) will be commissioning India's largest HPC-AI supercomputer 'PARAM Siddhi – AI'.
- 112. a** Guidance, nodal investment promotion and facilitation agency of the state of Tamil Nadu has partnered with the World Economic Forum (WEF) to establish India's first advanced manufacturing hub (AMHUB) in Tamil Nadu.
- 113. a** In a first step to pave the way for holding the long pending Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) elections, the Centre approved the appointment of Justice S S Saron (retd) as Chief Commissioner, Gurdwara Elections.
- 114. d** With a view to ensuring the conduct of free, fair, peaceful, transparent, ethical and safe elections during COVID-19, the Election Commission has revised the norms concerning star campaigners for all ongoing and future elections during the period of pandemic COVID-19. In the revised norms, the Commission said the maximum limit on the number of star campaigners for recognized National and State political parties will be 30 in place of 40 and for unrecognized registered political parties it will be 15 in place of 20.
- 115. c** Russia says it has successfully tested a new hypersonic anti-ship cruise missile in a move hailed by President Vladimir Putin as a "great event" for the country. The military said that the Tsirkon missile was fired from the Admiral Gorshkov frigate in the White Sea in the Russian Arctic and successfully hit its target.
- 116. a** Britain's Prince William, the Duke of Cambridge, launched a new 50-million pound Earthshot Prize, aimed at funding the most innovative solutions to some of the world's most pressing environmental challenges.
- 117. a** The appointment committee of the government named M Rajeshwar Rao, executive director of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) as the fourth deputy governor of the central bank.

- 118. a** As a part of Prime Minister Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) Scheme, Shri Durga Shanker Mishra, Secretary, Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs launched the Application Programming Interface (API) integration between the PM SVANidhi Portal and the State Bank of India (SBI) portal. This integration will facilitate seamless flow of data between the two portals i.e. PM SVANidhi Portal and SBI's eMudra Portal in a secure environment and expedite the loan sanctioning and disbursement process, which will benefit the street vendors seeking working capital loan under the Scheme.
- 119. d** The World Bank said that India's GDP is expected to contract by 9.6 per cent this fiscal which is reflective of the national lockdown and the income shock experienced by households and firms due to the COVID-19 pandemic, noting that the country's economic situation is "much worse" than ever seen before.
- 120. a** If we thought that Earth is just the perfect planet for human beings to thrive, then we might be wrong as scientists have discovered two-dozen planets that are habitable and perhaps support suitable conditions for the thriving of life forms. The research found out that there are at least 24 Superhabitable planets which may support life better than the Earth. As per the research conducted by the team led by scientist Dirk Schulze-Makuch of Washington State University and published in the journal Astrobiology — researchers have rummaged for the planets which are older, slightly warmer and wetter than the Earth.
- 121. a** Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered the keynote address at the Invest India Conference in Canada through video conferencing on 8th October 2020.
- 122. d** Union Minister Piyush Goyal has been given additional charge of the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution following the demise of Ram Vilas Paswan.
- 123. a** American poet Louise Gluck won the 2020 Nobel Literature Prize on October 8, an unexpected choice known for themes of childhood and family life that draw inspiration from myths and classical motifs. Prof. Gluck won the Pulitzer Prize in 1993 for her collection "The Wild Iris" and the National Book Award for her latest collection, "Faithful and Virtuous Night", in 2014.
- 124. d** In Nepal, India has constructed a new building of Shree Saraswati Secondary School in Tikapur, Kailali District.
- 125. b** The Reserve Bank of India in its bi-monthly Monetary Policy statement issued today has maintained a status quo keeping the key interest rates unchanged. The reverse repo rate remains unchanged at 3.35 per cent, the repo rate at four per cent.
- 126. a** Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman launched in Chennai Indian Bank's mentoring programme that aims to support 1,500 entrepreneurs across India in small businesses.
- 127. a** A Cabinet panel appointed J Venkatramu as managing director (MD) and chief executive officer (CEO) of India Post Payments Bank for three years.
- 128. c** Vistara and Axis Bank launched a co-branded forex card that can load up to 16 currencies. The card has locked-in exchange rates and the cardholder will accrue 3 award points on Club Vistara for every USD 5 or an equivalent value spent, the airline said in a press release.
- 129. d** World Post day happens each year on October 9, the anniversary of the Universal Postal Union, which started in 1874 in Switzerland.
- 130. d** President Ram Nath Kovind and Prime Minister Narendra Modi have paid their last respects to Union Minister and LJP leader Ram Vilas Paswan. The Lok Janshakti Party founder and Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution was elected to Lok Sabha eight times and also held the record of winning his constituency, Hajipur in Bihar with the highest margin for several years.

- 131. b** India's First Lichen Park comes up in Uttarakhand.
- 132. a** The Delhi Cabinet at a meeting approved the 'Tree Transplantation Policy' for the preservation of trees in the Capital. Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said the Cabinet also gave its nod for the installation of the second smog tower in the world at Connaught Place within ten months.
- 133. b** Equipped with an admirable network of entrepreneurs and absolute will power, WICCI bring up INDIAS FIRST Creative-arts mental health council in Uttar Pradesh.
- 134. c** Foreign ministers of Japan and Mongolia have agreed to cooperate in promoting a Free and Open Indo-Pacific.
- 135. a** Kasturi is the first national brand of Indian cotton.
- 136. b** India's first Hydrogen Fuel Cell (HFC) electric hybrid car successfully completed its maiden test run in Pune.
- 137. c** In Chess, Young Indian player Nihal Sarin emerged winner in the Chess.com's 2020 Junior Speed Online Championship in Chennai
- 138. a** Lewis Hamilton equalled Michael Schumacher's all-time record 91 Formula One wins with an Eifel Grand Prix victory that catapulted the Mercedes driver closer to a seventh world championship.
- 139. b** China commemorated the 110th birth anniversary of Indian doctor Dwarkanath Kotnis who served in the country during the Chinese revolution headed by Mao Zedong and the World War II.
- 140. d** World Migratory Bird Day is celebrated by people across the world on 10 October with the theme "Birds Connect Our World".
- 141. a** Goa has become the first state in the country to provide 100 per cent tap water connections in rural areas covering 2.30 lakh households.
- 142. c** The beaches which got International Blue flag Certification are Shivrajpur beach in Dwarka Gujarat, Ghoghla beach in Diu, Kasarkod and Padubidri in Karnataka, Kappad in Kerala, Rushikonda in Andhra Pradesh, Golden Beach in Odisha and Radhanagar beach in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- 143. d** Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a commemorative coin of 100 rupees in honour of Vijaya Raje Scindia through a virtual ceremony.
- 144. b** India is likely to overtake Japan as the third largest economy in the world by 2050 and continue in that position till 2100, according to a study published in the medical journal Lancet.
- 145. b** Afghanistan and India set aside the same share for health in their budgets, 4%.
- 146. d** In Tennis, Polish teenager Iga Swiatek has become the new French Open Champion.
- 147. a** Rafael Nadal tied Roger Federer with 20 Grand Slam titles by producing a nearly perfect performance against Novak Djokovic in the French Open final.
- 148. a** World Post Day 2020 is celebrated on October 9, to mark the anniversary of the establishment of Universal Postal Union (UPU) across the world.

- 149. d** Fleet Award Function (FAF), 2020 was organised to mark the successful culmination of the Operational Cycle of the Eastern Fleet of the Indian Navy at Visakhapatnam.
- 150. c** The 2020 Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded to the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP).
- 151. c** Arunachal Pradesh is poised to feature on country's aviation map with a greenfield airport at Hollongi, 15 kilometres from Itanagar.
- 152. b** Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a scheme to distribute property cards under the Svamitva scheme through video conference. Property card holders include beneficiaries from 44 villages of Madhya Pradesh.
- 153. a** The Seventh Meeting of Ministers of Justice of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Member States was hosted by Union Minister of Law and Justice Ravi Shankar Prasad.
- 154. a** E-Sanjeevani, Ministry of Health's telemedicine initiative, is rapidly gaining popularity amongst patients and doctors.
- 155. c** National Institute of Technology, Tiruchirappalli has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), Pune for installing a state of the art super computer in the process of becoming part of the National Super Computing Mission of the Government of India.
- 156. d** Reserve Bank of India has reallocated portfolios of deputy governors, with the department of regulation entrusted to the newly-appointed M Rajeshwar Rao.
- 157. a** Indian-origin philanthropist Harish Kotecha has been awarded the prestigious Sandra Neese Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of his work in the US for meeting the needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness.
- 158. a** Two women scientists won the 2020 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for creating genetic 'scissors' that can rewrite the code of life, contributing to new cancer therapies and holding out the prospect of curing hereditary diseases.
- 159. d** On December 19, 2011, United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution to declare October 11 as the International Day of the Girl Child, to recognize girls' rights and the unique challenges girls face around the world.
- 160. a** Dr. Balasaheb Vikhe Patil served as Member of Lok Sabha for multiple terms. His autobiography is titled 'Deh Vechwa Karani' which means 'dedicating one's life for a noble cause'.
- 161. c** Mukesh Ambani-owned Reliance Jio has become the first mobile service provider in the country to cross 40 crore customers mark. According to data released by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India.
- 162. c** The International Monetary Fund (IMF) slashed the growth forecast for India for the second time this year saying that the country's economy will contract 10.3% in FY21
- 163. a** China, Russia and Cuba won seats on the U.N.'s premiere human rights body on October 13 despite opposition from activist groups over their abysmal human rights records, but another target, Saudi Arabia, lost.
- 164. a** Qatar has ranked first worldwide on the Digital Accessibility Rights Evaluation Index 2020 (DARE Index 2020) released by the Global Initiative for Inclusive Information and Communication Technologies (G3ict).
- 165. b** India has proposed to construct a petroleum refinery in Thanlyin region near Yangon, and is planning to invest USD 6 billion.

- 166. c** In a first, eight of India's beaches including Shivrajpur (Dwarka-Gujarat), Ghoghla (Diu), Kasarkod and Padubidri (Karnataka), Kappad (Kerala), Rushikonda (AP), Golden Beach (Odisha) and Radhanagar (A&N Islands) got the eco-label of Blue Flag in a row.
- 167. d** The multi-national food and beverage major PepsiCo is setting up a greenfield potato chips production unit in Uttar Pradesh with an investment of Rs. 814 crore.
- 168. a** Indian Institute of Technology (IIT Madras) researchers have developed a biodegradable wrapping material, with a built-in anti-bacterial compound to prevent food contamination, and to reduce plastic waste.
- 169. d** Google's parent Alphabet and Soft Bank successfully tested the world's first LTE internet connectivity from a solar-powered unmanned aircraft flying above 62,000 feet.
- 170. b** U.S. economists Paul Milgrom and Robert Wilson won the Nobel Economics Prize for work on commercial auctions, including for goods and services difficult to sell in traditional ways such as radio frequencies.
- 171. c** India has been re-elected as the President of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and France as the Co- President for a term of two years.
- 172. a** The Union Cabinet has approved World Bank supported Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States -STARS project.
- 173. b** New Zealand Now Has the Most Powerful Passport in the World.
- 174. b** In a sign of France's greater focus on the Indian Ocean and the increasingly assertive behaviour of China across the region, President Emmanuel Macron has appointed the country's first ambassador for the Indo-Pacific.
- 175. b** India has contributed one million dollars to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for Palestine Refugees in Near East.
- 176. a** The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has asked all NGOs seeking foreign donations to open a designated FCRA account at the State Bank of India's New Delhi branch by March 31, 2021.
- 177. a** Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises- MSME Ministry has introduced Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning for strengthening its single window system portal 'Champions' to assist the MSMEs in the country.
- 178. a** Scientists at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Institute for Astronomy (IfA) produced the world's largest 3D astronomical imaging catalog of stars, galaxies and quasars using Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- 179. a** An experimental satellite developed by three students of Karur has been selected for launch in sub-orbital space by NASA.
- 180. d** A record 53.6 million metric tonnes (Mt) of electronic waste was generated worldwide in 2019, up 21 per cent in just five years, according to the UN's Global E-waste Monitor 2020.
- 181. a** In Ladakh Union Territory, Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Mr Nitin Gadkari initiated Asia's longest ZojiLa Tunnel works virtually, by igniting ceremonial blasts.
- 182. d** Mohali's Gharuan-based Chandigarh University has emerged as the top varsity in India which filed the highest number of patents in a year.

- 183. b** Vedanta Group firm Hindustan Zinc Ltd (HZL) has signed a pact with Gujarat government to set up a greenfield zinc smelter in the state.
- 184. a** Kyrgyzstan President Sooronbai Jeenbekov announced his resignation in a bid to end the turmoil that has engulfed the Central Asian nation after a disputed parliamentary election.
- 185. c** India has been designated the Vice-Chair of Good Laboratory Practice, GLP Working Group of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), recognising the contribution of the Indian GLP programme.
- 186. b** India will deliver a Kilo Class submarine INS Sindhuvir to Myanmar Navy as part of defence cooperation.
- 187. c** The Nandankanan Zoological Park (NZP) in Bhubaneswar, which suffered a huge loss following its closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic, has revived its innovative 'Adopt-An-Animal' programme to mobilise resources for animals.
- 188. b** Asan Conservation Reserve has become Uttarakhand's first Ramsar site, making it a 'Wetland of International Importance', announced the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- 189. b** Veteran Pakistani wicket-keeper Kamran Akmal became the world's first wicket-keeper to effect 100 stumpings in T20 cricket, the shortest format of the game.
- 190. c** Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a commemorative coin of Rs. 75 denomination to mark the 75th Anniversary of Food and Agriculture Organization, FAO.
- 191. a** Amid tensions between Beijing and Tokyo, Japan, began test flights of an unmanned aerial vehicle SeaGuardian in a bid to learn whether it can carry out key duties, including search, rescue and maritime surveillance.
- 192. b** Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor (L-G) Manoj Sinha announced the 'My Town My Pride' programme, a part of the public outreach initiative "in J&K's towns to deliver services at doorsteps to the urban population".
- 193. a** The government issued a clarification to its September 2019 policy that allowed up to 26% foreign direct investment (FDI) in the 'news digital media sector' through the approval route.
- 194. d** India hosted the virtual Summit of Ministers of Justice of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, SCO.
- 195. d** Food Processing Industries Minister Narendra Singh Tomar virtually inaugurated the India - International Food and Agri Week. Mr Tomar said Indian food processing sector is 32 per cent of India's food market.
- 196. d** Overall, India ranks 94 out of 107 countries in the Index, lower than neighbours such as Bangladesh (75) and Pakistan (88). 2020 scores reflect data from 2015-19.
- 197. c** Reserve Bank of India will conduct its first-ever Open Market Operation (OMO) purchase of State Development Loans (SDLs) on 22nd October.
- 198. a** Amur falcons, capable of flying the longest distances in one go, have begun to arrive in Manipur's Tamenglong district following their routine annual migration course.
- 199. d** Global Handwashing Day occurs on 15 October of each year.

- 200. b** A 35-year-old male elephant was radio-collared in Uttarakhand for the first time in the state's history to monitor its movements ahead of Maha Kumbh 2021.
- 201. c** The state's first solar tree and perhaps the tallest in the world will be erected in Sangam city under the Smart City project.
- 202. d** SCO Heads of Government meeting on 30th November 2020 to be hosted by India.
- 203. d** Aishwarya Sridhar became the first Indian to win the Wildlife Photographer of the Year award.
- 204. c** Uttar Pradesh government has launched a 6-month long women empowerment campaign 'Mission Shakti' to raise awareness and tackle crime against women in the state.
- 205. a** Dr. Jitendra Singh laid the foundation stone of Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya Shiksha Bhawan at Central University of Jammu
- 206. b** President Vladimir Putin proposed a one-year extension without conditions of the last major nuclear arms reduction accord between Russia and the U.S.
- 207. c** Indian Banks' Association (IBA) said Union Bank of India's MD and CEO Rajkiran Rai G has been elected as the association's chairman for the term 2020-21.
- 208. b** The cultivation of heeng started in India by its first plantation at Lahaul and Spiti district in Himachal Pradesh, at an altitude of about 11 thousand feet above sea level.
- 209. d** Nine States and Union Territories have been selected for upgradation to Khelo India State Centre of Excellence (KISCE).
- 210. d** This year marks the 27th anniversary of the declaration by the General Assembly of 17 October as the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.
- 211. d** The 8th annual joint exercise between Indian and Sri Lankan navies 'SLINEX-20' is held in Trincomalee coast.
- 212. a** India and Chile held their first joint commission meeting and agreed to add new momentum to their relations in a wide range of fields including trade and commerce, agriculture, health and social security, defence and space.
- 213. c** Kerala's first water taxi service launched in the backwaters of Alappuzha.
- 214. d** Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern won in New Zealand's general elections. With 87 per cent of the vote counted, Ardern's Labour Party won a landslide victory with 49 per cent support, heading to its biggest share of the vote since the 1930s.
- 215. c** ICICI Bank has made it even more convenient for its customers to avail its services. The bank announced for its customers the launch of services like creating fixed deposits (FDs), payment of utility bills and accessing details of trade finance on WhatsApp.
- 216. a** BRAHMOS, the supersonic cruise missile was successfully test fired from Indian Navy's indigenously-built stealth destroyer INS Chennai, hitting a target in the Arabian Sea.
- 217. b** Kings XI Punjab (KXIP) captain KL Rahul achieved a new milestone as he became the first Indian batsman to have scored more than 500 runs in three consecutive IPL seasons.

- 218. c** In Badminton, former World Champion Nozomi Okuhara clinched the Denmark Open title beating three-time world champion Carolina Marin in women's singles.
- 219. a** Most food crops depend on C3 photosynthesis where carbon is fixed into sugar inside cells called 'mesophyll' where oxygen is abundant.
- 220. a** The third World Statistics Day will be celebrated around the globe on 20 October 2020 with the theme "Connecting the world with data we can trust."
- 221. d** Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari will virtually lay the foundation stone for the first-ever multi-modal logistic park of the country in Assam.
- 222. b** NITI Aayog announced the establishment of a Frontier Technologies Cloud Innovation Centre, CIC with Amazon Web Services, AWS.
- 223. d** In any inflation index, the base year is the first year of an inflation index, with an index value of 100.
- 224. c** Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar launched AYUSHMAN SAHAKAR scheme.
- 225. c** Australia will join Malabar naval exercise involving India, US and Japan. The Annual Naval Exercise Malabar-2020 is expected to be held in the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea later this year.
- 226. a** MCX launched the country's first real-time base metal index in the country, MCX iCOMDEX Base Metal or METLDEX.
- 227. b** World Bank sanctions Rs 3 crore for Goa to develop India's first sand dune parks.
- 228. b** Gene-edited wheat is to be grown in Argentina, as the country becomes the first in the world to give the green light on the use of the drought-resistant crop.
- 229. d** 24 October has been celebrated as United Nations Day since 1948.
- 230. a** The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) has signed an agreement with the Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi and the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) to create a pool of officials who will work to find technology solutions for its operational challenges.
- 231. c** Union Minister Jitendra Singh inaugurated the nine-day Navratra festival at Katra in Jammu. The festival was organised by the Directorate of Tourism, Jammu, in collaboration with the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, Katra and the Hotel, Restaurant & Travel Associations of Katra.
- 232. d** Maharashtra has become the first state in the country to cap the prices of masks. N95 masks will now be available at Rs 19 to Rs 49, while two-layer and three-layer masks will be available for Rs 3 to 4.
- 233. a** In an historic first visit by a Gulf Arab nation, a United Arab Emirates delegation reached Israel.
- 234. b** The poll spending limit for candidates contesting Lok Sabha and Assembly elections has been enhanced by 10 percent.
- 235. c** Saudi Arabia was ranked first in the Arab world for issuing scientific papers on the coronavirus.

- 236. c** The panel, headed by P Umesh, Consultant-Liability Insurance, has been asked to study various statutory provisions on information and cybersecurity, and to evaluate critical issues involving legal aspects of transactions in cyber space.
- 237. c** State Bank of India (SBI) has been authorised to issue and encash Electoral Bonds through its 29 Authorized Branches with effect from 19th October to 28th of October this year.
- 238. a** In Ladakh, the recent studies have found that the tectonic faultline is moving northward. Dehradun situated Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology noted that the fault line is tectonically active along the Indus Suture Zone (ISZ).
- 239. b** Chennai Super Kings (CSK) skipper MS Dhoni became the first cricketer to play 200 Indian Premier League (IPL) matches when his side took the field against Rajasthan Royals.
- 240. d** The Police Commemoration Day is observed on 21st October every year to honor the loyalty and supreme sacrifice of police personnel for the nation.
- 241. a** Peru and Switzerland sign ‘world first’ carbon offset deal under Paris Agreement.
- 242. b** Uttar Pradesh Government has announced to provide financial assistance to labourers for historical and religious tour in a unique step towards welfare of the labourers in state. Government will also provide money to buy books for the study of their daughters.
- 243. a** India has hosted the Third India-US 22 Ministerial Dialogue on 27th of October in New Delhi.
- 244. c** Central Bank of Bahamas Launches Landmark ‘Sand Dollar’ Digital Currency.
- 245. b** Facebook introduced the first open-source multi-lingual machine translation model M2M-100 that can translate between any pair of 100 languages without relying on English data.
- 246. b** Minister of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises- MSME, Nitin Gadkari launched India’s first-ever high quality Khadi Fabric Footwear, designed by Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) through Video Conference.
- 247. a** An estimated one in six children — or 356 million globally — were living in extreme poverty before the COVID-19 pandemic began, and this is set to worsen significantly
- 248. c** Researchers have identified a previously unknown set of salivary glands in the upper part of the throat, discovering what could be the first set of major glands to be found in the human body in 300 years.
- 249. a** Saudi Arabia has announced a world-first initiative that will offer free golf to women across the Kingdom.
- 250. a** NDTV has been chosen by Snap Inc for a unique collaboration, which will see NDTV providing breaking news and premium content to Snapchat’s users in the country.
- 251. a** Himachal Pradesh’s Mandi district has bagged top position among 30 districts of the country in successful implementation of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY).
- 252. c** The Government of Jammu and Kashmir has introduced certain substitutes in 226(2) Article of Jammu and Kashmir Civil Service Regulations, on the orders of Lieutenant Governor.

- 253. d** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has virtually inaugurated three key projects in Gujarat. He also launched the Kisan Suryodaya Yojana for the farmers of Gujarat.
- 254. a** Culture and Tourism Minister Prahlaad Singh Patel virtually launched Life in Miniature project. The project is collaboration between the National Museum, New Delhi, Ministry of Culture, and Google Arts and Culture.
- 255. a** The signature creation of legendary cartoonist R.K. Laxman will be built to mark his birth centenary and commemorate his special connection with Pink City
- 256. c** Labour Minister Santosh Gangwar released the new series of Consumer Price Index for industrial workers (CPI-IW) with 2016 Base Year in New Delhi.
- 257. b** India-born US District Judge Amit Mehta will preside over the Justice Department's crucial lawsuit against internet search giant Google.
- 258. a** The European Union has awarded its top human rights prize to the Belarus opposition movement and its leader, Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, for their challenge to President Alexander Lukashenko's long, hard-line reign.
- 259. c** Country's largest power producer NTPC Ltd came first among Indian PSUs under World's Best Employer this year in a list published by Forbes.
- 260. b** Pakistan is preparing to contest India's claim in the European Union that basmati rice sold in the bloc is genuine only if it originates from specific areas of India.
- 261. d** The Northern Railways' Delhi Division announced the 'App-Based Bags on Wheels', a first of its kind service available for railway passengers in India.
- 262. d** European Union environment ministers struck a deal to make the bloc's 2050 net zero emissions target legally binding
- 263. c** Three-time Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri was renamed to the post to create a cabinet that can lift the country out of its worst economic crisis in decades.
- 264. b** Indian Navy has operationalized the first batch of three Women Pilots on Dornier Aircraft by the Southern Naval Command (SNC) at Kochi.
- 265. b** Prime Minister Modi e-dedicated country's biggest cardiac hospital at U.N. Mehta Institute of Cardiology and Research Center and launched a Mobile Application for tele-cardiology at Civil Hospital campus in Ahmedabad.
- 266. a** Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, Dr. M. Rajeevan dedicated Flash Flood Guidance services, first of its kind for South Asian countries namely India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and Sri Lanka.
- 267. b** Britain and Japan formally signed a trade agreement marking Britain's first big post-Brexit deal on trade, as it continues to struggle to agree on a deal with its closest trading partners in the European Union.
- 268. a** Israel and Sudan agreed to take steps to normalize relations in a deal brokered with the help of the United States, making Khartoum the third Arab government to set aside hostilities with Israel in the last two months.
- 269. b** IIT Kharagpur has developed a novel Industry 4.0 technology for remotely controlled factory operations and real-time quality correction during industrial production in India's advanced manufacturing sector.

- 270. a** Asan Conservation Reserve has become the first wetland from Uttarakhand to be included in the prestigious Ramsar sites list.
- 271. a** Jammu and Kashmir has become the first union territory in the country to operationalise public financial management system (PFMS) at the district level.
- 272. c** Under the patronage of Arunachal Government and with efforts of Pema Khandu, Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, a War Memorial has been constructed at Bum La, where Sub Joginder Singh, 1st Battalion the Sikh Regt made the supreme sacrifice.
- 273. b** Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh digitally laid the foundation stone of Punjab's first dedicated sports university and a bus stand, along with various other development projects in Patiala.
- 274. b** India's maiden seaplane service is likely to take off from Sabarmati riverfront to the Statue of Unity on October 31.
- 275. b** Human rights lawyer Aman Singh making history as he was projected to win the riding (as constituencies are called in Canada) of Richmond-Queensborough. Aman Singh becomes first turbaned Sikh to be elected to British Columbia assembly.
- 276. c** Indian-origin opposition candidate Wavel Ramkalawan, whose great grandfather was an indentured labourer from Bihar, has won Seychelles' presidential election with a solid majority.
- 277. c** The world's first iodine-based sanitisers, which are said to be more effective and long-lasting than alcohol-based hand cleansers, will be launched in India over the next two weeks.
- 278. c** Dairy production in India began as far back as in the 3rd millennium BCE and may have been a factor behind sustaining the Indus Valley Civilisation.
- 279. b** Union minister Kiren Rijiju flagged off a 200-km long 'Fit India Walkathon' being organised by border guarding force ITBP in Rajasthan's Jaisalmer.
- 280. d** In 1972, the United Nations General Assembly decided to institute a World Development Information Day coinciding with United Nations Day on October 24.
- 281. c** Labour and Employment Secretary, Apurva Chandra, has been elected as the Chairperson of the Governing Body of the ILO for the period October 2020- June 2021.
- 282. a** Uttar Pradesh government has secured the first rank in central government's one of the most ambitious schemes - the PM Atmanirbhar Nidhi Scheme (SVANidhi Scheme) by approving the highest number of loans under the scheme in the country.
- 283. a** Jammu and Kashmir High Court's Chief Justice, Gita Mittal inaugurated the first Family Court in the Union Territory at Srinagar.
- 284. a** The first transport project under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was inaugurated in Lahore.
- 285. b** Uttar Pradesh has emerged as the top destination for attracting the highest number of domestic tourists in 2019.
- 286. c** Pakistan will remain on the grey list of global terror financing watchdog, Financial Action Task Force (FATF) as it has not been able to fulfil six out of the 27 mandates to check terror funding.
- 287. b** Former U.S. security contractor Edward Snowden has been granted permanent residency in Russia.

- 288. a** UN officials said the 50th ratification from Honduras had been received.
- 289. c** Nokia has been chosen by NASA to build the first ever cellular network on the moon.
- 290. a** Six-times world champion Lewis Hamilton became the most successful Formula One driver of all time in terms of race wins with a dominant 92nd career victory at the Portuguese Grand Prix.
- 291. a** Seven mainstream parties of Jammu and Kashmir gave formal shape to their recently cobbled alliance for the restoration of Article 370, electing National Conference's Farooq Abdullah as its chairman and PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti as vice chairperson.
- 292. a** Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari laid the foundation stones of nine National Highway projects in Tripura.
- 293. d** Vigilance Awareness Week is observed every year during the week in which the birthday of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel falls on 31st of October.
- 294. b** Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda launched two Centers of Excellence for Tribal Welfare through video conference. The first initiative strengthening Panchayati Raj institutions will be launched in five districts covering 30 Gram Panchayats and 150 villages of Jharkhand.
- 295. c** Armenia and Azerbaijan have been at loggerheads over the mountainous region of Nagorno-Karabakh since 1988.
- 296. c** Amy Coney Barrett officially took the first of two oaths that will allow her to join the Supreme Court of USA, shortly after being confirmed by a deeply divided Senate.
- 297. d** Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga has said that the country will achieve zero carbon emissions by 2050.
- 298. a** As per the Ookla September speed test index, South Korea has the best mobile internet speed of 121 Mbps while India is at 131st place with 12.07 Mbps average speed.
- 299. a** The postgraduate programme in enterprise management (PGPEM), offered by the Indian Institute of Management-Bangalore (IIM-B), has been ranked in the top 100 in the Financial Times (FT) EMBA 2020 ranking
- 300. c** The NASA's Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA) has confirmed, for the first time, water on the sunlit surface of the Moon.
- 301. a** In a first for Metro services in north India, the Noida Metro Rail Corporation (NMRC) officially renamed the Sector 50 station as "Pride Station" dedicating it to the transgender community.
- 302. b** To promote inter-caste marriages Odisha chief minister Naveen Patnaik launched a web portal that would help inter-caste couples get an incentive within 60 days of application.
- 303. c** India and US held the 3rd bilateral two plus two Ministerial Dialogue in New Delhi and signed the landmark defence pact BECA.
- 304. c** The BRICS Parliamentary Forum was held in virtual format. It was chaired by Chairman of Russian Parliament, Vyacheslav Volodin.

- 305. d** In a breakthrough towards “green electronics”, researchers at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Jodhpur, have developed transistors with biodegradable gelatin as an electrical insulator, which may be utilised as breath analyser.
- 306. d** Kerala had become the first state in the country to fix the floor price for vegetables.
- 307. c** Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati researcher has developed a low-cost membrane technology to produce psychoactive drugs and anti-aging compounds from wide range of agricultural resources
- 308. a** Aditya Puri stepped out of HDFC Bank’s corporate headquarters after handing over charge to Sashidhar Jagdishan as the new chief executive and managing director of the largest private sector lender.
- 309. b** The World Day for Audiovisual Heritage (WDAH) on 27th October provides an occasion to raise general awareness of the need to take urgent measures and to acknowledge the importance of audiovisual documents.
- 310. c** A six year old Bangladeshi boy Anzar Mustaeen Ali won a special prize of USD 1000 for his artwork in the global art competition organised by the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR).
- 311. c** NITI Aayog, Ministry of Power, Rockefeller Foundation and Smart Power India launched the ‘Electricity Access in India and Benchmarking Distribution Utilities’ report.
- 312. d** In Madhya Pradesh, the Mobile Polling Units are going door-to-door for the first time for collection of ballot papers. By-elections are being held for 28 State Legislative Assembly seats in the state.
- 313. b** India’s largest power producer NTPC entered into foreign currency loan agreement with Japanese government’s financial institution for about Rs 3,582 crore.
- 314. c** Uttar Pradesh, Tripura, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu will get a vulture conservation and breeding centre each, according to the Action Plan for Vulture Conservation 2020-2025.
- 315. b** Scientists have identified the fossil of a giant bird that lived about 50 million years ago, with wingspans of up to 21 feet that would dwarf largest bird, the wandering albatross.
- 316. d** Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates, will issue foreign direct investment (FDI) licences to allow foreign investors to own 100% of projects in the emirate in sectors including agriculture, industry and service.
- 317. b** The Foreign Minister of Central Asian Countries welcomed the provision by India of one billion US dollar Line of Credit for priority developmental projects in fields such as energy, IT, healthcare, education and agriculture in the region.
- 318. d** The 1.8 kilometre long Feni bridge connecting Sabrum in India with Ramgarh in Bangladesh will be completed by December this year.
- 319. b** The United Kingdom has entered into a strategic partnership to develop India’s fledgling international financial services centre GIFT City, and agreed to set up a new Fund of Funds to be managed by the State Bank of India group in order to route U.K.’s future capital investments into India.
- 320. c** The Global Himalayan Expedition (GHE) is among the winners of the 2020 UN Global Climate Action Award.
- 321. b** Assam has become the first state in the country to add a ‘transgender’ option in the gender category of the civil service examination form.

- 322. a** Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd and Tech Mahindra signed a contract worth Rs 400 crore for implementation of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) to support HAL's 'Project Parivartan'.
- 323. a** China is building the world's highest-altitude cloud computing data centre in Tibet that will meet the data storage needs of the country and South Asian nations like Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan.
- 324. c** The country's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI) announced that it has entered into a strategic partnership with trusted global non-profit education platform edX in order to offer its Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs).
- 325. b** Hyderabad Airport becomes the first one in India to offer E-boarding services to flyers boarding international flights.
- 326. a** NITI Aayog and Quality Council of India (QCI) launched the 'National Program and Project Management Policy Framework' (NPMPPF), with the aim of bringing radical reforms in the way infrastructure projects are executed in India.
- 327. c** Actor Victor Banerjee won two global awards in two days for his role as a priest, Father O'Hara, in the 2019 film, Josef - Born in Grace.
- 328. b** Olympic champion Abhinav Bindra has taken another big step towards strengthening Indian sports with the opening of a sports medicine and research institute in Bhubaneswar.
- 329. a** Three species of black coral have been discovered on the seabed of the northern Pacific Ocean, an area where several countries have contracts to explore for metals including cobalt and nickel as they race to find new supplies of the key battery elements.
- 330. c** The Caribbean's most eco-certified hotel is now setting the world standard as Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort in Aruba is the first-ever hotel in the world to win the prestigious Global United Nations 2020 Climate Action Award for Climate Neutral Now.
- 331. a** Kerala was adjudged the best governed State in the large States category, while Uttar Pradesh ended at the bottom, in the Public Affairs Index-2020 released by the Public Affairs Centre.
- 332. b** Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated Sardar Patel Zoological Park and Geodesic Aviary Dome in the Statue of Unity complex near Kevadia in Narmada district of Gujarat.
- 333. c** Railways has launched Meri Saheli initiative for focused action on security of women passengers across all zones.
- 334. a** Former diplomat and Central Information Commissioner Yashvardhan Kumar Sinha is tipped to be appointed as the country's next Chief Information Commissioner (CIC), two months after the position at the top transparency watchdog fell vacant.
- 335. b** The first phase of the Malabar Naval exercise including Australia along with Japan and the U.S., is scheduled to be held next week off the Visakhapatnam coast.
- 336. b** Agri-lender Nabard has proposed to set up a subsidiary to provide a guarantee for loans under agriculture and rural development.
- 337. d** Biocon Ltd, a Bengaluru-headquartered biopharmaceuticals company, has been ranked among the Top 5 Global Biotech Employers for 2020 in the U.S.-based Science magazine's annual 'Science Careers Top 20 Employers' list.
- 338. d** Indian wrestler-turned-Mixed Martial Arts fighter Ritu Phogat won her third consecutive MMA championship title in Singapore.

- 339. b** Chris Gayle became the first batsman to get to 1,000 sixes in T20 cricket history when he smashed the seventh of his eight sixes during his belligerent 99 against Kings XI Punjab in an Indian Premier League match.
- 340. a** The Indian Army has developed and launched a secure messaging application, Secure Application for the Internet or SAI.
- 341. b** Kabartal, a freshwater marsh of North Bihar is designated as Ramsar Site. With this the network of Indian Ramsar Sites becomes the largest in South Asia.
- 342. d** The country's first defence park is ready for inauguration at Ottappalam in Palakkad district of Kerala.
- 343. a** Quanhai Li has been elected as World Sailing President, announced at World Sailing's Virtual General Assembly.
- 344. a** IndusInd Bank announced that it has gone live as a 'Financial Information Provider' (FIP) under the new 'Account Aggregator Framework' of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), making it the first bank in the country to do so.
- 345. d** The Reserve Bank will evaluate the impact of multi-media public awareness campaign 'RBI Kehta Hai', which was launched in 14 languages to educate the public about safe banking and financial practices.
- 346. a** A five-member team of researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee have developed the world's first specific reliable bacterial biosensor to detect the presence of common environmental pollutant- Sodium Dodecyl Sulphate/Sodium Lauryl Sulfate (SDS).
- 347. c** Corbett Tiger Reserve (CTR) will have women nature guides for the first time in its history.
- 348. a** Former India women's cricket team captain Shantha Rangaswamy will be conferred the Lifetime Achievement award for 2019 by the Karnataka state government on November 2 for her contribution to Indian and Karnataka women's cricket.
- 349. c** India's only medallist in the World Athletics Championships and Olympian Anju Bobby George was elected unopposed as the Athletics Federation of India's (AFI) first woman senior vice-president.
- 350. b** Manipuri's 17-year-old defender Bikash Yumnam has become the first Indian footballer to make it to The Guardian's Next Generation List – a list of the best young footballers from across the globe.