

# **SSC BANKING MANTHAN**

## **Current Affairs Supplement**

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## **Preface**

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**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 **SSC Banking, Insurance and RBI** 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's first online waste exchange platform launched by Andhra Pradesh

- Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy launched India's first online waste exchange platform of Andhra Pradesh Environment Management Corporation (APEMC) on the eve of "World Environment Day 2020" on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2020.
- Andhra Pradesh which was hit by an industrial gas leakage on 7 May at LG Polymers in Visakhapattanam has a big number of industries falling under red and orange categories. The Andhra Pradesh Environment Management Corporation (APEMC) will work in close coordination with Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board (APPCB), with a strong regulatory framework to handle the waste from cradle to grave.
- It is a proactive initiative of the State government towards environment protection, covering 100 per cent safe disposal of toxic waste, proper tracking, scrutiny and audit of waste. It will actively promote the six 'R's - Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Refurbish, Redesign and Remanufacture.
- Indian wing of the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) has praised Andhra Pradesh CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy for launching an online waste exchange platform which will help the authorities monitor the movement of hazardous waste real-time using the tools incorporated in the platform.

Andhra Pradesh is the first state in India to be formed under the State reorganisation act in 1956 and first state to be created based on the language in India. On 2 June 2014, the north-western portion of Andhra Pradesh was separated to form the new state of Telangana. The longtime capital of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, was transferred to Telangana as part of the division. Amaravati is the de facto capital city of the Andhra Pradesh. Biswabhusan Harichandan is serving as the current Governor of Andhra Pradesh. 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.

#### Gujarat is the first state to complete the migration of workers to their home state

- The Labour and Employment department of the Gujarat government said that as many as 1,017 trains were run between May 2 and May 31 ferrying 15.18 lakh migrant workers to their home states and thereby announced the closure of Shramik Special train service.
- According to Additional Chief Secretary of State Labor and Employment department Vipul Mitra, this was the biggest planned migration by any state in Independent India and Gujarat is the first state to complete the migration of workers to their home state through Shramik Special trains.

On 1 May, 2020, the central government permitted the Indian Railways to launch "Shramik Special" trains for the migrant workers and others stranded. On 3 May, the Ministry of Home Affairs mildly reprimanded the state governments for hurriedly requesting for trains to transport migrants, stating that the trains were primarily mainly meant for those who were stranded due to the sudden lockdown, and not the migrants.

## Centre announces ‘Mudra Shishu loan’ for small businesses and cottage industries

- Centre has taken several steps so that **shopkeepers do not suffer due to the COVID-19 pandemic**. Government has asked shopkeepers not to worry about restarting shops and handcarts as Unlock 1.0 begins tomorrow.
- The Government has **pledged to make an Atma Nirbhar Bharat**. A **1500 crore interest subvention for small business and cottage industries** has been announced under Mudra Shishu loan.
- Under this scheme, one lakh beneficiaries can avail interest benefit of 2 per cent for a year. A **Rs 5000 crore package** was announced for the roadside hawkers. **Under this, 50 lakh street vendors can avail loan upto Rs 10,000**. Street vendors can contact any nationalised bank to avail the benefit.

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs **launched PM Svanidhi, or Pradhan Mantri Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi scheme**, which is a special micro-credit facility plan to **provide affordable loan of up to Rs. 10,000 to more than 50 lakh street vendors**, who had their businesses operational on or before 24 March. The scheme is valid until March 2022.

## Now online, a map tracking migrants, real time

- **India Observatory**, an open-source database, has come up with a **GIS-enabled dashboard that includes an India map reflecting the movement of migrants in real time on their long journeys**, often on foot, along with facilities and relief organisations on their routes.
- The platform, collaboration with **Foundation for Ecological Security (FES)**, Anand as its main nodal point, is called **CoAST India (Collaboration/Covid Action Support Group)**. It draws information from **55 organisations on the ground**, mostly in villages, and aims to make such data available so that it would enable governments and small local civil society groups to be of assistance.

**India Observatory (IO)** is a research unit at the **London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE)**. The **IO and the IG Patel Chair** were established in 2006 in partnership with the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** and the **State Bank of India (SBI)** in honour of former Director of LSE and former Governor of RBI, **Dr IG Patel**. The Director of the IO, and **current holder of the IG Patel Chair**, is **Lord Nicholas Stern** of Brentford. **Dr Ruth Kattumuri**, Co-Director of the IO, is founder of the **IG Patel Chair** and the **India Observatory**.

## Prime Minister Modi launches Video Blogging Contest “My Life, My Yoga”

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** launched a **video blogging competition** and invited citizens to **participate in it during his “Mann Ki Baat” address to the nation**.
- The **“My Life, My Yoga” contest (also called “Jeevan Yoga”)** is a **joint effort by the Ministry of AYUSH and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR)**. It focuses on the transformative impact of yoga on the lives of individuals and it comes as one of the activities related to the **observation of the sixth International Day of Yoga (IDY) coming up on June 21**.
- The contest has gone live on the social media handles of the Ministry of AYUSH. **The observation of IDY in the past years has been marked by thousands of harmonious mass demonstrations of yoga in public places**.
- **To enter into the contest, participants are required to upload a three-minute video of three Yogic practices (kriya, asana, pranayama, bandha or mudra)**, including a short video message or description on how the said Yogic practices influenced their life. The video may be **uploaded on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram with the contest #MyLifeMyYogaINDIA** and appropriate category hashtag.

**Narendra Damodardas Modi** is serving as the **14<sup>th</sup> and current Prime Minister** of India since 2014. He was the **Chief Minister of Gujarat from 2001 to 2014** and is the **Member of Parliament for Varanasi**. He is the **first prime minister outside of the Indian National Congress to win two consecutive terms** with a full majority and the second to complete five years in office after **Atal Bihari Vajpayee**. Modi led the **BJP in the 2014 general election** which gave the party a majority with **282 seats in the Indian lower house of parliament, the Lok Sabha**, the **first time for any single party since 1984**. In 2019 Indian general election, **Bharatiya Janata Party won 303 seats**, further increasing its substantial majority and the **BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) won 353 seats**.



## PM Modi launches one-stop platform to help MSMEs grow, solve problems

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi **launched the technology platform CHAMPIONS, a one-stop-shop solution of the MSME Ministry** that would attempt to **make smaller entrepreneurship evolve and grow by solving their grievances.**
- The acronym **CHAMPIONS stands for Creation and Harmonious Application of Modern Processes for Increasing the Output and National Strength.** This ICT-based system has been set up to **help the MSMEs in the present difficult situation** and also to handhold them to become national and international 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.

## India's first national Artificial Intelligence Portal launched by IT minister Ravi Shankar Prasad

- On the occasion of the **first anniversary of the second tenure of Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government**, Union Minister for Electronics and IT, Law and Justice and Communications Ravi Shankar Prasad **launched India's national Artificial Intelligence Portal called [www.ai.gov.in](http://www.ai.gov.in).**
- “**Artificial Intelligence Portal has been jointly developed by the Ministry of Electronics and IT and IT Industry.** National e-Governance Division of Ministry of Electronics and IT and NASSCOM from the IT industry will jointly run this portal.
- **This portal shall work as a one-stop digital platform for AI-related developments in India, sharing of resources such as articles, startups, investment funds in AI, resources, companies and educational institutions related to AI in India. The portal will also share documents, case studies, research reports etc. It has a section about learning and new job roles related to AI”.**

In computer science, **artificial intelligence (AI)**, sometimes called **machine intelligence**, is **intelligence demonstrated by machines**, in contrast to the **natural intelligence displayed by humans and animals**. Leading AI textbooks define the field as the study of “intelligent agents”: any device that perceives its environment and takes actions that maximize its chance of successfully achieving its goals. Colloquially, the term “**artificial intelligence**” is **often used to describe machines (or computers) that mimic “cognitive” functions that humans associate with the human mind**, such as “**learning**” and “**problem solving**”. **John McCarthy is one of the “founding fathers” of artificial intelligence**, together with Alan Turing, Marvin Minsky, Allen Newell, and Herbert A. Simon. **McCarthy coined the term “artificial intelligence” in 1955.**

## ‘Railways first isolation coach deployed in Delhi to aid treatment of Covid-19 patients’

- **Indian Railways’ first isolation coach has been deployed to aid the treatment of coronavirus patients in Delhi.** As per the official, the Railway isolation facility, which has been deployed on Delhi government’s request, has 10 non-AC coaches with 160 beds, one AC coach for healthcare staff. Delhi Chief Minister shared details of the **state of healthcare infrastructure** in the national capital in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.

**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 18<sup>th</sup> 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.**

## Nitin Gadkari announces development of new Greenfield expressway to Amritsar

- Centre announced the development of a new Greenfield connectivity to Amritsar City from Nakodar via Sultanpur Lodhi, Goindwal Sahib, Khadoor Sahib as part of Delhi-Amritsar Expressway.
- Minister for Road Transport & Highways and MSMEs Nitin Gadkari said, **the road from Amritsar to Gurdaspur will also be fully developed and made completely signal free.** With this, there will be options to travel to Gurdaspur onwards from Nakodar either via Amritsar or via Kartarpur.
- This Greenfield alignment will not only provide shortest and alternate express connectivity to Amritsar city but also to other religious centres of Sultanpur Lodhi, Goindwal Sahib, Khadoor Sahib as well as the recently developed Dera Baba Nanak/Kartarpur Sahib International Corridor in Punjab.

Nitin Jairam Gadkari was served as the President of the Bharatiya Janata Party 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 contested 2014 Loksabha election successfully from Nagpur constituency, Maharashtra and won it.

## Telangana CM inaugurates Kondapochamma Reservoir in Siddipet

- **Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao inaugurated a pump house** in Siddipet district which will lift Godavari water to a reservoir which is at a height of 618 meters from the source—Godavari river.
- The water will flow from the reservoir through gravity to surrounding districts of Medak, Siddipet, Sangareddy, Yadadri-Bhongir and Medchal Malkajgiri which did not have any irrigation facilities till now.
- **As part of the Kaleswaram Project, water is pumped from the Medigadda Barrage on the Godavari** into several reservoirs through canals, tunnels and aqueducts to be distributed to several districts in the state.
- While the Godavari river flows at a lower level, all the reservoirs are at a higher level which **requires lifting and pumping the water.** The Rs 3,500 pump house and Kondapochamma Sagar Reservoir is located 210 kms away from Godavari and is at a height of 618 metres.

## Government launches SWADES to conduct skill mapping of citizens returning under VBM

- Union Government has **launched a new initiative SWADES- Skilled Workers Arrival Database for Employment Support** to conduct a skill mapping exercise of the returning citizens under the Vande Bharat Mission.
- This is a **joint initiative of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Civil Aviation Ministry and External Affairs Ministry.**
- **SWADES aims to create a database of qualified citizens based on their skillsets and experience to tap into and fulfil demand of Indian and foreign companies.** The collected information will be shared with the companies for suitable placement opportunities in the country. **The returning citizens are required to fill up an online SWADES Skills Card.**

## Centre launches TULIP portal to provide benefit to all stakeholders

- The Human Resources Development Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri launched a joint initiative, TULIP aimed at providing internships to the engineering students in the country.
- **TULIP will mutually benefit all stakeholders, including the students, urban local bodies and the Industry in identifying young talents.** He said this unique and first of its kind opportunity in the country will help unleash India's demographic dividend by creating a talent pool which can pave the way for making Indian cities more self-reliant.

**Ministry of Human Resource Development, formerly Ministry of Education** is responsible for the development of human resources in India. The Ministry is **held currently by Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank .He represents the Haridwar Parliamentary constituency of Uttarakhand** in the 17<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha.

## PM Modi addresses virtual Global Vaccine Summit; pledges USD 15 million to GAVI

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi pledged USD 15-million as India's contribution to the vaccines alliance GAVI at the Global Vaccine Summit hosted by the UK.
- The summit, held virtually given the coronavirus pandemic lockdown around the world, was opened by British Prime Minister Boris Johnson to urge nations around the world to pledge funding for vaccinations to save millions of lives and protect the world from future outbreaks of infectious diseases.
- Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi was among around 35 heads of state and government participants, including US President Donald Trump, to virtually join the conference aimed at raising USD 7.4 million to immunise a further 300 million children in the world's poorest countries by 2025.
- The UK government said the funding raised from the summit will not only protect children from deadly diseases like polio, diphtheria and measles and save up to 8 million lives, but will also help ensure a global recovery from the coronavirus.

GAVI, officially Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance (previously the GAVI Alliance, and before that the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization) is a public-private global health partnership with the goal of increasing access to immunisation in poor countries. GAVI was created in 2000 as a successor to the Children's Vaccine Initiative, which had been launched in 1990. GAVI focus is 'Vaccines against: human diseases'. It is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.

## India, Australia elevate their partnership to Comprehensive Strategic partnership

- The first ever India-Australia Virtual Summit held between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Australian counterpart Scott Morrison. These include the Joint Declaration on elevating the relationship from a strategic partnership to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.
- The second joint declaration is on a shared vision for Maritime Cooperation in the Indo Pacific. India and Australia announced a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between the two countries after the virtual summit.
- They have also jointly announced a declaration on a Shared Vision for Maritime Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific. Both the countries also signed seven agreements after talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Australian counterpart Scott Morrison.
- Seven MoUs include, Framework Arrangement on Cyber and Cyber-Enabled Critical Technology Cooperation, cooperation in the field of mining and processing of Critical and Strategic minerals, Arrangement concerning Mutual Logistic Support.
- Both the countries also signed MoUs implementing Arrangement concerning cooperation in Defence Science and Technology, Co-operation in the field of public Administration and Governance Reforms, cooperation in vocational Education and Training and on water resources management.

## Center removes food grains, oilseeds, potato, onions, pulses from Essential Commodities Act

- The Union Cabinet approved a historic amendment to Essential Commodities Act. This is a visionary step towards transformation of agriculture and raising farmers' income. Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar said, with the amendment to Essential Commodities Act, commodities like cereals, pulses, oilseeds, edible oils, onion and potatoes have been removed from list of essential commodities.

The Essential Commodities Act is an act of Parliament of India which was established to ensure the delivery of certain commodities or products, the supply of which if obstructed owing to hoarding or blackmarketing would affect the normal life of the people. This includes foodstuff, drugs, fuel (petroleum products) etc. The ECA was enacted in 1955. It has since been used by the Government to regulate the production, supply and distribution of a whole host of commodities it declares 'essential' in order to make them available to consumers at fair prices. Additionally, the government can also fix the maximum retail price (MRP) of any packaged product that it declares an "essential commodity". For instance, the Union Government on 14 March 2020 brought masks and hand-sanitisers under the act to make sure that these products, key for preventing the spread of COVID-19 infection, are available to people at the right price and in the right quality during the COVID-19 pandemic in India.



## Kerala becomes first state to provide free Internet for the poor

- Kerala has declared that their ambitious broadband project: Kerala Fibre Optic Network (K-FON) project will roll out from December, 2020. This means that from December onwards, all the citizens below poverty live in Kerala will get free high-speed Internet. And those who cannot afford, will be provided high speed Internet at a subsidized rate.
- Rs 1500 crore has already been allocated for K-FON project, which will be spread the usage of Internet all across the state, and trigger a new digital economy. Kerala will be the first state to provide free high speed broadband to the poor people.

Kerala is a state on the southwestern, Malabar Coast of India. It was formed on 1 November 1956 following the States Reorganisation Act by combining Malayalam-speaking regions. Kerala has the highest literacy rate 93.91% in the 2011 census; the highest life expectancy, 77 years; and the highest sex ratio, 1,084 women per 1,000 men. Arif Mohammad Khan is the current Governor of Kerala. Kerala is known as “God’s own country” and is one of the popular tourist destinations in India. Pinarayi Vijayan is the current Chief Minister of Kerala, in office since 25 May 2016. Kerala is the first State to have a floating solar power plant with a capacity of 250 MW.

## HRD Minister launches information booklet ‘Safe online learning in the times of COVID-19’

- Union Human Resource Development Minister, Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank launched the information booklet titled ‘Safe online learning in the times of COVID-19’ to raise awareness in students and teachers.
- While digitally launching the booklet in New Delhi, in the Covid-19 situation, there has been a huge increase in online and distance learning and teachers are engaging with students through online platforms. NCERT and UNESCO have jointly developed this booklet which will facilitate in raising awareness of our students and teachers as well as ensure timely action in cases of cyber bullying.

## Uttar Pradesh introduces a MoU Monitoring Mechanism for efficient implementation of investment proposals

- Uttar Pradesh has introduced a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) Monitoring Mechanism in a move that aims at better implementation of investment proposals through handholding interested investors and better tracking of the MoUs signed.
- For this, the state will be launching a new MoU tracking portal that will be integrated with its single window system Nivesh Mitra. Besides, all concerned departments will have to assign nodal officers for implementation of the MoUs and multi-level review meetings will be held by the MoU department every month.

## Power Minister launches the ‘#iCommit’ initiative on World Environment Day

- Union Power Minister R K Singh initiated the ‘#iCommit’ campaign on the occasion of World Environment Day. The initiative is a clarion call to all stakeholders and individuals to continue moving towards energy efficiency, renewable energy, and sustainability to create a robust and resilient energy system in the future.
- The ‘#iCommit’ initiative, driven by Energy Efficiency Services Limited is uniting a diverse set of players such as Governments, Corporates, Multilateral and Bilateral Organisations, Think Tanks and Individuals.
- A transformation of the entire energy value chain in the country and have been working towards ensuring 24X7 energy access and security for all our citizens. He said the #iCommit initiative can bring together a diverse spectrum of government and private players to build a new energy future for India. The initiative is centred around the idea of building an energy resilient future.]

Raj Kumar Singh is a former Indian bureaucrat and a current Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of Power, Minister of State (Independent Charge) of the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy and Minister of State in the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship. He is a Member of the Indian Parliament for Arrah, Bihar, since May 2014. Singh is a 1975 batch Bihar cadre Indian Administrative Service officer and former Home Secretary of India.

## Singapore is top source of foreign direct investment into India

- Singapore was the **top source of foreign direct investment into India** for the second consecutive financial year, accounting for about 30 per cent of FDI inflows in 2019-20. In the **past two financial years, FDI from Singapore has surpassed that from Mauritius.**
- In the last financial year, **India attracted USD 14.67 billion in FDI from Singapore**, whereas it was **USD 8.24 billion from Mauritius**, according to the data of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT). **In 2018-19, Singapore's FDI aggregated at USD 16.22 billion, while that from Mauritius it was USD 8.08 billion.**
- According to experts, Singapore has been able to outpace Mauritius with its **ease of doing business policies, simplified tax regime and a large number of private investors.** “**Mauritius was once seen as a tax haven making it the most favoured nation** for routing investments in India. April 2017 brought key amendments to the bilateral treaties with Mauritius and Singapore which neutralized the tax benefits available in Mauritius. In India **Brownfield investment is more dominant than in the world. If investments tend to be in the form of mergers and acquisitions, it is known as brownfield investment.**
- **Sectors which attracted maximum foreign inflows during 2019-20 include services (\$7.85 billion), computer software and hardware (\$7.67 billion), telecommunications (\$4.44 billion), trading (\$4.57 billion), automobile (\$2.82 billion), construction (\$2 billion), and chemicals (\$one billion),** the the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) data showed.

**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.**

## Rajasthan Chief Minister Gehlot launches Online Labour Employment Exchange

- **Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot recently launched the ‘Raj Kaushal Portal’ and ‘Online Shramik Employment Exchange’** through video conferencing.
- It is a major initiative taken by the state government after the lockdown, **to make it easier for the workers to get employment who are suffering from livelihood losses** and to make the labour available to the industries facing labour shortage.
- Taking a note of the **migration of workers from the state and the arrival of migrant workers due to the corona pandemic, CM Gehlot had directed to create an online labour exchange.** The **Online Labour Employment Exchange will be a platform to address the needs of local industries by matching them with the skill sets of workers available to balance the demand and supply of labour in the desert state.**

**Rajasthan is India's largest state by area, Thar Desert, also known as the Great Indian Desert; More than 60% of the desert lies in the state of Rajasthan, and extends into Gujarat, Punjab, and Haryana. Kalraj Mishra is the current Governor of Rajasthan. Sardar Patel Global Center for Security, Counter Terrorism and Anti-insurgency was set up in Rajasthan.**

## Karnataka launches app for real time info on rains, flooding in Bengaluru

- **The Karnataka government launched “Meghasandesha” App that would provide real-time information as well as forecast on rains, flooding and thunderstorm alerts in Bengaluru.**
- The app has been developed by **Karnataka state natural disaster monitoring centre along with the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and the Department of science and technology among others.** The app is launched at a

time when Bengaluru, among other parts of the state, has been receiving heavy rains that has once again revealed the chinks in civic infrastructure in India's technology capital.

**Karnataka** is a state in the south western region of India. It was formed on 1 November 1956, with the passage of the States Reorganisation Act. Originally known as the State of Mysore, it was renamed Karnataka in 1973. The capital and largest city is Bengaluru. Bookanakere Siddalingappa Yediyurappa is serving as the 19<sup>th</sup> and current Chief Minister of Karnataka. Vajubhai Rudabhai Vala is currently serving as the Governor of Karnataka.

### Madhya Pradesh launches urban street vendor welfare programme

- Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan launched Street Vendor Registration Portal and “Mukhyamantri Shahri Path Vyavsayi Utthan Yojana” and transferred Rs 300 crore to urban local bodies. “A few days ago we provided Rs 1,555 crore to 22,800 Gram Panchayats for development purpose and today's amount has also been transferred to the accounts of urban local bodies amid the Covid-19 crisis.”
- “I would like to thank Prime Minister Narendra Modi for starting Pradhan Mantri Path Vikreta Aatmanirbhar Nidhi Karyakram along with this Shehri Path Vyavasayi Utthan Yojana will commence in order to benefit the state's urban businessmen under which small businessmen or vendors will be given Rs 10,000 in the form of working capital,” said the Chief Minister.

**Madhya Pradesh** (meaning Central Province) is a state in central India. Its capital is Bhopal. Nicknamed the “Heart of India” due to its geographical location in India. Madhya Pradesh is the second-largest state in the country by area after Rajasthan. This state was the largest in India by area until 2000, when its southeastern Chhattisgarh region was made as a separate state. MP has the largest reserves of diamond and copper in India. Lalji Tandon is serving as the current Governor of Madhya Pradesh.

### Odisha accords state anthem status to Bande Utkala Janani

- Almost two decades after the then speaker of the assembly ruled that the patriotic song **Bande Utkala Janani** should be adopted as the state anthem, the Odisha cabinet accorded the status to it.
- The song will be sung at all government programs, assembly sessions, college and university cultural functions. The anthem will be played or sung in schools, colleges, meetings, cultural events.
- Whenever the anthem is sung or played, everyone will have to stand in attention except senior citizens, patients, infants, disabled and pregnant women. **Bande Utkala Janani** was written by poet Lakshmikanata Mohapatra.
- The poem envisages Utkala, one of the former names of present-day Odisha, who maintains her self-respect and dignity from a position of confidence and strength rather than insecurity and fear.
- The song was first sung at the Utkal Sammilani's conference at Balasore in 1912, a few months after Rabindra Nath Tagore's Jana Gana Mana, now the national anthem, was sung.
- It is sung during various conferences of the Utkal Sammilani, the organisation that spearheaded the movement of a separate province of Odisha since 1912.

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 13<sup>th</sup>-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. Professor Ganeshi Lal is current Governor of Odisha. Naveen Patnaik is the current Chief Minister of Odisha.

### Manipur CM inaugurates Plant Health Clinic in Imphal

- With an aim to boost economic growth of Manipur through agriculture and horticulture, Chief Minister N. Biren Singh inaugurated a Plant Health Clinic at the Directorate of Horticulture and Soil Conservation, Imphal. During the inaugural function, the Chief Minister also launched a mobile soil testing laboratory van.



- The Chief Minister said that his government has decided to **give more emphasis on agriculture and horticulture sectors in this hour of the pandemic COVID-19**. He assured that the priority of the government is to make Manipur a self-sufficient and self-reliant region. He said that most of the indigenous crops and fruits are disappearing due to the lack of scientific research and practices.

**Manipur is a state in northeastern India, with the city of Imphal as its capital. Najma Akbar Ali Heptulla is the current Governor of Manipur and the Chancellor of Jamia Millia Islamia. Nongthombam Biren Singh is the current Chief Minister of Manipur.**

### Indian Air Force designs, develops & manufactures ARPIT

- The Indian Air Force has **designed, developed and manufactured an Airborne Rescue Pod for Isolated Transportation (ARPIT)**. This pod will be utilised for evacuation of critical patients with infectious diseases including COVID-19 from high altitude area, isolated and remote places.
- Requirement of an air evacuation system with facility to prevent spread of infectious aerosol from a COVID-19 patient during air travel was felt by IAF when COVID-19 was declared as a pandemic. **This indigenously designed system has been developed at a cost of Rs. 60,000 only, which is very less as compared to the imported systems costing up to Sixty Lakh.**
- The system has been **developed as a lightweight isolation system made from aviation certified material**. The ARPIT Design requirements have been **evolved and are based on the guidelines issued by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers (NABH) and Centre for Disease Control (CDC), USA.**

**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. Its primary mission is to secure Indian airspace and to conduct aerial warfare during armed conflict. It was officially established on 8 October 1932 as an auxiliary air force of the British Empire which honoured India's aviation service during World War II with the prefix Royal. After India gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1947, the name Royal Indian Air Force was kept and served in the name of Dominion of India. With the government's transition to a Republic in 1950, the prefix Royal was removed. The President of India holds the rank of Supreme Commander of the IAF. Since 1950 the IAF has been involved in four wars with neighboring Pakistan and one with the People's Republic of China. Other major operations undertaken by the IAF include Operation Vijay, Operation Meghdoot, Operation Cactus and Operation Poomalai. Air Chief Marshal Rakesh Kumar Singh Bhadauria is the current Chief of the Air Staff of the Indian Air Force. IAF is headquartered in New Delhi.**

### Gairsain declared summer capital of Uttarakhand

- Gairsain in Chamoli district was declared as the summer capital of Uttarakhand.** A notification in this regard was issued by Chief Secretary Utpal Kumar Singh after Governor Baby Rani Maurya gave her assent to the move.
- Mr. Trivendra Singh Rawat dedicated the summer capital status to Gairsain** to thousands of men and women of Uttarakhand who fought for its statehood.

**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 27<sup>th</sup> state of the Republic of India, being created from the Himalayan and adjoining northwestern districts of Uttar Pradesh.**

### IIT Bombay is India's top university, says 2021 global ranking

- The Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, is **India's highest ranked university among top 200 global universities**, with Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru, and IIT Delhi also figuring in the 200-bracket, according to the QS World University Rankings.
- The **rankings for 2021 are based on six indicators**: academic reputation, employer reputation, citations per faculty, faculty/student ratio, international faculty ratio and international student ratio, compilers of the rankings said.

- **IIT Bombay is ranked 172<sup>nd</sup>, while IISc is 185<sup>th</sup> and IIT Delhi 193<sup>rd</sup>.** Overall, 21 Indian higher education institutions figure in the top 1000. India's best research university is IISc, which received a perfect 100/100 on the 'citations per faculty' indicator. **Other IITs in the top 500 are: Madras (275), Kharagpur (314), Kanpur (350), Roorkee (383) and Guwahati (470).**
- **Massachusetts Institute of Technology retains its position as the world's best university, while the top three institutions remain American: MIT is followed by Stanford University (2<sup>nd</sup>) and Harvard University (3<sup>rd</sup>).**

### Centre Mandates Green Strip on Sticker Providing Registration Details For BS-VI Vehicles

- Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has **mandated a strip of green colour of one centimetre width on top of the existing sticker carrying details of registration for BS-VI vehicles of any fuel type.**
- **For petrol and CNG vehicles, there is a light blue colour sticker and for diesel vehicle, it is of orange colour.** Such stickers will now have a green strip of one centimetre width on top for BS VI four wheel vehicles.
- **Green strip of such thickness for BS 6 vehicles for sticker of registration details is being stuck on windshields of 4 wheelers.**

Nitin Jairam Gadkari was served as the President of the Bharatiya Janata Party 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 contested 2014 Lok Sabha election successfully from Nagpur constituency, Maharashtra and won it.

### Cyclone-hit Maharashtra renames its environment ministry as 'Environment and Climate Change Ministry'

- Days after being hit by cyclone Nisarga, **Maharashtra has renamed its Environment Ministry as Environment and Climate Change Ministry.** The department is handled by Shiv Sena MLA Aaditya Thackeray.
- The new, **renamed department will work on 'the five elements of the nature'.** The proposal, however, needed a clearance from the state cabinet and was accordingly cleared during a Cabinet meeting convened under Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray.
- **Maharashtra is among a few states in the country which have a dedicated department to address climate change.** Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana are some other states to have such a department.

Maharashtra is India's second-most populous state and third-largest state by area. Nagpur is Maharashtra's second capital and hosts the winter session of the state legislature. Pune is its cultural capital. Shiv Sena President Uddhav Thackeray takes oath as the Chief Minister of Maharashtra. Uddhav Thackeray is the first of his family to be the chief minister of Maharashtra. His father Bal Thackeray founded the Shiv Sena over five decades ago. Bhagat Singh Koshiyari is serving as the current Governor of Maharashtra.

### Indian Railways achieves this for first time since introduction of rail system

- **Indian Railways has added yet another feather in its cap through some breakthrough achievements.** Indian Railways has given **best-ever safety performance during the past year with zero passenger fatalities due to railway accidents since April, 2019.**
- Measures to enhance safety include - **Highest ever elimination of level crossings (1274) and highest ever renewal of rails for 5181 track km in 2019-2020.** Also, total 1309 ROBs/RUBs were constructed and 1367 bridges were rehabilitated during 2019-2020 to enhance safety on the railways network. **The remarkable feat has been achieved for the first time in the year 2019-2020 since introduction of Railway System in India 166 years ago in the year 1853.**

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 18<sup>th</sup> 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.



## Severe Cyclonic Storm Nisarga was the strongest tropical cyclone to strike the Maharashtra

- Severe Cyclonic Storm Nisarga was the strongest tropical cyclone to strike the Indian state of Maharashtra in the month of June since 1891. It was also the first cyclone impact to Mumbai since Cyclone Phyan of 2009.
- The third depression and second named cyclone of the annual cyclone season, Nisarga originated as a depression in the Arabian Sea and moved generally northward.
- On 2 June, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) upgraded the system to a cyclonic storm, assigning the name Nisarga. On the next day, Nisarga further intensified to a severe cyclonic storm and turned to the northeast, ultimately made landfall south of Mumbai. Nisarga weakened once inland and dissipated on 4 June.
- Nisarga was the second cyclone to strike the Indian subcontinent within two weeks' time, after Cyclone Amphan, the first super cyclonic storm occurred in the Bay of Bengal in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, hit the state of West Bengal in May 2020.

The Nisarga Cyclone is formed because of the depression in the Arabian Sea. Bangladesh has given the name 'Nisarga'. The Regional Specialized Meteorological Centre (RSMC) New Delhi Tropical Cyclone Center is responsible for naming the tropical cyclones that have formed over the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea when they have reached the relevant intensity. The two states that are to be affected by the Cyclone Nisarga: Maharashtra and Gujarat. Cyclone Nisarga is a tropical cyclone formed because of exceptional warm ocean temperatures. Doppler Weather Radars (DWRs) at Mumbai and Goa are being used to track the cyclonic storm.

## India Rankings-2020 for Higher Educational Institutions released; IIT Madras retains first position in overall ranking

- Union Minister for Human Resource Development Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank virtually released India Rankings-2020 for Higher Educational Institutions. IIT, Madras retains first position in Overall Ranking as well as in Engineering.
- Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru tops the University list. IIM, Ahmedabad tops in Management Category and AIIMS occupies the top slot in Medical category for third consecutive year.
- Miranda College retains first position amongst colleges for third consecutive year, Maulana Azad Institute of Dental Sciences, Delhi secures first position in Dental category. Dental institutions included for first time in India Rankings-2020.
- "India Rankings 2020" of Institutions of Higher Education in various categories on the basis of their performance on five broad categories of parameters. The Minister released India Rankings 2020 virtually in 10 categories. In 2020, an addition to nine rankings one domain "Dental" has been introduced for the first time bringing the total tally to 10 categories / subject domains.

Ministry of Human Resource Development, formerly Ministry of Education is responsible for the development of human resources in India. The Ministry is held currently by Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank. He represents the Haridwar Parliamentary constituency of Uttarakhand in the 17<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha.

## A 'chedodu' for three communities

- Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy launched a welfare scheme benefiting tailors, Rajakas (dhobis) and Nayee Brahmins (barbers), who had lost their livelihood due to COVID-19 pandemic.
- Titled 'Jagananna Chedodu', the scheme provides a one-time financial assistance of Rs.10,000 each to the 2.47 lakh beneficiaries under 60 years of age. The scheme has been extended to the barbers who own a shop.

## 500-year-old temple found submerged in Odisha's Mahanadi

- The temple was found in the mid-river near Baideswar in the Padmavati area in Cuttack. An ancient temple that remained submerged in Mahanadi in Odisha has been found, said experts who are leading a documentation project of heritage sites in the river valley.

- The 60-feet temple, **believed to be around 500 years old**, was located recently during an exercise as part of the project. **The temple dates back to the late 15<sup>th</sup> or early 16<sup>th</sup> century**, considering the construction style of the Mastaka and the materials used for the construction.

### Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle Complex inaugurated at Visakhapatnam

- The **Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle (DSRV) Complex** was **inaugurated at Visakhapatnam** by Vice Admiral Atul Kumar Jain. The DSRV Complex is **designed to accommodate the newly inducted Submarine Rescue System** with state of the art facilities to store the DSRV assets in a Rescue-Ready state.
- The Indian Navy has **inducted two such systems** which will **provide rescue cover to submarines on the West and East coast of India respectively**. Currently, there are about **40 nations that operate submarines in the world out of which only a few have any form of submarine rescue capability**.
- The third generation IN submarine rescue capability can, therefore, be called upon to assist during submarine contingencies of other navies in the IOR.

The Indian Navy is the naval branch of the Indian Armed Forces. The President of India is the Supreme Commander of the Indian Navy. The Chief of Naval Staff, a four-star admiral, commands the navy. The Indian Navy traces its origins back to the East India Company's Marine which was founded in 1612 to protect British merchant shipping in the region. In 1793, the British East India Company established its rule over eastern part of the Indian subcontinent i.e. Bengal, but it was not until 1830 that the colonial navy was titled as His Majesty's Indian Navy. When India became a republic in 1950, the Royal Indian Navy as it had been named since 1934 was renamed to Indian Navy.

### India-ASEAN Youth Dialogue 2020 held Online from June 8-10 Amid COVID-19 Pandemic

- During the third **India-ASEAN youth dialogue** that was held from June 8 to 10, **India and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) pledged to enhance cooperation** in ways to effectively and constructively channelising youthful energy.
- According to reports, the dialogue took place online and primarily revolved around the coronavirus pandemic that has gripped the world. As per reports, the dialogue established that the revival and **re-establishment of Nalanda University in Bihar as a seat of learning was a big step in the direction towards channelising youthful energy**.
- The university also offers several scholarship programs for ASEAN students in a diverse set field. **The dialogue also acknowledged the launching of 1,000 PhD fellowships for ASEAN students at the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs)**.
- In a statement, the Ministry of External Affairs said that the **current ASEAN-India Dialogue was taking forward the legacy of the previous ASEAN-India Youth summits held in 2017 and 2019** which also provided a much-needed platform for constructive and impactful dialogue.

India as well as ASEAN member nations have some of the youngest populations in the world. India alone has roughly more than 450 million people who are between the ages of 15-35 meaning that it has the largest number of young people in the world. The statistic of young people is only expected to grow in the coming years.

### Railways creates new world record by successfully running first Double-Stack Container Train in OHE electrified territory

- Indian Railways has created a new world benchmark by successfully running first Double-Stack Container Train in high-rise in Over Head Equipment electrified territory on Western Railway.
- This tremendous achievement is a **first of its kind in the entire world and will also boost the ambitious mission of Green India**.
- Railway Ministry said, with this remarkable development, **Railways has become the first to run Double-Stack Container train with high reach pantograph in high rise Over Head Equipment territory**. The Operations successfully commenced on 10<sup>th</sup> June from Palanpur and Botad stations in Gujarat.

## NHAI becomes first construction sector organisation to go ‘Fully Digital’

- As one of the biggest reform, the **National Highway Authority of India (NHAI)** under **Ministry of Road Transport and Highways** has gone ‘Fully Digital’, with the launch of unique cloud based and Artificial Intelligence powered Big Data Analytics platform – Data Lake and Project Management Software.
- **The entire project management work flow of NHAI is transformed from manual to online portal based**, wherein the complete project execution operations including ‘workflow with time lines’ and ‘alert mechanism’ have been configured.
- **All project documentation, contractual decisions and approvals are now being done through portal only.** With advance analytics, the Data Lake software will forecast the delays, likely disputes and will give advance alerts. Thus apart from expediting the decision making, it will also facilitate in taking correct and timely decisions as the system is likely to predict financial impacts of different alternatives based on the historical data. This will reduce a lot of disputes.

**National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)** is an autonomous agency of the Government of India, set up in 1988 and is responsible for management of a network of over 50,000 km of National Highways out of 1,15,000 km in India. It is a nodal agency of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways. **NHAI has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Indian Space Research Organisation for satellite mapping of highways.** **Sukhbir Singh Sandhu (IAS)** is the present Chairman of NHAI since October 2019. **Nitin Jairam Gadkari** is the current Minister for Road Transport & Highways, Minister of Shipping and the Minister of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.

## First India-Pakistan meets on locusts likely on June 18

- **The first meeting between India and Pakistan on the problem of desert locust parties harvesting crops can be held on 18 June.** The two countries will hold six bilateral meetings from June to November to deal with this problem.
- **A technical-level meeting between India and Pakistan to discuss the issue of locust menace has been proposed for June 18,** the Ministry of External Affairs said. India had taken an initiative to develop regional cooperation to control locusts and as part of this cooperation it has **dispatched 20,000 litres of pesticide to Iran.** This pesticide is expected to reach Iran at the port of Chabahar on June 15, he said.

The **desert locust (Schistocerca gregaria)** is a species of locust, a periodically swarming short-horned grasshopper in the family Acrididae. They are found mainly in Africa, through Arabia, West Asia and extending into parts of South Asia. **On February the UN stated that the swarms are the largest in Somalia and Ethiopia in 25 years.** The swarm spread into east Africa from war-torn Yemen, after heavy rainfall in late 2019 created ideal conditions for the insects to flourish, and as of February 2<sup>nd</sup>, **Somalia is the first country in the region to declare an emergency over the infestation.** **On 1 February 2020, the Pakistani government declared a national emergency to counter an invasion of desert locusts that are destroying crops.** Locusts have been migrating from Africa to Pakistan, and have reached India, as of May 27, 2020. They have spread widely due to availability of crops from one place to another. The states widely affected are Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and Punjab.

## Central Railway launches Robotic ‘CAPTAIN ARJUN’ to intensify screening, surveillance

- **Central Railway added another feather in its cap to its many innovations during this lockdown.** Railway Protection Force, Pune has **launched a Robotic ‘CAPTAIN ARJUN’ (Always be Responsible and Just Use to be Nice)** to intensify the screening and surveillance.
- This Robot is launched to screen passengers while they board trains and keep a watch on anti-social elements. **The Brain Child behind this innovation of ‘Captain ARJUN’, Alok Bohra DIG/RPF, Central Railway** said that the high infection rates among multiple segments of people across the world have hampered efforts to tackle COVID-19 pandemic that prompted to consider robotic screening.
- **Captain ARJUN can be deployed for multiple uses and it is an effective element in station access control and will augment the station security plan.**



## Government launches AarogyaPath portal for healthcare supply chain

- **AarogyaPath**, a web based solution for the healthcare supply chain was launched to serve manufacturers, suppliers and customers to effectively deal with the Covid-19 pandemic. This national healthcare supply chain portal will remove supply chain bottlenecks during the Covid-19 pandemic. This public platform will **help healthcare users like hospitals, pathology laboratories, research institutes, medical colleges and patients.**
- The vision of this initiative is to **set up an information management and forecasting database platform at national level.** It will capture demand and supply scenarios for key healthcare needs items. **It will also provide seamless access to suppliers, manufacturers and importers for prevailing needs and demand related to medical equipment, diagnostic instruments, drugs, Personal Protective Equipment, respiratory assistance devices.**

**Aarogya Setu** is a **COVID-19 tracking mobile application** developed by the **National Informatics Centre** that comes under the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.** This app is an updated version of an earlier app called **Corona Kavach** which was already released by the Government of India.

## India will be Security Council President for August, 2021: UN

- **India**, which has been elected as a **non-permanent member of the Security Council**, will serve as the **president of the powerful 15-nation UN body** for the month of **August, 2021.** The presidency of the Council is held by each of the members in turn for one month, following the **English alphabetical order** of the member states' names.
- According to the information released by the office of the UN spokesperson, **India will assume the rotating presidency of the Council for the month of August next year.** India will **preside over the Council again for a month in 2022.**
- In a **first-of-its-kind election**, ambassadors and diplomats from **192 member states** cast their ballots in the General Assembly wearing masks and in adherence with the strict social distancing guidelines amidst the **COVID-19 pandemic.** **India, the endorsed candidate from the Asia-Pacific States, won 184 votes out of the 192 ballots cast.**
- **Tunisia will begin 2021 as the President of the Council in January**, followed by a month each for the rest of the year by the **UK, the US, Vietnam, China, Estonia, France, India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico and Niger.**
- In **2021, the newly-elected members India, Ireland, Kenya, Norway and Mexico** will sit for a two-year term beginning **January 1, 2021** at the UN high-table along with the **five permanent members – China, France, Russia, the UK and the US – as well as non-permanent members Estonia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia and Vietnam.**

**United Nations Security Council (UNSC)** is one of the six principal organs of the **United Nations.** Under the Charter, the Security Council has **primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.** It has **15 Members**, and each Member has one vote. Under the Charter, all Member States are obligated to comply with Council decisions. The **permanent members of the United Nations Security Council** (also known as the **Permanent Five, Big Five, or P5**) are **China (formerly the Republic of China), Russia (formerly the Soviet Union), France, the United Kingdom, and the United States.** **Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit** was an **Indian diplomat** and elected as the **first female president of the United Nations General Assembly.** **Antonio Guterres** is a **Portuguese politician and diplomat** who is serving as the **ninth Secretary-General of the United Nations.** Previously, he was the **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees** between **2005 and 2015.**

## UP becomes top state in country to provide employment to workers under MGNREGA

- **Uttar Pradesh** has become the top state in the country to provide employment to the workers under the **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme MGNREGA.** Uttar Pradesh provided employment to more than **57 lakh workers** under **MGNREGA.**
- According to the data released by officials, **57 lakh 12975 workers** got employment in around **57 thousand village panchayats** of the state which is **18% of the total work generated under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)** in the country.

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.

### India, with 12 nations, leads initiative at UN to counter misinformation on COVID-19

- India, along with 12 other countries, has led an initiative aimed at spreading fact-based content to counter misinformation on the coronavirus, with over 130 nations endorsing the global call to fight the “infodemic” relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- On the initiative by Australia, Chile, France, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Latvia, Lebanon, Mauritius, Mexico, Norway, Senegal and South Africa, a total of 132 member states endorsed a cross-regional statement on “infodemic” or manipulated information.
- UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has said that apart from fighting the deadly COVID-19 pandemic, the world is also seeing a “dangerous outbreak” of misinformation about harmful health advice, hate speech and wild conspiracy theories and antidote to this pandemic of misinformation is fact-based news and analysis.
- India's Permanent Mission to the UN said that it supported the UN Communications Response initiative ‘#VERIFIED’ and “calls for global action to fight infodemic in times of COVID-19.
- United Nations launched ‘Verified’, an initiative to combat the growing scourge of COVID-19 misinformation by increasing the volume and reach of trusted, accurate information. The 13 nations co-authored the cross-regional statement, which said that in times of the COVID-19 health crisis, “the spread of the ‘infodemic’ can be as dangerous to human health and security as the pandemic itself.

### Shri Dharmendra Pradhan launches Indian Gas Exchange, first nationwide online delivery-based gas trading platform

- Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas & Steel Shri Dharmendra Pradhan launched the Indian Gas Exchange (IGX), first nationwide online delivery-based gas trading platform, in an e-ceremony.
- IGX will be a delivery-based trading platform for delivery of natural Gas. The trade on the platform commenced in his auspicious presence. Incorporated as a wholly owned subsidiary of the IEX - India's energy market platform, IGX will enable market participants to trade in standardised gas contracts.
- The platform is fully automated with web-based interface to provide seamless trading experience to the customers and It will help the nation move towards free market pricing of natural gas. As there will be a market driven pricing mechanism, India Gas Exchange (IGX) will play a bigger role towards realizing a free market for gas.

The IGX is a digital trading platform that will allow buyers and sellers of natural gas to trade both in the spot market and in the forward market for imported natural gas across three hubs —Dahej and Hazira in Gujarat, and Kakinada in Andhra Pradesh. Imported Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) will be regassified and sold to buyers through the exchange, removing the requirement for buyers and sellers to find each other. LNG imports are set to become a larger proportion of domestic gas consumption as India moves to increase the proportion of natural gas in the energy basket from 6.2% in 2018 to 15% by 2030. Currently, the pipeline infrastructure necessary for the transportation of natural gas is controlled by the companies that own the network. State-owned GAIL owns and operates India's largest gas pipeline network, spanning over 12,000 km.

### Uttar Pradesh cabinet gives nod to set up workers welfare commission

- In Uttar Pradesh, a special commission has been set up for the employment generation and safeguarding the interests of workers. State Cabinet gave its nod to set up Uttar Pradesh workers welfare commission.



- **Named as the UP Kamgar Shramik Sevayojan Avam Rozgar Aayog**, the commission will have an executive board in which many ministers and representatives of different worker's organizations will be members.
- **The Chief Minister or a cabinet minister nominated by him** will be **its chairman and the minister for labour its convener**. Within a few hours of its formation the commission held its first meeting also at the Chief Minister's residence to discuss ways to increase opportunities for workers and labourers in the state. Issue of safeguarding the interests of workers and labourers of the state was also discussed.

### Kishan Reddy launches microbe-killing device

- **Union Minister of State for Home affairs G. Kishan Reddy** launched '**GermiBAN**', a device developed by **Atal Incubation Centre & Association of Lady Entrepreneurs of India-Women Entrepreneurs HUB (ALEAP WE HUB)**.
- **The device can kill 99.9% of surface and air microbes** and is useful for isolation wards, quarantine centres, hospitals and all general places for killing viruses like coronavirus.
- Appreciating the ALEAP WE HUB enterprise, he pointed out that startups like these have a potential to grow their business and government will provide them support in all aspects to **create an 'Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Innovations' including materials made to combat COVID-19** like PPE kits, critical care equipment, testing kits, large area sanitisation, IT solutions such as geofencing, tracking etc.

**Gangapuram Kishan** is the current Minister of State for Home Affairs Government of India. He is the Member of Parliament representing **secunderabad parliament constituency** first Time in 2019.

### First antigen based COVID-19 testing kit approved in India

- **Indian Council of Medical Research**, the body leading the COVID-19 response in the country, has **validated the first antigen based testing kit in India** that will allow infected patients to be diagnosed much faster, at lower rates and without laboratory examinations of the samples.
- The antigen test—which can detect presence of molecules of the pathogen that triggers immune response in an infected person—has been developed by a private biotechnology firm **SD Biosensor**—has also been validated by **AIIMS, New Delhi** apart from the **ICMR** and can detect presence of **SARS CoV 2** in swab collected from nose alone.
- Each of the kit called **Standard Q COVID-19 Ag rapid antigen detection test** will cost less than Rs 500, can be used in field conditions and can show results within **30 minutes** as opposed to **RT-PCR test** that takes **3-4 hours** once in labs.

**Reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR)** is a laboratory technique combining reverse transcription of RNA into DNA (in this context called complementary DNA or cDNA) and amplification of specific DNA targets using polymerase chain reaction (PCR). It is primarily used to measure the amount of a specific RNA. This is achieved by monitoring the amplification reaction using fluorescence, a technique called **real-time PCR** or **quantitative PCR (qPCR)**. Combined RT-PCR and qPCR are routinely used for analysis of gene expression and quantification of viral RNA in research and clinical settings.

### Jammu and Kashmir conferred with three prestigious awards for outstanding contribution to socio-economic development of Gram Panchayats

- **Jammu and Kashmir** has been conferred with three prestigious **Deen Dayal Upadhyay Sashaktikaran Puraskar** awards for its outstanding contribution to the socio-economic development of the Gram Panchayats across the Union Territory.
- **Panchayat Rathal, (Block Rajouri) and Panchayat Badakana, (Block Thana Mandi) of District Rajouri and Panchayat Meej, (Block Pampore) of Pulwama district** were adjudged the best performing panchayats in recognition of their work in improving the delivery of services for socio economic development and implementation of various schemes.

- J&K government was earlier awarded three different national awards by the Union Ministry under Nanaji Deshmukhh Rashtriya Gaurav Gram Sabha Puraskar (NDRGGSP), Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPD) Award, Child-friendly Gram Panchayat Award appreciating the good work done at different levels in the UT.

**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**. Ladakh is a region administered by India as a union territory; **Radha Krishna Mathur** is the **first Lieutenant Governor of the union territory of Ladakh**.

### In a first, Indian Railways installs automated ticket checking machine at Nagpur station

- In a first, Indian Railways' Central Railway zone has installed a newly innovated ATMA – Automated Ticket Checking & Managing Access machine at the Nagpur railway station. The ATMA machine has been introduced at the station under the NINFRIS policy to prevent transmission of COVID-19.
- According to details shared by a Central Railway official, some of the key benefits of this system are automated boarding protocol by ticket checking, human body temperature checking, face mask checking and access to the station. Another benefit of ATMA is reduced staff deployment of commercial, RPF as well as medical departments with automation and adequate safety.

**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 18<sup>th</sup> railway zone, headquartered at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. **Piyush Vedprakash Goyal** is currently serving as the **Minister of Railways and Commerce** in India. He was elected as the **BJP candidate from Maharashtra for the Rajya Sabha** in 2016.

### India sets up first mobile Covid-testing lab

- India has set up its first mobile testing laboratory in a bid to meet the growing demand to conduct coronavirus disease (Covid-19) tests.
- The laboratory can be deployed at remote and inaccessible areas in the country, where there is no such facility, even as the overall Covid-19 testing capacity has reached three lakh swab samples per day.
- The mobile laboratory belongs to the biosafety level 2 (BSL-II) category, which was created within eight days by a team from Andhra Pradesh MedTech Zone Limited. The Andhra Pradesh MedTech Zone Limited, spread over 270 acres, is a dedicated zone to medical device manufacturing and was inaugurated by the Andhra government two years ago.
- BSLs are ranked from one to four and are categorised on the basis of the organisms that the researchers are dealing with.

**BSL-I** is considered to be the least hazardous, while **BSL-IV** poses the maximum safety risk. Each level builds on the previous category, adding more layers of constraints and barriers. The organisms include viruses, bacteria, fungi, parasites, etc. **SARS-CoV-2**, which causes Covid-19, belongs to the **BSL-II** category.

### In Andhra Pradesh's budget of Rs 2.24 lakh cr, a revenue deficit of Rs 18K cr

- Andhra Pradesh finance minister **Buggana Rajendranath Reddy** presented the budget for 2020-21 in the state assembly with an outlay of Rs 2.24 lakh crore and a revenue deficit of Rs 18,434 crore and capital expenditure, including loan repayments and other capital disbursements of around Rs 44,396 crore..
- The budget was scheduled to be presented in the last week of March but was delayed because of the lockdown to contain the spread of Covid-19. As a result, the state government had to promulgate an ordinance on March 30 to draw around Rs 70,000 crore from the state consolidated fund for the first three months commencing on April 1.

## MNRE forms project development cell to attract investment in green energy

- The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) has constituted a project development cell to attract investment in the clean energy sector, particularly solar. The project development cell (PDC) would offer those renewable projects for investment where all necessary spade work like detailed project report, land, etc is complete.
- The PDC has been constituted under Amitesh Kumar Sinha, Joint Secretary, MNRE, the ministry said in its order issued on June 17. “He (Sinha) shall be assisted by Ruchin Gupta, Director, MNRE, other officers of the Grid Solar Power Division and representatives of Invest India,” the order said.
- MNRE has also asked the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) to nominate its representatives from Invest India to participate in the working of this cell. Besides, MNRE is developing a portal to receive proposals from the renewable energy sector, with provisions to check the status of action taken on such proposals.

## PM Modi launches employment scheme for migrant workers affected by coronavirus lockdown

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched an employment scheme with an outlay of Rs 50,000 crore for migrant workers who returned to their home states during the coronavirus-induced lockdown.
- The ‘Garib Kalyan Rozgar Abhiyaan’ will be implemented on a mission mode in 125 days in 116 districts of six states – Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Jharkhand and Odisha – that received the maximum numbers of migrant workers back.
- Launching the scheme, Modi said during the nationwide lockdown, the talent from cities returned to villages and it will now give a boost to development of rural areas.
- Saturate villages with public infrastructure and create livelihood opportunities viz. Roads, Housing, Anganwadis, Panchayat Bhavans, various livelihood assets and Community Complexes among others.

Indian Government has identified 25 work areas for employment in villages, for the development of various works. These 25 works or projects are related to meet the needs of the villages like rural housing for the poor, Plantations, provision of drinking water through Jal Jeevan mission, Panchayat Bhavans, community toilets, rural mandis, rural roads, other infrastructure like Cattle Sheds, Anganwadi Bhavans etc.

## India sent Tri-Services Contingent to participate in Russia’s Victory Day parade

- India sent a 75-member Tri-Service contingent to participate in the military parade in Moscow on the occasion of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the victory in the Second World War. The parade was honour the heroism and sacrifices made by the Russian and other friendly people.
- Defence Minister of Russia had invited an Indian contingent to take part in the Victory Day Parade scheduled to be held on 24<sup>th</sup> of this month. The participation will be a mark of tribute and solidarity with the people of Russia at a time when they remember their heroes of the Great Patriotic War.

World War II (often abbreviated as WWII or WW2), also known as the Second World War, was a global war that lasted from 1939 to 1945. The vast majority of the world’s countries—including all the great powers—eventually formed two opposing military alliances: the Allies and the Axis. The leaders of the “Big Three”—the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States—controlled Allied strategy; relations between the United Kingdom and the United States were especially close. There were many tensions in the Grand Alliance among the “Big Three” leaders Franklin D. Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and Joseph Stalin, although they were not enough to break the alliance during wartime. The war in Europe concluded with an invasion of Germany by the Western Allies and the Soviet Union, culminating in the capture of Berlin by Soviet troops, the suicide of Adolf Hitler and the German unconditional surrender on 8 May 1945. Following the Potsdam Declaration by the Allies on 26 July 1945 and the refusal of Japan to surrender under its terms, the United States dropped atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on 6 and 9 August, respectively. With an invasion of the Japanese archipelago imminent, the possibility of additional atomic bombings, the Soviet entry into the war against Japan and its invasion of Manchuria, Japan announced its intention to surrender on 15 August 1945, cementing total victory in Asia for the Allies.

## Coronavirus lockdown: Niti Aayog forms panel to develop job platform for migrant labours

- Government think tank Niti Aayog has formed a panel including top officials of tech companies like Google, Microsoft and Tech Mahindra to develop a job platform for migrant labours, according to sources involved in the project.
- The move comes at a time when a huge number of migrant workers have lost their jobs during the lockdown period. The goal is to develop a platform that can help blue-collar workers find job opportunities in their own language and location, an industry source said.
- The platform will connect job seekers, employers, government agencies, skill centres and external partners using new-age technologies like artificial intelligence and machine learning.

The National Institution for Transforming India, also called NITI Aayog, was formed via a resolution of the Union Cabinet on January 1, 2015 by replacing Planning Commission of India. 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.

## Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry signs MoU to engage SIDBI as implementation agency for PM SVANidhi

- Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry and Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) signed an MoU to engage SIDBI as the implementation agency for PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi).
- The Ministry had launched the PM SVANidhi on 1<sup>st</sup> of this month 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. Under the Scheme, the vendors can avail a working capital loan of up to ten thousand rupees, which is repayable in monthly instalments in the tenure of one year.
- As per the MoU terms, SIDBI will implement the PM SVANidhi Scheme under the guidance of Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. It will also manage the credit guarantee to the lending institutions through Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises.
- It will develop and maintain a customized and integrated IT Platform providing end-to-end solutions, including documentation of all the processes and workflows for an end-to-end solution, through a Portal and a Mobile App. The disbursement of loan under PM SVANidhi is planned to commence in July this year.

Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) set up on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1990 under an Act of Indian Parliament, acts as the Principal Financial Institution for Promotion, Financing and Development of the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) sector as well as for co-ordination of functions of institutions engaged in similar activities. It is headquartered in Lucknow.

## India joins 'Alliance for Poverty Eradication' at UN as founding member

- India has become a founding member of an Alliance for Poverty Eradication at the United Nations, launched by the President of the General Assembly, aimed at focusing on efforts to boost global economy in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- President of the 74<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly Tijjani Muhammad-Bande formally launched the 'Alliance for Poverty Eradication' which he said will serve as a forum for Member States to raise awareness about the danger that poverty poses to world peace, human rights and sustainable development.
- India has joined the alliance as a founding member and stressed that ending poverty is not just about monetary compensation but guaranteeing access of the poor to quality education, healthcare, clean water, sanitation, decent housing and social security.



- It's shocking to note that just a little over 2000 billionaires have more wealth than 60 per cent of the planet's wealth," India's Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Nagaraj Naidu said.

A concept note on the formation of the alliance with the UN said that it aims to provide a forum at which participants would deliberate on measures that need to be instituted so as to get the world economy working in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, canvass support for efforts that have proved effective in alleviating and ultimately eradicating poverty within and across the world's regions. The concept note said that before Covid-19 practically shut down socio-economic activities across the globe, the number of people classified as poor was approximately 2.1 billion. Of this number, 767 million were found to be living in extreme poverty. According to United Nations Development Programme, between 2006-2016 over 271 million people in India moved out of poverty, recording the fastest reductions in the multidimensional poverty index values during the period.

### Age limit reduced for voters to opt for postal ballot

- Keeping in mind the safety of senior citizens amid rising cases of the coronavirus, the age limit for voters to opt for postal ballot in Lok Sabha and assembly elections has been reduced. After the coronavirus outbreak in India, Bihar will be the first state to have assembly polls. And voters of Bihar will be the first to benefit from the amended rules.
- In October 2019, the Law Ministry amended the Conduct of Election Rules to allow people with disabilities and those who are 80 years of age or above to opt for postal ballot during Lok Sabha and assembly elections. Now, on June 19, the ministry notified a fresh change in the rules, allowing those aged 65 years and above to opt for postal ballot. While amending the rules on the suggestions of the Election Commission, the Ministry also allowed "COVID-19 suspect or affected persons" to use the postal ballot facility.
- The age limit was reduced as "people who are 65 and above are vulnerable" to the coronavirus, explained an EC official. The EC had approached the government to tweak the rule as pandemic could continue till the end of the year. As of now, people who come under the category of those allowed to use postal ballot have to fill form 12D to avail the facility.

Responding to Mr Yechury's letter, Deputy Election Commissioner Chandra Bhushan Kumar said, the decision to allow elderly and Covid-19 patients to cast postal votes was taken under the Representation of People Act, 1951. He said, ECI has not used Article 324 for extension of postal ballot facility to specified class of electors. Part XV of the Constitution of India consists of Articles on Elections. Article 324 of the Constitution provides that the power of superintendence, direction and control of elections to parliament, state legislatures, the office of president of India and the office of vice-president of India shall be vested in the election commission. Sunil Arora is the current and 23<sup>rd</sup> Chief Election Commissioner of India.

### ISKCON plans world's first virtual Rath Yatra across 6 continents amid Covid-19 pandemic

- The International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), with its headquarters in West Bengal, organized the world's first digital Rath Yatra that was covered six continents during the Covid-19 pandemic on June 23.
- This comes at a time when the iconic Rath Yatra at Puri in Odisha has been halted by the Supreme Court because of the coronavirus pandemic. The Puri Rath Yatra was last held up nearly three centuries ago when Mohammed Taqi Khan, deputy governor of Odisha, attacked the Jagannath temple, forcing the shifting of the idols to Ganjam district.
- "This was the world's first digital Rath Yatra which would cover six continents in 24 hours on June 23 and June 24. It was named 'Mercy in Wheels'. There were 108 rathas.

Ratha Jatra, the Festival of Chariot: Chariots of Shri Jagannath is celebrated every year at Puri, the temple town in Odisha, on the second (dwitiya) day of shukla pakhya (waxing cycle of moon) of Ashadha Maasa (3<sup>rd</sup> month in Lunar Calendar). The presiding deities of the Jagannath Temple, Puri's main temple, Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Goddess Subhadra, with the celestial wheel are removed from the temple in a ceremonial procession to their chariots. The Ratha Yatra festival has become a common sight in most major cities of the world since 1968 through the ISKCON Hare Krishna movement.



### Annular solar eclipse with majestic Ring of Fire, witnessed in several parts of India

- India witnessed a rare celestial event, an annular solar eclipse. The annular ‘ring of fire’ solar eclipse, wherein the Sun appears like a ring of fire, is visible in different parts of the country.
- The solar eclipse took place on the summer solstice, which is the longest day in the Northern Hemisphere. The rare celestial event occurs, when the Moon comes between the Sun and the Earth and the shadow falls on the surface of the Earth.
- The Sun is entirely covered by the Moon for a brief period. Those places that are engulfed by the dark, dense umbral shadow of the Moon experience the total solar eclipse. People in different parts of Rajasthan, Haryana and Uttarakhand could see the annular phase and people in rest of the country witnessed a partial eclipse.
- The first solar eclipse of this year, known as surya grahan in India, coincided with the summer solstice. The first solar eclipse of this year which coincided with the summer solstice, when the Northern Hemisphere has the longest day, was an annular eclipse. Apart from India, the eclipse was visible in Congo, Sudan, Ethiopia, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Pakistan, and China.

The summer solstice, also known midsummer, occurs when one of the Earth’s poles has its maximum tilt toward the Sun. It happens twice yearly, once in each hemisphere (Northern and Southern). Depending on the shift of the calendar, the summer solstice occurs sometime between June 20 and June 22 in the Northern Hemisphere and between December 20 and December 23 in the Southern Hemisphere. The winter solstice occurs during the hemisphere’s winter. In the Northern Hemisphere, this is the December solstice (usually 21 or 22 December) and in the Southern Hemisphere; this is the June solstice (usually 20 or 21 June). A solar eclipse occurs when a portion of the Earth is engulfed in a shadow cast by the Moon which fully or partially blocks sunlight. This occurs when the Sun, Moon and Earth are aligned. Such alignment coincides with a new moon indicating the Moon is closest to the ecliptic plane. In a total eclipse, the disk of the Sun is fully obscured by the Moon. In partial and annular eclipses, only part of the Sun is obscured.

### NITI Aayog with International Transport Forum launched ‘Decarbonising Transport in India’ project

- NITI Aayog in collaboration with International Transport Forum launched the ‘Decarbonising Transport in India’ project with the intention to develop a pathway towards a low-carbon transport system for India.
- India has been a member of ITF, an intergovernmental organisation for transport policy, since 2008. ITF Secretary-General Young Tae Kim and NITI Aayog Chief Executive Officer Amitabh Kant opened the public online launch event. Senior officials of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Ministry of Road, Transport and Highways, and ITF will also be present.
- The online event will inform transport and climate stakeholders in India about planned project activities. It will also offer the opportunity to provide inputs regarding India’s transport challenges and how they relate to CO<sub>2</sub> reduction ambitions. The discussion will help to focus the project further on India’s specific needs and circumstances.

### Harsimrat Kaur Badal launches Food Processing Edition of Exclusive Investment Forum

- Union Minister of Food Processing Industries Harsimrat Kaur Badal launched the Food Processing Edition of the Exclusive Investment Forum by Invest India, the National Investment Promotion & Facilitation Agency of the Government of India.
- Invest India has designed this forum of unique sectoral series to conduct detailed conversations between global industry leaders and key decision makers from the highest levels of the Union & State Governments of India. The forum witnessed participation from the senior most policy makers from Union Government and 6 State Governments – Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh. 180 companies from 18 countries also participated in the forum.
- Union Minister said that due to the COVID pandemic, the sector has seen unique challenges and has been playing a very important role in ensuring that the lockdown was successful.

Harsimrat Kaur Badal has been serving as the Union Cabinet Minister of Food Processing Industries in the Government of India and Member of Parliament in the Lok Sabha from Bathinda.

### Cabinet approved 2% interest subvention to Shishu loan accounts under PMMY

- Union Cabinet approved a scheme for interest subvention of 2 per cent for a period of 12 months, to all Shishu loan accounts under Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) to eligible borrowers.
- The scheme will be extended to loans which are not in Non-Performing Asset (NPA) category, as per Reserve Bank of India (RBI) guidelines as on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 and during the period of operation of the Scheme.
- The interest subvention would be payable for the months in which the accounts are not in NPA category including for the months that the account becomes a performing asset again, after turning NPA. The scheme will incentivize people who will make regular repayments of loans.
- The estimated cost of the Scheme would be approximately Rs. 1,542 crore which would be provided by the Government of India. This Scheme is for implementation of one of the measures relating to MSMEs, announced under the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan. The severe colour blind citizens from driving. This is also allowed in other parts of the world.

Subvention means grant of money by the government. In the context of the Budget, it is interest subvention, the government paying part of the interest on a loan. The government offers subvention mostly on home, crop and education loans.

### Madhya Pradesh gets Rs 1,280 crore from Centre under Jal Jeevan Mission

- The Centre has approved Rs 1,280 crore for the implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) in Madhya Pradesh for 2020-21. The state had presented an annual action plan on drinking water and sanitation aimed at providing adequate drinking water to rural households in the state.
- Government of India has restructured and subsumed the ongoing National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) into Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) to provide Functional Household Tap Connection (FHTC) to every rural household i.e., Har Ghar Nal Se Jal (HGNSJ) by 2024. The goal of JJM is to provide functional household tap connection to every household with service level at the rate of 55 litres per capita per day.

### Tourism Ministry conducts webinar on 'Vedic Food and Spices of India'

- To showcase the benefits about our country's ancient form of health science, Tourism Ministry conducted a webinar on 'Vedic Food and Spices of India' under Dekho Apna Desh webinar series.
- The webinar focused on the importance of Vedic food and spices of India which remain unexplained to the world and never bridged to modern world cuisines. This session attempted to decode myths about some foods and presented the secret of spices and the technique of preparations in order to inspire the traveller to come, explore and experience.

Prahlad Singh Patel is the current Minister of Culture and Minister of Tourism of India, and Member of Parliament from Damoh Lok Sabha Constituency in Madhya Pradesh.

### PM launches 'Atma Nirbhar Uttar Pradesh Rojgar Yojana' for migrant workers

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the unique and path-breaking initiative scheme of Atma Nirbhar Uttar Pradesh Rojgar Yojana through video conferencing. Prime Minister said that ATMANIRBHAR ABHIYAN is going to benefit Uttar Pradesh the most.
- The Atma Nirbhar Uttar Pradesh Rojgar Yojana is focused on generating employment for those migrant workers of the state who recently returned from other states. Under the campaign around one crore 25 lakh people were provided employment in the state in different schemes.
- The Prime Minister said that The ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT campaign will generate approximately 35 lakh new jobs in the agriculture sector.

Uttar Pradesh is the most populous state in the Republic of India. It was created on 1 April 1937 as the United Provinces during British rule, and was renamed Uttar Pradesh in 1950. Lucknow is the capital of Uttar Pradesh. Anandiben Patel is currently the Governor of Uttar Pradesh. Yogi Adityanath is the current Chief Minister of UP. Uttar Pradesh is the most populous country subdivision in the world.

### In a first, Samruddhi expressway to have 10 overpasses as wildlife mitigation structures

- The Samruddhi Mahamarg (expressway) connecting Nagpur and Mumbai will include 10 overpasses, a first in the country, among other wildlife mitigation structures taken up by the project, as per recommendations by the state Wildlife Board committee set up by the government.
- The 750-km expressway is the first linear project in India to incorporate wildlife mitigation measures at the inception stage. Earlier, such mitigation structures have come up after agitations led by activists. Recently, the committee, headed by Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (Wildlife) Nitin Kakodkar, visited several sites over the past two years and submitted its recommendations to the government.

### Mansukh Mandaviya inaugurates India's one of India's largest & first Virtual Healthcare & Hygiene EXPO 2020

- Union State Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers Mansukh Mandaviya inaugurated one of India's largest and first Virtual Healthcare and Hygiene EXPO 2020.
- He underlined schemes such as providing toilets for every household, Ayushman Bharat, to cover 10 crore family for healthcare, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan and Suvridha Sanitary Napkin under which a sanitary napkin is provided for just 1 rupees each. The unique exhibition which aims to give a boost to such health and hygiene endeavours has been organised by FICCI.

### Rohini Commission set to get nod for its ninth extension

- The Justice Rohini Commission- set up in October 2017 to recommend sub categorization of the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and ensure that marginalized sub castes get due benefits- is set to get its ninth extension. The Rohini Commission was to originally submit its report by March 2018.
- The move to grant yet another extension to the Commission comes at a time when elections are due in Bihar- a state where OBC sub categorization of any kind will have huge political impact. "The commission has come to the view that it would require some more time to submit its report since the repetitions, ambiguities, inconsistencies and errors of spelling or transcription etc. appearing in the existing Central List of OBCs need to be cleared.

### Tripura to distribute nutrition kits to pregnant, lactating women

- As part of its efforts to fight malnutrition and maternal mortality, Tripura has launched a scheme – Mukhyamantri Matru Pushti Uphaar – under which it would provide nutrition kits, containing ghee, jaggery among other items, to pregnant and lactating women.
- Announcing the scheme, state Minister for Social Welfare and Social Education Santana Chakma said at least 40,000 women would benefit from the kits, costing Rs 500 each. The state government is expected to incur an expenditure of Rs 8 crore every year for the initiative. Earlier, the state had doled out Rs 5,000 each under Pradhan Mantri Matru Bandana Yojana to 58,996 beneficiaries, after the birth of their first child.

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.

### Jharkhand plans job guarantee scheme for urban poor

- With an estimated 25 per cent households in urban areas adversely affected by the extended lockdown in Jharkhand, the state government is planning to launch a job guarantee scheme under which urban workers will be able to demand a maximum 100 days of work.

- The wages under the **proposed Mukhyamantri Shramik Yojana** are likely to be at least 40 per cent higher than Rs 194 a day provided under the MGNREGA programme in the state.

**Jharkhand** is a state in eastern India, carved out of the southern part of Bihar on 15 November 2000. The city of Ranchi is its capital and Dumka its sub capital. **Draupadi Murmu** is the current and first woman Governor of Jharkhand. **Hemant Soren** is the current Chief Minister of Jharkhand. Previously, he had also served as the Chief Minister of Jharkhand from July 2013 to December 2014. He is the son of **Shibu Soren**, former Chief Minister of Jharkhand. “Jharkhand” means ‘land of bush or forest’.

### Karnataka becomes first state to amend Industries (Facilitation) Act for Small, Medium & Large-Scale Industries

- **Karnataka government** amended the long pending industrial reform “The Karnataka Industries (Facilitation) Act, 2002” to facilitate and attract investment in the state.
- **Currently, only Gujarat and Rajasthan** are the two states in the country that have amended this Act for small scale industries only. In our state the amended act includes small, medium and large scale industries.
- Under the amended Act, an **industry would not need any statutory permissions for the first three years, or whichever is earlier to set up operations in the state**. These permissions include approvals from under multiple state laws, including trade licence and building-plan approval, measures that would save lot of time and cost for industries. The objective of the amended Act is to simplify regulations and reduce procedural requirements and create a conducive investment environment.

### ‘Surakshit Dada-Dadi, Nana-Nani Abhiyan’ launched to ensure well-being of Senior Citizens amid COVID-19 pandemic

- **Surakshit Dada-Dadi, Nana-Nani Abhiyan** is a collaborative effort between NITI Aayog, Piramal Foundation, and 25 Aspirational Districts to ensure the well-being of 2.9 million Senior Citizens during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **NITI Aayog** has launched this campaign following the appeal by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to take care of senior citizens. They are contacting about 25000 senior citizens of the district through phone calls by taking the contact details from the district administration.
- They inquired about the health of old persons and gave them information on Coronavirus. They also helped them to fulfill their essential requirements like medicines, ration or work related to ration cards. It is worth mentioning that **Surendranagar district administration with the help of volunteers has already contacted more than 5 thousand senior citizens**. They provided all required help to 850 such old age persons.

### Maharashtra announces Maha Parwana plan to attract fresh investments in industries

- In a bid to attract fresh industrial investments in Maharashtra, the state government announced a new plan called ‘Maha Parwana’, which will offer several incentives and offer a single-window clearance system for project execution.
- The government has decided that henceforth companies investing in a project costing Rs 50 crore or more would not be burdened with getting clearances from several departments.
- Such companies would be given an assurance letter (Maha Parwana). All that these companies need to do is to apply at the Maharashtra Industry, Trade and Investment Facilitation Cell (MAITRI), a single-window system, and if there is no lacunae in the application, then an online permission would be given within 48 hours.

**Maharashtra** is India’s second-most populous state and third-largest state by area. **Nagpur** is Maharashtra’s second capital and hosts the winter session of the state legislature. **Pune** is its cultural capital. **Shiv Sena** President **Uddhav Thackeray** takes oath as the Chief Minister of Maharashtra. **Uddhav Thackeray** is the first of his family to be the chief minister of Maharashtra. His father **Bal Thackeray** founded the Shiv Sena over five decades ago. **Bhagat Singh Koshiyari** is serving as the current Governor of Maharashtra.



## International



### COP26 climate talks in Glasgow to take place next year in Nov 2021

- The 26<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 26) to the UNFCCC, which was scheduled to meet in November this year in UK's Glasgow, will now take place from November 1-20, 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the United Nations. A decision, in this regard, was agreed upon between the UK government, the UN climate body and member states.
- The development comes two days after the European Union (EU) unveiled the EUR 750 billion green stimulus plan to shore up the sagging economy due to the Covid-19 pandemic while also making sure that the 27-nation trading bloc achieves climate neutrality by 2050.

The conference is set to incorporate the 26<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of the parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP16), and the third meeting of the parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA3). This conference is to be the first “global stocktake” that was outlined in the Paris Agreement. The venue is the SEC Centre in Central Glasgow. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is an international environmental treaty adopted on 9 May 1992 and opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro from 3 to 14 June 1992. It then entered into force on 21 March 1994, after a sufficient number of countries had ratified it.

### Japan's Fuji Rock Festival cancelled for first time due to the pandemic

- Fuji Rock Festival, Japan's biggest annual music event, will be cancelled for the first time ever due to the coronavirus pandemic, organisers said, disappointing thousands of rock-and-roll fans who flock to the outdoor festivities every year.
- Since its inception in 1997, headliners at the event have included The Red Hot Chilli Peppers, The Cure and Kendrick Lamar. Last year, the event, held in the summer, attracted 130,000 people over four days.

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 126<sup>th</sup> monarch according to Japan's traditional order of succession. Shinzo Abe is serving as Prime Minister of Japan and Leader of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) since 2012. 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.

### Indian-American aerospace expert appointed General Atomics Chief Executive

- Vivek Lall, a prominent Indian-American aerospace and defence expert who played key roles in some of the major defence deals between India and the US, has been appointed as the Chief Executive of General Atomics Global Corporation at its headquarters in San Diego, California.
- Mr. Lall had resigned in April 2020 as vice president of Aeronautics Strategy and Business Development at Lockheed Martin, an American security and aerospace giant, to spend more time with his family in San Diego, where he resides. However, weeks later the world's premier drone manufacturer roped him in. “We are pleased to announce that Dr Vivek Lall will assume the position of Chief Executive at General Atomics Global Corporation, effective immediately”.



## Russia starts work on stealth nuclear bomber PAK DA as Sukhoi Su-57 fighter enters service

- Russia is modernising its military at an extremely fast pace and has now started constructing its first strategic stealth bomber, capable of delivering nuclear weapons, under the Perspective Aviation Complex for Long-Range Aviation (PAK DA) programme.
- The strategic stealth bomber, the second 5<sup>th</sup> Generation combat aircraft from Russia after the Sukhoi Su-57 supersonic fighter, will eventually replace the current set of Tupolev Tu 22, Tu-95 and Tu-160 strategic bombers.
- According to Russian news agency TASS, a senior military-industrial complex source confirmed about the construction of the bomber under the PAK DA programme designed as a flying wing. “The production of airframe elements will be handled by one of the United Aircraft Corporation (UAC)’s plants; development of working design documentation is complete, material shipping has commenced. The final assembly of the entire machine should be complete in 2021”.

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.

## Russian President Putin declares state of emergency over Siberian fuel spill

- The Norilsk diesel oil spill is an ongoing industrial disaster near Norilsk, Krasnoyarsk Krai, Russia. It began on 29 May 2020 when a fuel storage tank at Norilsk-Taimyr Energy’s Thermal Power Plant No. 3 (owned by Nor Nickel) failed, flooding local rivers with up to 21,000 cubic metres of diesel oil.
- Russian President Vladimir Putin declared a state of emergency in early June after a massive diesel spill into a Siberian river. The accident has been described as the second-largest oil spill in modern Russian history.

Siberia is an extensive geographical region spanning much of Eurasia and Northern Asia. Siberia has been part of modern Russia since the latter half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The territory of Siberia extends eastwards from the Ural Mountains to the watershed between the Pacific and Arctic drainage basins.

## China to ban pork imports from India to ‘prevent swine fever

- Citing concerns regarding African swine fever (ASF), China has announced that it will put a ban on imports of pigs, wild boar and related products from India.
- The ban comes amid border tensions between Beijing and Delhi. Global Times reported that “the ban comes after tensions between the two countries flared up in Galwan Valley region,” which it blamed on “India’s recent, illegal construction of defence facilities on the border to Chinese territory”.
- According to the daily, India reported its first case of ASF in both domestic pigs and wild boars in Assam earlier this month. The disease has killed more than 14,000 pigs in Assam, according to media reports.

China is a country in East Asia and the world’s most populous country, with a population of around 1.404 billion. Beijing is the capital of the People’s Republic of China, the world’s third most populous city proper, and most populous capital city. Xi Jinping is serving as president of China. National People’s Congress is the national legislature of the People’s Republic of China. With 2,980 members in 2018, it is the largest parliamentary body in the world. China’s currency yuan joins the International Monetary Fund’s basket of reserve currencies.

## US: Joe Biden becomes Democratic presidential nominee

- Former US Vice President Joe Biden, has formally become the Democratic presidential nominee to run for the White House against President Donald Trump in the elections in November this year. The veteran Democrat served as the 47<sup>th</sup> vice president of the United States from 2009 to 2017 during the presidency of Barack Obama.

- He would be **formally nominated at the Democratic National Convention in Wisconsin** in August. Biden has been consistently supportive of the India-US relations. As a Senator, he had voted to approve the landmark civilian nuclear deal between the two countries in 2008.

The election of the President and the Vice President of the United States is an indirect election in which citizens of the United States who are registered to vote in one of the fifty U.S. states or in Washington, D.C., cast ballots not directly for those offices, but instead for members of the Electoral College. These electors then in turn cast direct votes, known as electoral votes, for President, and for Vice President. The candidate who receives an absolute majority of electoral votes (at least 270 out of a total of 538, since the Twenty-Third Amendment granted voting rights to citizens of D.C.) is then elected to that office. If no candidate receives an absolute majority of the votes for president, the House of Representatives chooses the most qualifying candidate for the Presidency; if no one receives an absolute majority of the votes for Vice President, then the Senate elects the vice president.

### G20 pledges more than \$21 billion to fight coronavirus

- The Group of 20 rich and emerging economies has pledged more than \$21 billion to fight the coronavirus. "The G20, with invited countries, has coordinated the global efforts to support the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. The pledges will be directed towards diagnostics, vaccines, therapeutics, and research and development, the statement added.
- In April the group called on all countries, non-governmental organizations, philanthropies and the private sector to help close a financing gap estimated at over \$8 billion to combat the Covid-19 pandemic.

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).

### Senate confirms Gen Charles Brown Jr as first black US military service chief in unanimous vote

- The Senate unanimously confirmed Gen. Charles Brown Jr. as chief of staff of the U.S. Air Force, making him the first black officer to lead one of the nation's military services. The vote came as the Trump administration and the mostly white Senate Republican conference grapple with the aftermath of the killing of George Floyd in police custody in Minneapolis.

Charles Quinton Brown Jr. is a United States Air Force general. He was nominated to Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force on March 2, 2020 by President Donald Trump. Brown served as commander of Pacific Air Forces, air component commander for United States Indo-Pacific Command.

United States of America (USA) is a federal republic composed of 50 states and capital is Washington, D.C., Donald John Trump is the 45<sup>th</sup> and current President of the United States. He became the oldest and wealthiest person ever to assume the presidency, the first without prior military or government service, and the fifth to have won the election while losing the popular vote.

### Anmol Narang becomes first observant Sikh to graduate from US Military Academy

- Anmol Narang has made history by becoming the first observant Sikh to graduate from the prestigious United States Military Academy at West Point, and the Second Lieutenant is hopeful that her efforts to represent her religion and community will encourage Americans to learn more about Sikhism.
- US President Donald Trump addressed the 1,107 graduates, including 23-year-old Narang, who gathered for the academy's annual commencement.
- Narang will complete her Basic Officer Leadership Course at Fort Sill in Lawton, Oklahoma. Following the successful completion of BOLC, she will then head to her first posting in Okinawa, Japan, in January of 2021.

- In 1987, the US Congress passed a law that prohibited Sikhs and several other religious communities from maintaining their articles of faith while in the military, despite a history of diverse service and simple accommodations.

### China, Pak possess more nuclear weapons than India: Defence think-tank SIPRI

- **China and Pakistan possess more nuclear weapons than India**, according to a new yearbook released by a leading conflict and armaments think-tank.
- **The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)'s Yearbook 2020 pegs the number of nuclear warheads in the Chinese arsenal at 320**, while the nuclear forces of Pakistan and India are estimated to have **160 and 150 weapons**, respectively. The figures have been updated till January 2020.
- India and its neighbours were ranked in the same order by SIPRI last year too when **China possessed 290 nuclear warheads, Pakistan 150-160 and India had 130-140 warheads at the start of 2019**.
- The yearbook, which “assesses the current state of armaments, disarmament and international security”, **found while there has been an overall decrease in the number of nuclear warheads in 2019**, all nuclear weapon-possessing countries continue to modernise their nuclear arsenals.
- **With 6,375 and 5,800 warheads, Russia and the United States together possess more than 90% of global nuclear weapons**. The nine nuclear-armed countries—the US, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea—together account for an estimated 13,400 nuclear weapons as of January 2020.
- **“This marked a decrease from the 13,865 nuclear weapons that SIPRI estimated these states possessed at the beginning of 2019**. Around 3,720 of the nuclear weapons are currently deployed with operational forces and nearly 1,800 of these are kept in a state of high operational alert,” SIPRI’s statement said.
- **New Delhi’s defence spending grew by 6.8% to reach \$71.1 billion in 2019**, said the report on Trends in World in World Military Expenditure.

Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) is an international institute based in Sweden, dedicated to research into conflict, armaments, arms control and disarmament. Established in 1966, SIPRI provides data, analysis and recommendations, based on open sources, to policymakers, researchers, media and the interested public. SIPRI is based in Stockholm.

### Kyrgyzstan’s Prime Minister steps down over frequencies case

- The Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan has **resigned amid a scandal over whether the government illegally sold radio frequencies**.
- **Mukhammedkalyi Abylgazyev denied personal involvement**, but said he was stepping down because in difficult conditions, when the country confronts the threat of coronavirus infection and struggles with its consequences for the economy, the government must work stably and enjoy the full confidence of citizens. **Mr. Abylgazyev became Premier in 2018**.

Bishkek is the capital and largest city of Kyrgyzstan. The som is the currency of the Kyrgyz Republic. Sooronbay Sharipovich Jeenbekov is the current President of Kyrgyzstan. Supreme Council is the unicameral Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic. Kubatbek Boronov has been serving as the Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan since 17 June 2020.

### India ranked 43<sup>rd</sup> on IMD’s World Competitiveness Index; Singapore on top

- **India continues to remain ranked 43<sup>rd</sup> on an annual World Competitiveness Index compiled by Institute for Management Development (IMD)** with some traditional weaknesses like poor infrastructure and insufficient education investment keeping its ranking low, the international business school said.
- **Singapore has retained its top position on the 63-nation list. Denmark has moved up to the second position (from 8<sup>th</sup> last year), Switzerland has gained one place to rank 3<sup>rd</sup>**, the Netherlands has retained its 4<sup>th</sup> place and Hong Kong has slipped to the fifth place (from 2<sup>nd</sup> in 2019).

- **The US has moved down to 10<sup>th</sup> place (from 3<sup>rd</sup> last year), while China has also slipped from 14<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> place.** Among the BRICS nations, India is ranked second after China, followed by Russia (50<sup>th</sup>), Brazil (56<sup>th</sup>) and South Africa (59<sup>th</sup>).
- **India was ranked 41<sup>st</sup> on the IMD World Competitiveness Ranking**, being produced by the business school based in Switzerland and Singapore every year since 1989, but had slipped to 45<sup>th</sup> in 2017 before improving to 44<sup>th</sup> in 2018 and then to 43<sup>rd</sup> in 2019.
- **While its overall position has remained unchanged in the 2020 list, it has recorded improvements in areas like long-term employment growth, current account balance, high-tech exports, foreign currency reserves, public expenditure on education, political stability and overall productivity**, the IMD said. However, it has moved down in areas like exchange rate stability, real GDP growth, competition legislation and taxes.

### India 9<sup>th</sup> largest recipient of FDI in 2019, will continue to attract investments: UN

- **India received 51 billion US dollar in foreign investment in 2019.** UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in its report said, it was the **world's ninth largest recipient of Foreign Direct Investments (FDI)**. The report said, India's large market will continue to attract market-seeking investments to the country.
- In the developing Asia region, **India was among the top five host economies for FDI**. The report said, **FDI to India, the largest South Asian recipient, increased 20 per cent to 51 billion US dollar**, sustaining the country's upward FDI trend. Most of the investments were in the information and communication technology and the construction industry.

**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, China increased nuclear weapons since last year: SIPRI

- **India and China have increased their nuclear arsenal over the last year**, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).
- **The Swedish think-tank that researches on conflict, armaments and arms control also pointed out that China is significantly modernising its nuclear arsenal.** China and Pakistan have more nuclear warheads as compared to India, according to the SIPRI Yearbook 2020.
- **India has 150 nuclear warheads**, while **China and Pakistan have 320 and 160**. The figures are until January. Last year, **India had 130-140 warheads**, while **China had 290 and Pakistan 150-160**.
- **The nine nuclear-armed states—the US, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea—together possessed an estimated 13,400 nuclear weapons at the start of 2020.** This marked a decrease from the 13,865 nuclear weapons that SIPRI estimated these states possessed at the beginning of 2019.
- **The decrease in the overall number of nuclear weapons in the world last year was largely due to the dismantlement of retired nuclear weapons by Russia and the US.** Together, they still possess over 90 per cent of global nuclear weapons.

### UN Security Council elected 5 new non-permanent members

- **The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) elected five new non-permanent members to the council.** France took over the Presidency of the powerful 15-member Security Council for the month of June.



- The United Nations General Assembly last month adopted a decision to hold the Security Council Elections under new voting arrangements taking into account restrictions in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic. India is the sole candidate for a non-permanent seat from the Asia-Pacific category for the 2021-22 term.
- India's candidature was unanimously endorsed by the 55-member Asia-Pacific grouping, including China and Pakistan, in June last year. Each year the General Assembly elects five non-permanent members out of ten in total, for a two-year term. The 10 non-permanent seats are distributed on a regional basis.
- This year, Canada, Ireland and Norway are vying for two seats in the Western Europe and Other countries category, Mexico is the only candidate for the one Latin America and Caribbean seat while Kenya and Djibouti will contest the seat available for the African group. Beginning in January 2021, the new members will serve a two-year term on the UNSC.

### Print to build: World's first 3D-printed commercial building

- The world's first 3D-printed commercial building, according to the Guinness World Records, was unveiled recently. The 2,600 sq ft building now houses the office of the Dubai Future Academy.
- It is 20 ft high, 120 ft long, and 40 ft wide. One 3D printer took 17 days to print the basic building. It took 3 more months to build and adjust the interior design. It was made using a special mixture of cement and required 50% less manpower when compared with traditional methods of building.

### Japan's Fugaku tops world's fastest supercomputer list

- In the race for the most powerful computers, Fugaku, a Japanese supercomputer, recently beat American and Chinese machines. The winning machine's concept was initially proposed a decade ago, and six years after the official start of the project, the supercomputer is getting ready for a full launch in April 2021.
- While the US and China were fighting to take the lead in supercomputing, Japan seems to have emerged as the winner with its world's fastest supercomputer.
- Fugaku, a supercomputer jointly developed by RIKEN and Fujitsu Ltd., has taken the top position on the TOP500 list, a supercomputer benchmarking index. Fugaku turned in a High Performance Linpack (HPL) result of 415.5 petaflops, besting the now second-place Summit system by a factor of 2.8x.
- Supercomputers have become a symbol for both technical and economic competitiveness. The room-size systems are used for complex military and scientific tasks, including breaking codes, modeling climate change and simulating new designs for cars, weapons, aircraft and drugs. Riken has said Fugaku is already being used to help study, diagnose and treat Covid-19.

A supercomputer is a computer with a high level of performance as compared to a general-purpose computer. The performance of a supercomputer is commonly measured in floating-point operations per second (FLOPS) instead of million instructions per second (MIPS). Since 2017, there are supercomputers which can perform over a hundred quadrillion FLOPS (100 petaFLOPS, or PFLOPS). Since November 2017, all of the world's fastest 500 supercomputers run Linux-based operating systems.

### Vietnam builds 'world's first gold-plated hotel'

- Located in Hanoi, the hotel is covered with 5,000 square meters of gilded ceramic – from the sinks to the rooftop pool. The 25-story hotel has been crowned the world's first gold-plated hotel.

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 Phe Truong is the current General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam, de facto top leader of Vietnam, in office since 19 January 2011, and President of Vietnam, de jure head of state of Vietnam, in office since 23 October 2018.

### UK government debt most in 57 years

- Britain's budget deficit swelled further in May, taking debt as a percentage of GDP above 100% for the first time since the financial year ending 1963.

- The increase reflects the cost of Chancellor Rishi Sunak's unprecedented interventions to help prop up the economy, and the deficit is likely to swell further this year. The government is currently paying the wages for almost 12 million jobs and more stimulus including tax breaks and infrastructure projects potentially in the pipeline.

London is the capital and most populous city of England and the United Kingdom. Pound sterling is the official currency of the United Kingdom. Boris Johnson is serving as the current Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. Elizabeth II is Queen of the United Kingdom and the other Commonwealth realms. She is the longest-lived and longest-reigning British monarch as well as the world's longest-reigning queen regnant and female head of state, the oldest and longest-reigning current monarch and the oldest and longest-serving current head of state.

### World's first yoga University outside India launched in US

- As part of the 6<sup>th</sup> International Yoga Day commemorations, the world's first yoga university outside India has been launched in Los Angeles, offering programmes that combine scientific principles and modern research approaches to the ancient Indian practice of yoga.
- The Vivekananda Yoga University (VaYU) was jointly launched by Minister of State for External Affairs V Muraleedharan and Chairperson of the Standing Committee on External Affairs P P Chaudhary during a virtual event held at the Consulate General of India in New York. Eminent Indian yoga guru Dr. H R Nagendra, Chancellor of Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana (SVYASA) is the first Chairman of VaYU.

### World's first spherical artificial eye has 3D retina

- An international team led by scientists at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) has developed the world's first 3D artificial eye. According to the University, the eye has capabilities better than existing bionic eyes and in some cases, even exceeds those of the human eyes, bringing vision to humanoid robots and new hope to patients with visual impairment.
- Scientists have spent decades trying to replicate the structure and clarity of a biological eye, but vision provided by existing prosthetic eyes – largely in the form of spectacles attached with external cables, are still in poor resolution with 2D flat image sensors. The Electrochemical Eye (EC-Eye) developed at HKUST, however, not only replicates the structure of a natural eye for the first time, but may actually offer sharper vision than a human eye in the future, with extra functions such as the ability to detect infrared radiation in darkness.

### Burundi gets new prime minister after 22 years

- The Burundian parliament has approved the nominations of the country's Vice President and Prime Minister made by the newly elected President Evariste Ndayishimiye.
- The senate has approved Alain-Guillaume Bunyoni as Prime Minister and Bazombanza Prosper as Vice President. The office of the Prime Minister was abolished in 1998, and reinstated in 2020 with the appointment of Bunyoni. According to the country's constitution, the Prime Minister is the head of government and the Vice President assists the president in the exercise of his duties.

Burundi is a landlocked country in the Great Rift Valley where the African Great Lakes region and East Africa converge. The franc is the currency of Burundi. Gitega (formerly Kitega) is the capital of Burundi. In late December 2018, Gitega named as political capital, with Bujumbura remaining as economical capital and center of commerce.

### Chitra Srinivasan, Ritu Garg, and 3 other Indian-origin techies feature in UK's 2020 Top 50 Women in Engineering list

- The UK Atomic Energy Authority's Chitra Srinivasan is among five Indian-origin engineers to be named among the UK's Top 50 Women in Engineering for 2020.

- **Srinivasan, a control and software engineer at UKAEA's fusion research lab at Culham Science Centre near Abingdon in south-east England was joined by transport engineer Ritu Garg, seismic engineer Barnali Ghosh, climate change expert Anusha Shah and senior engineer Kusum Trikha for the Women's Engineering Day awards announced.**
- **Judged by a panel of industry experts, the awards seek to recognise female talent within engineering and are coordinated annually by the Women's Engineering Society. In its fifth year, the awards focused on sustainability – celebrating female engineers who are making a significant contribution to achieving net zero carbon emission.**

### Foundation stone for Islamabad's first Hindu temple laid

- **Pakistan has started the construction process of a Rs. 10 crore Hindu temple – the first in Islamabad. The Krishna temple will come up in a 20,000 sq ft plot at the capital's H-9 area.**
- **Religious Affairs Minister Pir Noorul Haq Qadri said the government will bear the cost of the construction, currently estimated at Rs 10 crore, the report said. The Islamabad Hindu Panchayat has named the temple as Shri Krishna Mandir. The plot for the temple was allotted to the Hindu Panchayat by the Capital Development Authority (CDA) in 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 22<sup>nd</sup> 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 13<sup>th</sup> and current President of Pakistan**

### Yoga University named after Swami Vivekananda launched in U.S.

- **This is the world's first yoga varsity outside India. As part of the 6<sup>th</sup> International Yoga Day commemorations, the world's first yoga university outside India has been launched in Los Angeles, offering programmes that combine scientific principles and modern research approaches to the ancient Indian practice of yoga.**
- **The Vivekananda Yoga University (VaYU) was jointly launched by Minister of State for External Affairs V. Muraleedharan and Chairperson of the Standing Committee on External Affairs P P Chaudhary during a virtual event held at the Consulate General of India in New York.**

### Terror financing watchdog FATF decides to continue Pakistan in Grey List

- **In a setback for Pakistan, the global terror financing watchdog Financial Action Task Force (FATF) has decided to keep Pakistan in the Grey List' for terror financing. The decision has been taken as Pakistan has failed to check flow of money to terror groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM).**
- **The decision was taken at the Financial Action Task Force's third and final plenary held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The plenary was held under the Chinese Presidency of Xiangmin Liu. Now, Pakistan will continue to remain in the Grey List till FATF's next meeting to be held in October.**
- **Now, it will be difficult for Pakistan to get financial aid from the IMF, World Bank, ADB and the European Union, thus further enhancing problems for the nation which is in a precarious financial situation.**

**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.**

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## **ECONOMY AND FINANCE**



### **Economy News**

#### **India retains position as third largest economy in PPP**

- India has retained its position as the third-largest economy in the world in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP), behind the US and China, the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI) said.
- India accounts for 6.7% or \$8,051 billion, out of the world's total of \$119,547 billion of global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in terms of PPP compared to 16.4 % in case of China and 16.3 % for the US, World Bank data for reference year 2017 show.
- The findings are part of the World Bank new PPPs for reference year 2017, under the International Comparison Programme (ICP) that adjust for differences in the cost of living across economies of the World. Globally 176 economies participated in the 2017 cycle of ICP.
- As per the release, in 2017, India retained its regional position, as the second-largest economy, accounted for 20.83 per cent of the regional gross domestic product (GDP) in terms of PPPs where China was at 50.76 per cent (first) and Indonesia at 7.49 per cent (third).
- India is also the second-largest economy in terms of its PPP-based share in regional actual individual consumption and regional gross capital formation, it added. The next ICP comparison will be conducted for reference year 2021.

The ICP is the largest worldwide data collection initiative, under the guidance of UN Statistical Commission (UNSC), with the goal of producing PPPs, which are vital for converting measures of economic activities to be comparable across economies. Along with the PPPs, the ICP also produces PLI and other regionally comparable aggregates of GDP expenditure. India has participated in almost all ICP rounds since its inception in 1970.

#### **Finance Ministry appoints PR Jaishankar managing director of IIFCL**

- The ministry of finance appointed PR Jaishankar as the managing director of the India Infrastructure Finance Company Ltd (IIFCL) for three years. The appointment comes after the Bank Boards Bureau (BBB), the headhunter for state-run banks and financial institutions, recommended Jaishankar on March 15.
- Jaishankar served as the executive director of the National Housing Bank prior to this. His latest posting was approved by the appointments committee of the cabinet headed by Prime Minister Naredra Modi.

Banks Board Bureau (BBB) is an autonomous body of the Government of India tasked to improve the governance of Public Sector Banks, recommend selection of chiefs of government owned banks and financial institutions and to help banks in developing strategies and capital raising plans. In February 2016, the NDA government approved the proposal for setting up BBB and it started functioning from April 2016. The BBB works as step towards governance reforms in Public Sector Banks (PSBs) as recommended by P.J. Nayak Committee. Bhanu Pratap Sharma is the new Chairman of the Mumbai based Bureau. It is housed in RBI's Central Office in Mumbai. The BBB was the part of Indradhanush Plan of government.



## Arun Singhal appointed as CEO FSSAI

- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet approved the appointment of **Arun Singhal** as **chief executive officer of India's apex food regulator Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)**.
- **Singhal is special secretary, department of health and family welfare**. He will succeed **GSG Ayyangar** who was briefly appointed as the CEO of the food regulator. The move comes **after former FSSAI chief Pawan Agarwal, who was recently appointed as special secretary logistics**.

**Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)** is an autonomous body established under the **Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India**. The FSSAI has been established under the **Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006** which is a consolidating statute related to food safety and regulation in India.

## Kolkata Port renamed after Syama Prasad Mookerjee

- The Union Cabinet approved the renaming of **Kolkata Port** as **Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port**, after the founder of the **Bharatiya Jana Sangh**.
- The decision was announced by Information and Broadcasting Minister **Prakash Javadekar** at a press briefing after the Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister **Narendra Modi**. In a statement, the government said the **Board of Trustees of the Kolkata Port Trust had passed a resolution to rename the port after Mookerjee** at its meeting on February 25, "considering his multifaceted genius as an eminent jurist, academician, thinker and leader of the masses".

**Kolkata Port Trust** (officially renamed by the name of **BJS founder as Dr. Syama Prasad Mukherjee Port Trust**) is a riverine port in the city of **Kolkata, India**. It is the **oldest operating port in India**, and was constructed by the **British East India Company**. Kolkata is a freshwater port with no variation in salinity. **Syama Prasad Mukherjee served as the Minister for Industry and Supply in Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's cabinet**. After falling out with Nehru, **Mukherjee quit the Union Government because of differences of opinion with the Nehru-led government on the issue of Jammu & Kashmir**. With the help of the **Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh**, he founded the **Bharatiya Jana Sangh**, the predecessor to the **Bharatiya Janata Party**, in 1951.

## India drops six places in the ranking for world's best startup ecosystem

- Even as India continues to improve its annual **Ease of Doing Business** ranking, its startup ecosystem appears to be losing steam. According to the **global innovation mapping and research company StartupBlink**, which gathers local data of every country to rank their startup ecosystem based on the **quality of startups, business environment coupled with the quantity**, India has moved down from **17<sup>th</sup> position in 2019 to 23<sup>rd</sup> this year out of 100 countries**.
- The **third-largest ecosystem – India**, in terms of number of technology startups, has been **ranked even behind emerging ecosystems such as Estonia, Lithuania, Brazil, Denmark etc**. The ranking has been led by the **US, the UK, and Israel** while **China has improved its rank by 13 spots to 14<sup>th</sup> position this year and Japan stood at 21<sup>st</sup> spot**.
- Moreover, among the **top 100 startup cities**, only **four India cities were captured**. **Bengaluru (down by three ranks to 14<sup>th</sup> position)**, **New Delhi (up by three spots to 15<sup>th</sup> position)**, **Mumbai (improved by seven spots to 22<sup>nd</sup> position)**, and **Hyderabad (falling 21 ranks to disappointing 96<sup>th</sup> position)**.

## Rajeev Topno, private secretary to PM Modi, gets World Bank assignment

- **Rajeev Topno**, the 1996 batch IAS officer who has served as a **key aide to Prime Minister Narendra Modi**, has been appointed as **senior advisor to the World Bank Executive Director**.
- Topno's next assignment was cleared by the **PM Modi-led Appointments Committee of the Cabinet**. The committee also cleared names of **five other officers for foreign assignments**. **Topno, a Gujarat cadre Indian Administrative Service officer**, had joined the Prime Minister's Office as a deputy secretary in 2009 when **Manmohan Singh** had just started his second term. He handled key portfolios such as **telecom and ports** at the **PMO** in the **UPA-2 government**.

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.

### Taj 'strongest' Indian brand: Brand Finance report

- The iconic Taj brand of Tata Group's Indian Hotels Company Ltd. (IHCL) has been ranked No. 1 in the list of the strongest Indian brands by Brand Finance in its 'India 100 2020' report. The top 5 Indian brands in terms of brand value for this year include Taj, Jio, HP, Maruti Suzuki, HDFC Bank.
- Brand Finance defines Brand Strength as the efficacy of a brand's performance on intangible measures, relative to its competitors. Each brand is assigned a BSI score out of 100, which feeds into the brand value calculation.
- The Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL) and its subsidiaries bring together a group of brands and These include Taj – which started with India's first five star hotel – the Taj Mahal Palace & tower in Mumbai and then spread all over the world, SeleQtions, a named collection of hotels, Vivanta, sophisticated upscale hotels and Ginger, which is revolutionising the lean luxe segment.

Taj Hotels is a chain of luxury hotels and a subsidiary of the Indian Hotels Company Limited; headquartered at Express Towers, Nariman Point in Mumbai. Incorporated by the founder of the Tata Group, Jamsetji Tata, in 1903, the company is a part of the Tata Group, one of India's largest business conglomerates. Natarajan Chandrasekaran is an Indian businessman, and who was recent chairman of Tata Sons. He was Chief operating officer (COO) and executive director of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), where in 2009; he became Chief executive officer (CEO).

### Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) – Annual Report

- Considering the importance of availability of labour force data at more frequent time intervals, National Statistical Office (NSO) launched Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) on April 2017. The objective of PLFS is primarily twofold:
- To estimate the key employment and unemployment indicators (viz. Worker Population Ratio, Labour Force Participation Rate, Unemployment Rate) in the short time interval of three months for the urban areas only in the Current Weekly Status (CWS) and to estimate employment and unemployment indicators in both usual status (ps+ss) and CWS in both rural and urban areas annually. The first Annual Report (July 2017- June 2018) covering both rural and urban areas giving estimates of all important parameters of employment and unemployment in both usual status (ps+ss) and current weekly status (CWS) was released in May 2019. This is the second Annual Report being brought out by NSO on the basis of Periodic Labour Force Survey conducted during July 2018-June 2019.

### Centre allots Rs 4,000 cr to states under “Per Drop More Crop”

- The Central government has allocated Rs 4,000 crore as annual allotment to states for the current financial year under “Per Drop More Crop” component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY-PDMC).
- The state governments have identified the beneficiaries to be covered under the programme, said an Agriculture Ministry statement, adding that the process to release funds to some of the states is already under way for the year 2020-21.
- The Department of Agriculture Cooperation and Farmers’ Welfare is implementing the “Per Drop More Crop” component of PMKSY-PDMC, which focuses on enhancing water efficiency at farm level through micro irrigation technologies such as “drip and sprinkler” irrigation.

- The drip micro irrigation technique not only helps in saving water but also reduces fertilizer usage, labour expenses and other input costs. The statement said Micro Irrigation Fund corpus of Rs 5,000 crore has been created with National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), an apex development financial institution in India.

**Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana** is a national mission to improve farm productivity and ensure better utilization of the resources in the country. Launched on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2015 with the motto of “Har Khet Ko Paani”, the PMKSY is being implemented to expand cultivated area with assured irrigation, reduce wastage of water and improve water use efficiency. PMKSY not only focuses on creating sources for assured irrigation, but also creating protective irrigation by harnessing rain water at micro level through “Jal Sanchay” and “Jal Sinchan”. Micro irrigation is also incentivized through subsidy to ensure “Per drop-More crop”.

### WEF Davos summit to focus on ‘The Great Reset’ in 2021

- The World Economic Forum (WEF) will adopt a new twin-summit format for its next annual Davos meeting in January 2021, by bringing together leaders from across the globe for in-person as well as virtual dialogues with a theme of ‘The Great Reset’.
- The gathering of the world’s rich and powerful, held every year in the Swiss ski resort town, will also open its doors virtually for everyone across the world online and through a network of more than 400 hubs globally.
- The 50<sup>th</sup> WEF Annual Meeting, which was held from January 21-24, 2020, was one of the last high-profile gatherings this year before the coronavirus pandemic brought almost the entire world to a halt.

World Economic Forum (WEF), based in Cologny-Geneva, Switzerland, was founded in 1971 as a not-for-profit organization. It gained formal status in January 2015 under the Swiss Host-State Act, confirming the role of the Forum as an International Institution for Public-Private Cooperation. The WEF hosts an annual meeting at the end of January in Davos, a mountain resort in Graubunden, in the eastern Alps region of Switzerland.

### Mumbai most expensive Indian city for expats, 19<sup>th</sup> most expensive in Asia: Survey

- India’s financial capital Mumbai has emerged as the most expensive city in the country for expatriates in terms of cost of living. According to Mercer’s ‘2020 Cost of Living Survey’, Mumbai is the 60<sup>th</sup> most expensive city for expatriates globally, while it ranks 19<sup>th</sup> in Asia.
- Mumbai is the most expensive among Indian cities surveyed, followed by New Delhi (101<sup>st</sup> globally) and Chennai (143<sup>rd</sup> globally). Bengaluru (171) and Kolkata (185) are the least expensive Indian cities in the rankings, the survey said. Overall, all Indian cities surveyed showed a jump in rankings by a minimum of four places, with New Delhi climbing the most by 17 positions and narrowly escaping the top 100 list of most expensive cities for expatriates.

### In a first, BSE to deliver India standard gold and silver in F&O segment

- The BSE has introduced a first-of-its-kind India standard gold and silver delivery, under the ‘futures and options’ (F&O) bullion contracts. This move could potentially elevate India’s status as a ‘price-setter’ for the metals. To facilitate the India standard delivery, the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) had, in January, notified standards for purity of gold and silver.
- All exchanges offering F&O contracts in bullion quote, at present, the London Bullion Markets Association (LBMA)-approved gold and silver for delivery. Only one Indian refinery qualifies for supplying LBMA gold; rest on bourses is imported.

Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) is the national Standards Body of India working under the aegis of Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, Government of India. It is established by the Bureau of Indian Standards Act, 1986 which came into effect on 23 December 1986. The Minister in charge of the Ministry or Department having administrative control of the BIS is the ex-officio President of the BIS. A new Bureau of Indian standards (BIS) Act 2016 which was notified on 22 March 2016, has been brought into force with effect from 12 October 2017. The Act establishes the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) as the National Standards Body of India.



### India's foreign exchange reserves surge to cross half-a-trillion mark for 1<sup>st</sup> time

- India's foreign exchange reserves have surged by a massive 8.22 billion dollars to cross the half-a-trillion mark for the first time.
- The reserves rose to 501.70 billion dollars for the week ended 5<sup>th</sup> of June, helped by a whopping rise in foreign currency assets.
- India's foreign reserves consist of foreign currency assets (FCAs), special drawing rights (SDRs), gold reserves, and the country's reserve position with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Foreign exchange reserves of India are India's holdings of cash, bank deposits, bonds, and other financial assets denominated in currencies other than India's national currency, the Indian rupee. The reserves are managed by the Reserve Bank of India for the Indian government.

### Sebi panel suggests measures to strengthen enforcement, recovery mechanism

- A Sebi panel suggested measures to strengthen markets watchdog's enforcement mechanism and improve the system of recovery of siphoned off money. The committee headed by former Supreme Court Judge Anil Dave has proposed method of quantification of profit made by the defaulter and loss caused to investors.
- The panel also suggested suitable changes in the insolvency law are not used as a refuge by defaulters, thereby protecting the interest of investors.
- The panel also recommended amendment in Intermediaries Regulations to the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi). It has suggested that a two-tier enquiry process of registration for intermediaries should be replaced with an enquiry process as two-stage enquiry does not add much value and in fact, causes further delays in the completion of the enquiry proceedings. It has been proposed to provide for the opportunity of personal hearing to be given by the designated authority (DA) and not by the designated member (DM).

The Securities and Exchange Board of India was established on April 12, 1992 in accordance with the provisions of the Securities and Exchange Board of India Act, 1992. SEBI has its headquarters at the business district of Bandra Kurla Complex in Mumbai. Shri Ajay Tyagi is the current chairman of Securities and Exchange Board of India. All the credit rating agencies in India are regulated by SEBI (Credit Rating Agencies) Regulations, 1999 of the Securities and Exchange Board of India Act, 1992. There are a total of six credit agencies in India viz, CRISIL, CARE, ICRA, SMREA, Brickwork Rating, and India Rating and Research Pvt. Ltd.

### KVIC rolls out unique project to produce Neera, Palm jaggery

- The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) has rolled out a unique project to produce Neera and Palm jaggery which has huge potential to create employment.
- The project that aims at promoting Neera as a substitute to soft drinks while also creating self-employment to Adivasis and traditional trappers was launched at Dahanu in Palghar district of Maharashtra.

Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) is a statutory body formed in April 1957 (as per an RTI) by the Government of India, under the Act of Parliament, 'Khadi and Village Industries Commission Act of 1956'. It is an apex organisation under the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, with regard to khadi and village industries within India, which seeks to – “plan, promote, facilitate, organise and assist in the establishment and development of khadi and village industries in the rural areas in coordination with other agencies engaged in rural development wherever necessary.” Its head office is in Mumbai.

### AIIB clears \$750-mn loan to India for COVID-19

- Beijing-based Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has approved a \$750-million loan to India to help strengthen its response to the adverse impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on millions of poor and vulnerable households.



- “Many of the world’s low and middle-income countries are still in the **early stages of the health crisis but are already feeling the impact of the pandemic**. This poses an enormous **risk for millions across India who have only recently emerged from poverty**,” said AIIB Vice President, Investment Operations, D.J. Pandian.

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is a multilateral development bank that aims to support the building of infrastructure in the Indo-Pacific region. The bank currently has 78 members as well as 24 prospective members from around the world. The starting capital of the bank was \$100 billion, equivalent to  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the capital of the Asian Development Bank and about half that of the World Bank. Jin Liqun is currently the President of the AIIB. It is based in Beijing.

### Government launches Portal ‘SATYABHAMA’ to Promote R&D in Mining, Mineral Sector

- Union mines ministry announced the **launch of a portal “SATYABHAMA” with an aim to promote research and development in the mining and minerals sector**.
- This portal will allow online submission of project proposals along with monitoring of the same and utilisation of funds. The portal has been **designed, developed and implemented by National Informatics Centre (NIC), Mines Informatics Division**.
- **At the launch, Shri Pralhad Joshi, Union Minister for Coal, Mines and Parliamentary Affairs** emphasized the role of Digital Technologies in promoting research and development in the mining and mineral sector in the country.

### Indian economy to contract by 4% in 2020-21, forecasts ADB

- Hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic, the **Indian economy is expected to contract by 4% during the current financial year**, the ADB said in a supplement to its Asian Development Outlook (ADO).
- **Countries in ‘Developing Asia’ will ‘barely grow’ in 2020**, the ADB forecast. **China, however, is expected to record a positive growth of 1.8% in 2020**, sharply down from 6.1% in 2019, the lender said.
- **“Growth in Indian GDP slowed to 3.1% in the last quarter...its slowest since early 2003. Economic growth slowed to 4.2% in the whole of”** the last fiscal year as both exports and investment started to contract, the ADB said.

### India is second biggest driver of global energy consumption in 2019: BP Statistical Review

- **India was second biggest growth driver of primary energy consumption in the world, behind China**, in 2019 even though it witnessed fall in demand in oil and coal, according to BP Statistical Review released.
- **Global primary energy consumption growth slowed to 1.3 per cent last year**, less than half the rate of growth in 2018 (2.8 per cent), BP said. The increase in energy consumption was driven by renewables and natural gas.

### India becomes 12<sup>th</sup> largest holder of US government securities

- **India became the 12<sup>th</sup> largest holder of US government securities** at the end of April, with **holding worth \$157.4 billion**, according to official data.
- After significantly reducing the exposure in March to \$156.5 billion, **Indian marginally hiked the holding by \$0.9 billion to \$157.4 billion the next month**, the data from the US Treasury Department showed. So far this year, there has been no specific trend in terms of such securities bought and sold by India amid global economic coronavirus pandemic.

### One billion children experience violence every year as countries fail to protect them: UN report

- According to the findings, in 2017, around 40,000 children were victims of homicide. **Half of the world’s children — one billion every year — are affected by physical, sexual or psychological violence, suffering injuries and death because countries** have failed to follow established strategies to protect them, the first report of its kind from the UN has said, with experts noting that the coronavirus-related lockdowns have left far too many youngsters stuck with their abusers.

- While nearly all countries (88%) have laws in place to protect minors, less than half (47%) say they strongly enforce them, said the **Global Status Report on Preventing Violence Against Children 2020** launched. Because countries have failed to follow established strategies to protect children, **about one billion are affected each year by physical, sexual or psychological violence.**
- The report — **launched by the World Health Organisation, the UNICEF, the UNESCO, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Violence against Children and the End Violence Partnership** — **charted progress in 155 countries against the “INSPIRE” framework**, a set of seven strategies for preventing and responding to violence against children.
- **UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay** said during the **COVID-19 pandemic**, and the related school closures, “we have seen a rise in violence and hate online — and this includes bullying”.

**United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) based in Paris. **Audrey Azoulay** appointed as the **Director-general** of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). **UNESCO World Heritage Convention** which was **established in 1972** recognised various sites of cultural and natural importance around the world. After the latest addition to the UNESCO World Heritage Sites list, **India has now 39 World Heritage Sites, and that makes India with the 6<sup>th</sup> largest number of World Heritage Sites in the world!** There are **31 cultural sites, 7 natural sites and 1 mixed** as recognised by UNESCO.

### India now world's 5<sup>th</sup> largest hydropower producer

- The **International Hydropower Association (IHA)** released its **2020 Hydropower Status Report** highlighting that **hydropower continues to be the world's largest source of renewable electricity** with multiple non-power benefits. The **top 5 countries ranked by installed hydropower capacity** are: **China (356.4GW), Brazil (109.06GW), United States (102.75GW), Canada (81.39GW) and India (50.07GW).**

### Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport becomes first in India with this new tech at both ends of runway

- For the first time in India, an **Aviation Weather Monitoring System** has been installed at the **Bangalore airport at both ends of the runway.**
- **Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL)**, which operates **Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru (BLR Airport)** at its new runway has recently installed an **indigenously-developed Aviation Weather Monitoring System (AWMS).**
- According to a statement released by BIAL, it is the **first airport in India to have this technology installed at both ends of the runway.** The **Aviation Weather Monitoring System** has been developed by **Bengaluru-based CSIR-National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL).**

**Kempegowda International Airport** is an international airport serving **Bangalore**, the capital of the Indian state of **Karnataka**. The airport opened in **May 2008**. It is named after **Kempe Gowda I, the founder of Bangalore**. Airport became **Karnataka's first fully solar powered airport** developed by **CleanMax Solar.**

### Money in Swiss banks: India ranks 77<sup>th</sup>

- **India has moved down three places to 77<sup>th</sup> rank in terms of money parked by its citizens and enterprises with Swiss banks at the end of 2019**, while the **United Kingdom (UK)** has retained its top position, as per the latest data from **Switzerland's central bank**. **India was ranked 74<sup>th</sup> in the previous year.**
- An analysis of the latest annual banking statistics released by the **Swiss National Bank (SNB)** showed that **India remains ranked very low when it comes to money parked by Indian individuals and enterprises in Swiss banks**, including through their **India-based branches**, accounting for just about **0.06 per cent** of the aggregate funds parked by all foreign clients of **Switzerland-based banks.**
- According to the latest SNB data, **funds parked by Indian individuals and enterprises in Swiss banks, including through India-based branches, fell by 5.8 per cent in 2019 to 899 million Swiss francs (Rs 6,625 crore).**

- The data is for ‘total liabilities’ of Swiss banks towards Indian clients takes into account all types of funds of Indian customers at Swiss banks, including deposits from individuals, banks and enterprises. This also includes data for branches of Swiss banks in India, as well as non-deposit liabilities.
- In comparison, the top-ranked UK accounted for close to 27 per cent of the total foreign funds parked with Swiss banks at the end of 2019.
- Among the top-ranked jurisdictions, the UK is followed by the US, West Indies, France and Hong Kong in the top five. The top-five countries alone account for more than 50 per cent of the aggregate foreign funds parked with the Swiss banks, while the top-10 account for nearly two-thirds.
- The top-15 countries account for nearly 75 per cent of all foreign money in Swiss banks, while the contribution of the top-30 is almost 90 per cent.
- Among the five-nation BRICS block of emerging economies, India is ranked the lowest while Russia is ranked the highest at the 20<sup>th</sup> place (same as last year), followed by China at 22<sup>nd</sup> (same as 2018-end), South Africa at 56<sup>th</sup> (up two places) and Brazil at 62<sup>nd</sup> (up from 65<sup>th</sup> last year) in terms of money parked by their citizens and enterprises at the end of 2019.

### World's First Gold-backed Digital Gold Currency Launched in India

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- IBMC Financial Professionals Group, an internationally recognized financial services institution and business consultants, has joined hands with US Gold Currency Inc and Blockfills to bring the world's first monetary gold-backed digital gold currency to India.
- The currency is also being simultaneously introduced in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Middle East and Africa. For this, IBMC, which has presence in India, has partnered exclusively with US Gold Currency Inc, the issuer of the US Gold digital currency, and Blockfills, the transaction platform provider.
- Each US Gold digital currency is backed by US American Eagle one ounce (33.931 gram) gold coin, minted by US Federal Agency, US Mint. The holders of the currency can redeem their digital assets as physical gold coin or in US dollars anywhere in the world.
- IBMC is introducing the digital asset to customers ranging from retail and corporate investors, banks, financial institutions and sovereign wealth funds to treasuries and asset management companies.

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## Banks in News

### Uday Kotak takes over from Vikram Kirloskar as the new CII President

- The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) announced new office-bearers for the year 2020-21. Uday Kotak was elected as CII President and Sanjiv Bajaj assumed office as the Vice-President.
- Managing Director and CEO of Kotak Mahindra Bank, Uday Kotak, has taken over as the President of CII for 2020-21 from Vikram Kirloskar, Chairman and Managing Director of Kirloskar Systems.

In 1985 Uday Kotak founded what later became an Indian financial services conglomerate. In February 2003, Kotak Mahindra Finance Ltd. (KMFL), the group's flagship company, received a banking licence from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). With this, KMFL became the first non-banking finance company in India to be converted into a bank: Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited. The Bank is headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra, India. As of April 2019, it is the second largest Indian private sector bank by market capitalization.

### IndusInd Bank launches a mobile app based facility for opening a current bank account

- The IndusInd Bank launched a mobile application based facility where customer can open current bank account in just few hours.
- The new facility can be used to open current accounts for all kinds of businesses including proprietorship, partnership as well as private and public limited companies, the bank said.
- The launch of the mobile application based facility for opening current accounts comes close on the heels of expanding video banking services with the integration of a video KYC platform for onboarding savings account and credit card customers.

IndusInd Bank Limited is a Mumbai based Indian new generation bank, established in 1994. It was founded by Srichand Parmanand Hinduja. The bank offers commercial, transactional and electronic banking products and services.

### RBI Creates Payments Infrastructure Development Fund to boost Digitisation

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is creating a Payments Infrastructure Development Fund to push digital payments across the country. The central bank will make an initial contribution of Rs 250 crore covering half the fund. In an effort to give a push to digital payments across the country, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said they are setting up a Payment Infrastructure Development Fund (PIDF) of Rs 500 crore.
- The remaining will come from the card-issuing banks and card networks operating in the country. This fund has been created to encourage acquirers to deploy point of sale (PoS) infrastructure, both physical and digital, in tier three to six centres and northeastern states.

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.

### ePaisha joins hand with First Alliance Bank to promote POS solutions in Africa

- ePaisha, a point of sale (POS) solution provider in India, has entered into a partnership with First Alliance Bank (Z) Ltd in Zambia, Africa, to provide mobile point of sale (mPOS) solution to small and medium enterprises and other businesses in the country.
- The prime focus of the partnership for First Alliance Bank (FAB) is to empower all businesses with the POS solution in various industries across Zambia starting with the much-required contactless payment feature.



## Karnataka Bank launches KBL Micro Mitra for micro enterprises

- **Karnataka Bank** has launched a new product **KBL Micro Mitra**, wherein **financial assistance up to Rs.10 lakhs** can be provided to the **Micro manufacturing and service enterprises** either for working capital or for investment purposes. The facility comes with a simplified procedure and competitive rate of interest.

**Karnataka Bank Limited** is India's twelfth largest private sector bank. It is an 'A' Class Scheduled Commercial Bank based in **Mangaluru** in **Karnataka**, India.

## Banks Board Bureau recommends new CEOs for IOB, Central Bank of India

- The **Banks Board Bureau** has recommended a new MD and CEO for **Central Bank of India** and **Indian Overseas Bank** and also a new MD for **State Bank of India**.
- **Ashwani Bhatia** has been recommended as the MD for **State Bank of India** while **P.P. Sengupta** has been recommended as MD and CEO for **Indian Overseas Bank**. The current CEO of IOB, **Karnam Sekar** will superannuate on June 30, 2020.
- **Matam Venkata Rao** has been recommended as MD and CEO in **Central Bank of India**. Mr. Rao will take charge after current MD **Pallav Mohapatra** retires in **February 28, 2021**.

## RBI sets up panel to review ownership, corporate structure of Private sector banks

- The **Reserve Bank of India** has constituted a five-member **Internal Working Group** to review the guidelines related to ownership, governance and corporate structure of private sector banks.
- RBI informed that **RBI Central Board Director P K Mohanty** will head the committee, which will submit its report by 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2020.
- The panel will also examine norms for promoter shareholding at the initial/licensing stage and subsequently, along with the timelines for dilution of the shareholding. It is necessary to align regulations to meet the requirements of a dynamic banking landscape as macro-economic, financial market and technological developments continue to influence the future of banking.
- The panel has also been asked to examine and review the eligibility criteria for individuals or entities to apply for banking licence and make recommendations on all related issues.

## SBI relaunches Aadhaar-based online savings account opening facility

- The **State Bank of India (SBI)** relaunched its **Aadhaar-based instant digital savings account facility** for customers who want to open an online account using the **Yono platform**. **Yono** is the lender's integrated banking and lifestyle platform.
- The 'insta savings bank account' will offer a complete paperless and instant digital savings account opening with just **PAN and Aadhaar number**, the bank said in a release. "This account has all the features that would provide our potential customers a convenient, hassle-free and paperless banking experience without visiting the bank branch."

**YONO (You Only Need One)** is an integrated digital banking platform offered by **State Bank of India (SBI)** to enable users to access a variety of financial and other services such as flight, train, bus and taxi bookings, online shopping, or medical bill payments. **YONO** is offered as a smartphone app for both **Android** and **iOS**. **YONO** was launched on **24 November 2017** by then, **Arun Jaitley**, the **Finance Minister of India**.

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**. **Rajnish Kumar** 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**.

## RBI modifies framework for financial market infra, retail payment system

- The Reserve Bank came up with a modified oversight framework for financial market infrastructure and retail payment systems with a view to ensure safety and stability of payment structure.
- “This document, by enhancing supervisory transparency and disclosure, would enable better regulatory compliance by payment systems operators, and enhance customer awareness, eventually contributing to the safety and stability of our payment systems,” the RBI said while releasing version 2.0 of Oversight for Financial Market Infrastructure and Retail Payment Systems.
- The RBI, as per the document, will carry out the oversight activity through monitoring existing and planned systems, assessment of the FMIs and RPSs against the oversight objectives, and inducing change for improvements, where necessary.

The FMI generally refers to systemically important payment systems (SIPS), Central Securities Depositories (CSDs), Securities Settlement Systems (SSSs), Central Counter Parties (CCPs), and Trade Repositories (TRs) that facilitate the clearing, settlement and recording of financial transactions. RPS refers to transactions effected through mobile phones, internet, ATMs, PoS networks and with contactless technology (card payments and tokenisation), electronic billing and use of various systems and platforms for making instant payments.

## ICICI Bank introduces ‘Insta FlexiCash’

- ICICI Bank announced the launch of a facility, that enables its Salary Account customers to get approval for overdraft (OD) instantaneously and in a paperless manner. Called, ‘Insta Flexicash’, the end-to-end fully digital facility can be availed using the Bank’s internet banking platform.
- The facility comes handy to lakhs of the Bank’s pre-approved customers who can apply for the OD from the comfort of their home, without visiting a bank branch. The facility can be sanctioned immediately while customers can start using the approved OD limit within 48 hours. The interest payable on the OD is calculated on the basis of the actual amount availed by the customer, not on the full amount of the OD sanctioned.

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.

## RBI proposes upper age limit of 70 years for CEOs, whole-time directors of banks

- The RBI has proposed an upper age limit of 70 years for CEOs and whole-time directors of banks and a maximum term of 10 years for those belonging to the promoter group, as part of the exercise to improve governance in the banking sector.
- The discussion paper released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said that chief executive officers (CEOs) and whole time directors (WTDs) belonging to the promoter group should pass on the managerial leadership to professionals after ten years. “The upper age limit for CEO/WTDs of banks is 70 years. Beyond this nobody can continue in the post. Within the overall limit of 70 years, individual bank’s board can prescribe, as an internal policy, a lower age limit for CEO/WTDs.

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.

### Airtel Payments Bank launches salary account for MSMEs

- **Airtel Payments Bank announced a salary account for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME).** Through the ‘Suraksha Salary’ account, MSMEs and other organisations will be able to make cashless payments and also provide financial security blanket to their employees.
- **The benefits under the account include Hospicash Insurance and Personal Accidental insurance cover,** given the low penetration of insurance in India. The MSME workforce has been one of the worst affected during the nationwide lockdown. These units employ a large number of informal labour force who are not eligible for social and healthcare benefits as part of their salaries.
- **The lack of any financial protection makes them highly vulnerable, particularly in the current times.** After the recent policy measures for the sector, different industries have been reaching out to tap into the new found cash flow in the sector.

Airtel Payments Bank is a public limited company with its headquarters in New Delhi, India. The company is a subsidiary of Bharti Airtel. It is the first company in India to receive a payments bank license from the Reserve Bank of India and it became the first live payments bank in the country. Airtel Payments Bank is a joint venture between Bharti Airtel Ltd. and Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd.. Kotak Mahindra Bank holds 19.9% stake in the Airtel Payments Bank.

### HDFC ERGO to Launch On-demand “Pay As You Fly” Insurance for Drones with TropoGo

- **A first-of-its-kind policy for drone-owners in India** Mumbai, Maharashtra, India (NewsVair) HDFC ERGO, the country’s third-largest non-life insurance provider in the private sector, and TropoGo, a Deep Tech start-up, have partnered to offer commercial drone owners and operators Third Party Liability claims cover for property damage and bodily injuries.
- **This policy is the first-of-its-kind in the non-life insurance segment in India** which will be offered on-demand to customers on ‘Pay as you Fly’ concept. In the current pandemic, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) or drones are being considered and also actively used actively by State and Central Government in the fight against COVID-19. While the world has come to a grinding halt, drones are proving to be efficient and beneficial for public surveillance, crowd monitoring and; in certain areas; even for delivery of essentials like medicines.

### Former RBI Governor Urjit Patel named NIPFP chairman

- **Former Reserve Bank governor Urjit Patel takes charge as chairman of the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP)** from June 22, the economic think tank.
- **Patel replaced Vijay Kelkar, who assumed office on November 1, 2014** “National Institute of Public Finance and Policy is privileged to have Dr. Urjit Patel, former Reserve Bank Governor, as its Chairperson for a four-year term commencing June 22, 2020,” the economic think tank said in a statement.
- **“NIPFP records its deep sense of appreciation and gratitude for the significant contributions made by the outgoing Chairman, Dr. Vijay Laxman Kelkar during his tenure which has immensely helped the institute towards scaling to its present level of growth and effectiveness,”.**
- **Patel on December 10, 2018, had unexpectedly resigned months before the end of his three-year term in September 2019.** He, who was the first governor since 1990 to step down before his term ends, had in a brief statement had cited “personal reasons” for the decision. **Patel was eligible for a second term like most of his successors barring a few like his outspoken predecessor Raghuram Rajan.**

NIPFP is a premier research institution in public economics and policy. The institute has made significant research contribution in the areas of revenue and taxation, fiscal management, public expenditure, macro-economic policies, fiscal federalism and other policy issues both at the Central and the State-level. Being the largest think-tank on public economics and policy in India, the institute faces an overwhelming demand for research in these areas. Most of the studies are supported by Central and State governments in India, and bilateral and multilateral institutions. Collaborative research is also undertaken with national and international academic institutions. The institute has also undertaken research for a few other countries at the request of the Governments of those countries

## RBI doubles withdrawal limit to Rs 1 lakh for PMC Bank depositors

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) doubled the withdrawal limit for Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative Bank's depositors to Rs 100,000 from Rs 50,000 earlier.
- With this relaxation, the RBI said that more than 84 per cent of the depositors of the bank will be able to withdraw their entire account balance.

**Punjab & Maharashtra Co-operative Bank Limited (PMC)** is a multi-state co-operative bank that began operations in 1983. It has 137 branches spread over half a dozen states of India and nearly 100 branches are in Maharashtra. It is regulated by the Reserve Bank of India and registered under the Cooperative Societies Act.

## Yes Bank launches mobile payment app 'Yuva Pay'

- Yes Bank launched its digital wallet solution 'Yuva Pay' in partnership with UDMA Technologies to enable contactless payments for its customers. The digital wallet issued under minimum KYC regulations to Yes Bank will offer bill payments via Bharat Bill Pay and provide Unified Payments Interface (UPI) facility to customers.
- Through the app, customers can pay their utility bills (including municipal, house, water tax, electricity, LPG, DTH, Mobile bill, license fees), make insurance renewals, FASTag recharges, EMI payments, and use the app to make payments at retail outlets.

## J&K Bank launches products to provide financial support to business communities

- In Jammu and Kashmir, in order to provide adequate financial support to different business communities to overcome business challenges due to the prevailing conditions, J&K Bank has launched two products titled 'J&K Bank Business Support Loan Scheme 2019-20' and 'J&K Bank Business Support Loan Scheme 2019-20 for Hotels and Guest Houses'.
- Launching the schemes, the Lt Governor G C Murmu said the bank's schemes are a timely financial intervention for businesses of the region especially hotels and guest-houses which are crucial for the sustenance and development of tourism sector and calling for collaborated efforts by all stakeholders in this direction.

**Jammu and Kashmir Bank (J&K Bank)** is a J&K - based private sector banking and financial services company. It is a privately owned bank with majority owned state share with its headquarters in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, India. J&K Bank, incorporated on October 1, 1938, was the first bank in the country to emerge as a state-owned bank.

## Yes Bank, Affordplan launch co-branded cashless card for healthcare needs

- Yes Bank has partnered with fintech startup Affordplan to launch a co-branded health card to address healthcare needs. The co-branded healthcare card will enable families plan and manage their finances for their healthcare needs, Yes Bank said in a release.
- In addition, Yes Bank's wallet has also been integrated on Affordplan Swasth to enable wallet QR scan for making payments to merchant partners empaneled on the app. The co-branded card will have flexible recharges from Rs 100 up to a maximum balance of Rs 1 lakh.

The programme has an inbuilt rewards platform, which provides wellness related products and services in the form of rewards and incentives to customers. It is contactless and eliminates cash transactions for the safety of customers at hospitals and pharmacy stores.

**Yes Bank Limited** is an Indian public bank headquartered in Mumbai, India and was founded by Rana Kapoor and Ashok Kapur in 2004. On 5 March 2020, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has taken control of the bank which had an excessive amount of bad loans in an attempt to avoid the collapse of the bank. On 13 March 2020, the Union Cabinet approved the reconstruction scheme for Yes Bank. During this reconstruction, seven investors infused 12000 crore in Yes bank and Prashant Kumar has been proposed as new CEO of the bank. These investors include State Bank of India, ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank, Axis Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Rakesh Jhunjhunwala, Radhakishan Damani and Azim Premji trust.



## Firms in News

### Infosys joins Amazon-backed Climate Pledge to become net-zero carbon

- **Infosys has joined the Climate Pledge**, a commitment co-founded by Internet giant Amazon and environment firm Global Optimism to meet the Paris Agreement 10 years early.
- **Infosys committed to become net-zero carbon** and will power its operations fully with renewable energy well ahead of 2040, in an effort to protect the planet. The Climate Pledge calls on **signatories to be net-zero carbon across their businesses by 2040** - a decade ahead of the Paris Accord's goal of 2050.

Infosys Limited is an Indian multinational corporation that provides business consulting, information technology and outsourcing services. It has its headquarters in Bangalore, Karnataka, India. Infosys is the second-largest Indian IT company after Tata Consultancy Services by 2017 revenue and 596<sup>th</sup> largest public company in the world based on revenue. Infosys was established by seven engineers in Pune, Maharashtra, India with an initial capital of \$250 in 1981. Nandan Nilekani co-founded Infosys and is the non-executive chairman of Infosys replacing R Seshasayee and Ravi Venkatesan, who were the co-chairs of the board, on 24 August 2017.

### S&P's retains India's sovereign rating at "BBB-" with stable outlook

- **S&P Global Ratings affirmed its ratings on the country's long-term foreign and local currency sovereign credit at lowest investment grade** and maintained a stable outlook, arguing that "India's economy is likely to achieve a strong recovery following the deep contraction in this fiscal year; **forecasting real GDP growth at 8.5 per cent**" in FY22.
- **It affirmed India's long-term rating at 'BBB-' with a stable outlook and short term rating at 'A-3'**. S&P also said the economy faces stark challenges in the near-term. Meanwhile, Fitch Ratings said that after a 5 per cent contraction in the current fiscal, the country's economy is forecast to **bounce back with a sharp growth rate of 9.5 per cent next year** provided it avoids further deterioration in financial sector health.

S&P Global Ratings (previously Standard & Poor's) is an American credit rating agency (CRA) and a division of S&P Global that publishes financial research and analysis on stocks, bonds, and commodities. S&P is considered the largest of the Big Three credit-rating agencies, which also include Moody's Investors Service and Fitch Ratings. Its head office is located on 55 Water Street in Lower Manhattan, New York City.

### Hyderabad airport receives ACI recognition for green practices

- **GMR-led Hyderabad International Airport or Rajiv Gandhi International Airport received the highest Platinum Recognition** in the Airports Council International (ACI) Asia-Pacific Green Airports Recognition 2020 in the 15-35 million passengers per annum (MPPA) category.
- **Airports Council International (ACI) Asia-Pacific has announced the results of the region's annual Green Airports Recognition 2020** for efficient water management practices. The recognition was the outcome of the submissions shared this year focussed on water management documenting approaches to waste-water treatment, water harvesting, recycling and reduction.
- **ACI's Green Airports Recognition programme promotes best environmental practices** to minimise the aviation sector's impact on the environment and recognises ACI Asia-Pacific's members for outstanding accomplishments in their environmental projects.

GMR Group is an infrastructural company headquartered in New Delhi. The company was founded in 1978 by Grandhi Mallikarjuna Rao. Employing the Public Private Partnership model, the Group has implemented several infrastructure projects in India. GMR Group chairman Grandhi Mallikarjuna Rao, a first-generation entrepreneur hailing from Rajam in Srikakulam District in Andhra Pradesh. Rajiv Gandhi International Airport is an international airport that serves Hyderabad, the capital of the Indian state of Telangana. It is named after Rajiv Gandhi, former Prime Minister of India. It is the only airport in India ranking in AirHelp's list of top 10 airports in the world.

## International Chamber of Commerce elects Mastercard CEO Ajay Banga as new Chair

- ICC, the institutional representative of 45 million companies, has elected MasterCard CEO Ajay Banga as Chair. Mr Banga, who has served as ICC's First Vice-Chair since June 2018, becomes ICC Chair with immediate effect, succeeding Paul Polman who becomes ICC Honorary Chair, having served as Chair for the past two years.
- The election of Mr Banga during the ICC World Council, held annually, also confirmed Maria Fernanda Garza, CEO of Orestia and current Board member, as ICC First Vice-Chair – making her the first woman to hold this position. Seven members have also been elected to the ICC Executive Board, strengthening leadership at ICC with augmented geographic, ethnic and gender diversity.

International Chamber of Commerce is the largest, most representative business organization in the world. Its over 45 million members in over 100 countries have interests spanning every sector of private enterprise. ICC was the first organization granted general consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council and UN Observer Status

## Wipro names Thierry Delaporte as CEO

- India's Wipro Ltd named Thierry Delaporte as the new chief executive officer and managing director of the IT Company, replacing Abidali Neemuchwala. Delaporte was most recently the chief operating officer of French consulting and technology firm Capgemini Group. Neemuchwala will step down as CEO on June 1 while executive chairman Rishad Premji will oversee day-to-day operations of the company until Delaporte takes over on July 6.

Wipro (formerly, Western India Palm Refined Oil Limited, legally Wipro Limited) is an Indian multinational corporation that provides information technology, consulting and business process services. It is headquartered in Bangalore, Karnataka, India. In 2013, Wipro separated its non-IT businesses and formed the privately owned Wipro Enterprises. The company was incorporated on 29 December 1945 in Amalner, Maharashtra by Mohamed Premji as "Western India Palm Refined Oil Limited", later abbreviated to "Wipro". In 1966, after Mohamed Premji's death, his son Azim Premji took over Wipro as its chairman at the age of 21.

## Switzerland launches first app based on Google, Apple's Exposure Notification API

- Switzerland has launched the world's first app that utilised the Exposure Notification API developed by Apple and Google.
- According to a BBC report, the app called "SwissCovid" is currently available to members of the Swiss army, civil servants, and hospital workers. Apart from Switzerland, Latvia too has developed an app that utilised the API. The report says that their app called the Apturi Covid app could be rolled out to the general public as soon as this week as they do not need a parliamentary vote for the same. The app will be rolled out to a wider audience once the Swiss MPs debate and approve the app. The Swiss government hopes to achieve this by mid-June.

Switzerland is a country situated in the confluence of Western, Central, and Southern Europe. Switzerland is a landlocked country bordered by Italy to the south, France to the west, Germany to the north, and Austria and Liechtenstein to the east. Bern is the de facto capital of Switzerland. Simonetta Sommaruga was elected President of the Swiss Confederation for 2020 on 11 December 2019.

## MSME Minister Nitin Gadkari launches CGSSD

- Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, MSME, Minister Nitin Gadkari launched the Credit Guarantee Scheme for Sub-ordinate Debt (CGSSD). As per the Scheme, guarantee cover worth twenty thousand crore rupees will be provided to the promoters who can take debt from the banks to further invest in their stressed MSMEs as equity.
- The scheme seeks to extend support to the promoters of the operational MSMEs which are stressed and have become NPA as on 30<sup>th</sup> April of this year. Under the scheme, Promoters of the MSMEs will be given credit equal to 15 percent of their stake or 75 lakh rupees whichever is lower.

- There will be a moratorium of 7 years on payment of principal whereas maximum tenure for repayment will be 10 years. The scheme will provide support to around 2 lakh MSMEs and will help in reviving the economic activity in and through this sector.

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.

### Two Indian firms in WEF list of tech pioneers for 2020

- Two Indian firms - ZestMoney and Stellapps - figure in a new list of Tech Pioneers released by the World Economic Forum (WEF) which described these 100 entities as future headline-makers addressing global issues with cutting-edge technology.
- From artificial intelligence (AI) to carbon capture, these companies are using innovations to protect the climate, improve healthcare and much more, helping us to reset society and build towards a better future, the WEF said. About India's ZestMoney, the WEF said the company is using its technology to transform the financial services industry, offering affordable credit to those who are unable to access this through traditional finance paths. The company uses AI-based digital lending platform for disbursing affordable credit.

### Moody's downgrades India's rating to 'Baa3'

- Moody's Investors Service downgraded India's sovereign rating to 'Baa3' from 'Baa2', saying there will be challenges in implementation of policies to mitigate risks of a sustained period of low growth and deteriorating fiscal position.
- "Moody's has downgraded the Government of India's foreign-currency and local-currency long-term issuer ratings to Baa3 from Baa2. "Moody's has also downgraded India's local-currency senior unsecured rating to Baa3 from Baa2, and its short-term local-currency rating to P-3 from P-2.

Moody's Investors Service is a leading provider of credit ratings, research, and risk analysis. The company was incorporated in 1914 and is based in New York, New York. Moody's Investors Service, Inc. operates as a subsidiary of Moody's Corporation.

### IRCON inks pact with NIIFL, Ayana Power to explore opportunities in solar energy

- IRCON International Ltd has inked pact with NIIFL and Ayana Renewable Power for exploring opportunities in solar energy sector. NIIFL and Ircon will evaluate strategic partnerships across infrastructure projects and have agreed in-principle to identify, bid and execute solar energy projects through joint ventures/consortium arrangements, as per the agreement.

Indian Railway Construction Limited (IRCON), is an engineering and construction organisation, specialized in transport infrastructure. The PSU was established in 1976, by the Government of India under the Companies Act 1956. It is headquartered in New Delhi.

### Tech Mahindra signs UN Global Compact Initiative to reduce emissions

- Tech Mahindra a provider of digital transformation, consulting and business reengineering services signed a joint declaration with UN Global Compact urging governments to align their COVID-19 recovery efforts with the latest climate science.
- Tech Mahindra reaffirms its commitment to achieving net-zero carbon emissions while calling on governments to "prioritize a faster and fairer transition from a grey to a green economy." By moving towards a zero-carbon



resilient economy, Tech Mahindra aims to reduce carbon footprint, emissions and will conserve energy using new-age technologies like internet of things, artificial intelligence and blockchain.

The **United Nations Global Compact** is a **non-binding United Nations pact to encourage businesses worldwide to adopt sustainable and socially responsible policies, and to report on their implementation.** The UN Global Compact is a principle-based framework for businesses, stating ten principles in the areas of human rights, labor, the environment and anti-corruption. **The UN Global Compact was announced by then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan in an address to the World Economic Forum on 31 January 1999, and was officially launched at UN Headquarters in New York City on 26 July 2000.** The Global Compact Office works on the basis of a mandate set out by the UN General Assembly as an organization that “**promotes responsible business practices and UN values among the global business community and the UN System.**”

### Microsoft joins Amazon in banning face-recognition technology sales to police

- **Microsoft Corp** said it would **await federal regulation before selling facial recognition technology to police,** making it the latest big firm to back away from the business following protests against law enforcement brutality and bias.
- The **Microsoft announcement came shortly after rival Amazon.com Inc declared it was pausing police use of its “Rekognition” service for a year** and International Business Machines Corp said it no longer offers the software generally. **The death of George Floyd, a black man pinned down by a white officer who knelt on his neck for nearly nine minutes, prompted worldwide protests against racial inequity. Concerns also arose over whether facial recognition could be used against protesters unfairly.**

**Microsoft Corporation** is an **American multinational technology company with headquarters in Redmond, Washington.** Microsoft was **founded by Paul Allen and Bill Gates on April 4, 1975, to develop and sell BASIC interpreters for the Altair 8800.** **Satya Narayana Nadella is an Indian American business executive.** He is the **chief executive officer of Microsoft, succeeding Steve Ballmer in 2014.**

### Reliance Industries closes \$7 billion rights issue, India’s largest ever

- India’s oil-to-telecoms giant **Reliance Industries closed a \$7 billion rights issue, India’s largest ever, luring buyers in with a rare deferred payment offer.**
- Proceeds from the issue, also **ranked as one of the world’s biggest by a non-financial company based on Dealogic data,** will aid Reliance’s plan to slash net debt to zero this year. The issue was subscribed about 1.6 times, in “a vote of confidence, by both domestic investors, foreign investors and small retail shareholders, in the intrinsic strength of the Indian economy”.

**Reliance Industries Limited (RIL)** is an **Indian conglomerate holding company headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra, India.** On 18 October 2007, Reliance Industries **became the first Indian company to breach \$100 billion market capitalization.** It is also the **highest income tax payer in the private sector in India.** **Dhirubhai Ambani founded Reliance Industries in Bombay with his cousin. Mukesh Dhirubhai Ambani is an Indian billionaire business magnate, and the chairman, managing director, and largest shareholder of Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL), a Fortune Global 500 company and India's most valuable company by market value. He is currently the richest man in Asia.**

### Adani Green Energy wins world’s largest solar bid worth \$6 billion

- **Adani Green Energy, the renewable energy arm of Adani Group, has bagged “the world’s largest solar tender” from the Union government to construct an 8-gigawatt (Gw) photovoltaic power plant and set up a 2-Gw solar cell and module manufacturing capacity in five years.** This would entail an investment of Rs 45,000 crore at a time when companies in almost all sectors are looking to cut down capital expenditure.
- With this win, the company is now the **largest renewable power generator in the country with 15 Gw of renewable capacity** under various stages of development. **It is followed by ReNew Power with an 8.5-Gw capacity and Azure Power with a 6.5-Gw capacity.**



**Adani Green Energy Limited (AGEL)** is an Indian renewable energy company headquartered in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. It is owned by Indian conglomerate Adani Group. The company operates Kamuthi Solar Power Project, one of the largest solar photovoltaic plants in the world.

### BHEL commissions 270 mw thermal plant in Telangana

- **State-owned BHEL announced commissioning of 270 megawatt (MW) thermal power plant in Telangana.** Located at Manuguru in Kothagudem district of the state, the project was awarded to BHEL by Telangana State Power Generation Corporation Limited (TSGENCO), the company said in a statement.
- **This is the first unit to be commissioned at this project** and work on the balance three units is also at an advanced stage. **Following the commissioning of the 1x800 MW Kothagudem thermal power project, this is the second unit** to have been commissioned as part of the memorandum of understanding between TSGENCO and BHEL for construction of new thermal power plants totalling 6,000 MW.

**Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL)** owned and founded by the Government of India, is an engineering and manufacturing Maharatna status company based in New Delhi, India. It was established in 1964, BHEL is India's largest power generation equipment manufacturer.

### WhatsApp launches payments service, 2 yrs after it began testing in India

- **WhatsApp has launched its 'WhatsApp Pay' in Brazil**, two years after it began testing the payments service in India.
- **In 2018, the Facebook-owned company had started testing the service in India, which allows users to utilise the messaging platform to send and receive money.** However, the ambitious plan has been caught in a bind over regulatory issues.

**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.

### Empays Payment Systems partners Mastercard to enable contact-free ATM cash withdrawals

- **Empays Payment Systems India Pvt Ltd, which built and runs the IMT Payment System, announced a partnership with Mastercard to enable contact-free ATM cash withdrawals in India.** With this partnership, Empays will upgrade the basic technology behind the IMT Payment System to incorporate the requirements of Mastercard Cardless ATM enabling a true EMV-capable cash withdrawal transaction.
- As per a release by Mastercard, **the IMT Payment System powers the largest ATM network for cardless cash withdrawals in the world** and is available across 40,000 ATMs in India. It uses SMS technology to enable cash withdrawals from participating ATMs without any physical contact with a card.

### Recykal in pact with UNDP, HCCB for plastic waste management

- **Recykal, a digital technology company in the waste management space, has partnered with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Hindustan Coca-Cola Beverages (HCCB) for Project Prithvi, a joint initiative for developing sustainable plastic waste management practices in the country.**
- **Under Project Prithvi, their pan-India partnership, Recykal will leverage its cloud and mobile applications to raise consumer awareness of segregation and recycling.**

### PhonePe launches domestic trip insurance with ICICI Lombard

- **Flipkart-owned digital payments platform PhonePe, along with ICICI Lombard announced the launching of a comprehensive, industry-first domestic multi-trip insurance cover, which will be exclusively available for PhonePe users.**

- With the lockdown ending and domestic travel gradually starting across the country, **the policy will provide one of the most affordable annual insurance covers for unlimited trips**, as it aims for a stress-free travel experience for its customers by covering risks associated with **all modes of travel within the country (road, rail, and air)**. Additionally, this policy provides cover against death or hospitalization due to an accident that happened during the journey with a sum assured of Rs 5 lakhs. **The premium of this policy is Rs 499 for a year.**

**PhonePe Private Limited** or **PhonePe** is an **Indian e-commerce payment system and digital wallet company** headquartered in **Bangalore, India**. It was **founded in December 2015**, by **Sameer Nigam and Rahul Chari**. **PhonePe app went live in August 2016** and was the **first payment app built on Unified Payments Interface (UPI)**.

### “Saudi Arabia’s PIF to invest Rs 11,367 crore in Jio Platforms for 2.32% stake

- Jio Platforms**, owned by **Reliance Industries** announced that **Saudi Arabia-based Public Investment Fund (PIF)** will invest **Rs 11,367 crore** for **2.32 per cent stake** in the company.
- With this investment, **Jio Platforms** has raised **Rs 1,15,693.95 crore** from leading global investors including **Facebook, Silver Lake, Vista Equity Partners, General Atlantic, KKR, Mubadala, ADIA, TPG and L Catterton** since April 2020.
- This investment values **Jio Platforms** at an equity value of **Rs 4.91 lakh crore** and an enterprise value of **Rs 5.16 lakh crore**.

**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**. **Mukesh Dhirubhai Ambani** is founder of **Reliance Jio**.

### Mukesh Ambani, Asia’s wealthiest man, joins club of world’s 10 richest

- Asia’s richest man** has entered a new league of wealth. The net worth of **Mukesh Ambani**, chairman of **Reliance Industries Ltd.**, has jumped to **\$64.5 billion**, making him the **only Asian tycoon** in the exclusive club of the **world’s top 10 richest people**, according to the **Bloomberg Billionaires Index**.
- He overtook **Larry Ellison of Oracle Corp.** and **France’s Francoise Bettencourt Meyers**, the wealthiest woman, to reach the **No. 9 spot**.
- Ambani**, who owns **42% of Reliance**, has benefited from a flurry of investment into the company’s digital unit, **Jio Platforms Ltd.**, that **Reliance** said has made it net-debt free ahead of a **March 2021 target**. The shares of the Indian conglomerate have doubled from a low in March, just as other billionaires on the list have been hit by the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.
- Mukesh** revels in being the biggest. In India, **Reliance** officially became just that last year, when it surpassed state-owned **Indian Oil Corp.** to become the country’s largest company by revenue.

### Tata Sons’ Chandrasekaran re-nominated to RBI central board

- The Central government has re-nominated **Natarajan Chandrasekaran** as a **part-time non-official director on the Reserve Bank of India’s central board**, for a further period of two years beyond **March 3, 2020**, or until further orders, whichever is earlier. The **RBI** made the announcement regarding **Chandrasekaran’s re-nomination** on **June 21**.
- The government had first nominated **Chandrasekaran**, **Chairman of the Board of Tata Sons** since **January 2017**, as **Director on the central board of directors of the RBI** for a period of four years with effect from **March 4, 2016** or until further orders, whichever is earlier.

### Union HRD Minister virtually launches ‘YUKTI 2.0’ platform for Higher Education Institutes

- Union Minister of Human Resource Development, Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’**, launched an initiative ‘**YUKTI 2.0**’ to help systematically assimilate technologies having commercial potential and information related to incubated startups in our higher education institutions.

- The Minister had launched the **YUKTI (Young India combating COVID with Knowledge, Technology and Innovation) web portal on 11 April, 2020**. Ministry of HRD prepared the portal in view of Coronavirus. The portal intends to cover the different dimensions of COVID-19 challenges in a very holistic and comprehensive way.
- Through this portal, the Ministry of Human Resource Development will endeavor to ensure that students, teachers and researchers in higher educational institutions are getting appropriate support to meet the requirements needed to advance their technologies and innovations.

### Fitch Ratings revises India's outlook to negative from stable

- **Fitch Ratings revised India's outlook to 'negative' from 'stable'**, stating that the coronavirus pandemic has significantly weakened the country's growth prospects for the year and exposed the challenges associated with a high public-debt burden.
- The move comes after another rating agency **Moody's** earlier this month downgraded India's sovereign rating by a notch to lowest investment grade of **'Baa2'** for the first time in 22 years. "Fitch Ratings has revised the outlook on India's long-term foreign-currency issuer default rating (IDR) to negative from stable and affirmed the rating at **'BBB-'**".

**Fitch Ratings Inc.** is one of the "Big Three credit rating agencies" the other two being **Moody's** and **Standard & Poor's**. It is one of the three nationally recognized statistical rating organizations (NRSRO) designated by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission in 1975. **Fitch Ratings is headquartered in New York, US.**

### Reliance Industries becomes first Indian firm to hit \$150 bn market cap

- **Reliance Industries** became the first Indian firm to hit a market valuation of **\$150 billion** helped by a continuous rally in its share price. Reliance Industries became the first Indian company to cross the **Rs. 11 lakh crore market valuation mark**.
- Its market valuation crossed **Rs. 11 lakh crore** in the previous session as its share price rallying over 6% after chairman **Mukesh Ambani** announced that his oil-to-telecom conglomerate had become net debt-free.

**Reliance Industries Limited (RIL)** is an Indian conglomerate holding company headquartered in **Mumbai, Maharashtra, India**. On 18 October 2007, Reliance Industries became the first Indian company to breach **\$100 billion market capitalization**. It is also the highest income tax payer in the private sector in India. The company is ranked **203<sup>th</sup>** on the **Fortune Global 500** list of the world's biggest corporations as of 2017. **Dhirubhai Ambani** founded Reliance Industries in Bombay with his cousin.

### Wipro builds India's first hospital for covid-19 care

- **Azim Premji-promoted Wipro Ltd** opened the country's first hospital dedicated for covid-19 treatment in **Pune's Hinjewadi area in Maharashtra**.
- The Covid Care Hospital has been **set up on a public-private-partnership basis**, and is equipped with **504 beds**. There are 18 ventilators, intensive care units and all other medical facilities.

**Wipro (formerly, Western India Palm Refined Oil Limited, legally Wipro Limited)** is an Indian multinational corporation that provides information technology, consulting and business process services. It is headquartered in **Bangalore, Karnataka, India**. The company was incorporated on 29 December 1945 in **Amalner, Maharashtra** by **Mohamed Premji** as "**Western India Palm Refined Oil Limited**", later abbreviated to "**Wipro**". In 1966, after **Mohamed Premji's** death, his son **Azim Premji** took over Wipro as its chairman at the age of 21.

## **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**



### **Inventions/Discoveries**

#### **ISRO signs MoU with ARIES for cooperation in Space Situational Awareness, Astrophysics**

- The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) has entered into an agreement with Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES) for cooperation in the field of Space Situational Awareness (SSA) and Astrophysics.
- The Memorandum of Understanding was signed by R Umamaheswaran, Scientific Secretary of ISRO and Dipankar Banerjee, Director of ARIES, Nainital through videoconference mode at ISRO and ARIES Headquarters' on June 4.
- Space objects orbital tracking, analysis and space weather studies are important aspects in Space Situational Awareness and Management to safeguard Indian space assets from critical conjunction threats from space debris, ISRO said.

Indian Space Research Organisation is the space agency of the Government of India headquartered in the city of Bangalore. ISRO was formed in 1969. ISRO built India's first satellite, Aryabhata, which was launched by the Soviet Union on 19 April 1975. Dr Kailasavadivoo Sivan is current the chairperson of the ISRO. Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) or Sriharikota Range (SHAR) is a rocket launch centre operated by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). It is located in Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.

#### **India's first infectious disease diagnostic lab now ready**

- India's first infectious disease diagnostic lab is now ready. This rapid response mobile labrotary is part of government Aatmnirbhar Bharat.
- This labrotary was built in a record time of eight day. It is from the date of receipt of Automotive Chassis, from Bharat Benz. It is built with the support of Department of Bio-Technology.
- The lab is a BSL-2 facility with on-site Elisa, real-time reverse tranion polymerase chain reaction (rRT-PCR) test and Bio chemistry analysers. This lab can test Elisa about 200 per day and RTPCR about 50 per day.

#### **Government forms new institution 'IN-SPACE' to guide private sector in space activities**

- Minister for State in Atomic Energy and Space, Jitendra Singh informed that a new institution IN-SPACE (Indian National Space, Promotion & Authorisation Centre) has been formed to guide private sector's participation in space activities. "A new institution has been formed. It will be known as Indian National Space, Promotion & Authorisation Centre.
- IN-SPAcE, the new entity of the Department of Space, will have its own chairperson and board, and regulate and promote building of routine satellites, rockets and commercial launch services through Indian industry and startups.
- IN-SPAcE, or Indian Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre, is touted as the body that will ensure a level playing field for Indian industry in a fast-growing global space sector. It will function autonomously and parallel to ISRO "without taking away anything from it," Dr. K. Sivan said.



In 1961, the Government of India and Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru entrusted the responsibility for space research and for the peaceful use of outer space to the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), then under the leadership of Dr. Homi J. Bhabha. In 1962, the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) set up Indian National Committee for Space Research (INCOSPAR), with Dr. Vikram Sarabhai as chairman, to organise a national space programme. The Government of India constituted the Space Commission and established the Department of Space (DoS) in 1972 and brought ISRO under DoS management on 1 June 1972. Jitendra Singh is the Minister of State (Independent Charge) for the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region and Minister of State for Prime Minister's Office; Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions; Department of Atomic Energy and Department of Space.

### Centre constitutes task force to examine issues related to lowering Maternal Mortality Rate

- **Government has constituted a task force to examine issues related to age of motherhood, lowering Maternal Mortality Rate and improvement of nutritional levels.** The task force will be headed by Jaya Jaitly and it will submit its report by 31<sup>st</sup> July of next month.
- The task force set up by the **Women and Child Development Ministry** will suggest suitable legislations and amendments in existing laws and also chalk out a detailed roll-out plan with timelines to implement these recommendations.
- The task Force will examine the issues related to **Infant Mortality Rate, Maternal Mortality Rate, Total Fertility Rate, Sex Ratio at Birth, Child Sex Ratio (CSR)** and any other issues pertaining to health and nutrition.
- It will also suggest measures for promoting higher education among women. **Union Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman** in her Budget Speech for 2020-21 has announced to set up a task force for women.

The **Ministry of Women and Child Development**, a branch of the Government of India, is an apex body for formulation and administration of the rules and regulations and laws relating to women and child development in India. The current minister for the Ministry of Women and Child Development is **Smriti Irani** having held the portfolio since 31 May 2019. She is also serving as **Minister of Textiles**. She is a **Member of Parliament in the Lok Sabha**, representing Amethi.

### IIT Madras study reveals metabolism of key gut microbiota

- A study by IIT Madras researchers of 36 strains of gut bacteria commonly found in the gut reveals their metabolism and could bring added rigour into the development of probiotics. Probiotics are cocktails of helpful bacteria which, among other uses, are prescribed to alleviate digestive imbalances.
- The human gut microbiome has a huge number of beneficial bacteria, collectively called commensals, living in it. Key among these are the bacteria of the **Bifidobacterium** genus. **Bifidobacterium adolescentis** and **B. longum** are found in adult human gut whereas **B. bifidum** are found in infant gut.
- More than 80 species of **Bifidobacterium** are found in the human gut of which 36 strains comprising 20 species have been studied by the researchers through metabolic network modelling. **Bifidobacterium** is one of the largest genera among gut bacteria and its species are known to be early colonisers of the breastfed infant gut.

### Low-cost test kits to sanitising drones: IIT innovations take commercial route to aid COVID-19 fight

- **Low-cost portable ventilators, affordable COVID-19 test kits, drones for sanitisation, specialised digital stethoscopes, disposable bamboo furniture for makeshift isolation wards** and “infection-proof fabric” for hospitals – these are among several innovations, by IITs across the country during the lockdown period, which are ready to hit the market to aid the fight against COVID-19.
- The innovations have taken commercial route either through **IIT-incubated startups** or the premiere institutes have given license to companies keeping the patent rights with themselves.
- The **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi**, which became the first academic institute to get a nod from the **Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR)** for its **COVID-19 test kit**, has given non-exclusive open licence to Bengaluru-based biotechnology firm **Genie Laboratories** for commercialising the test, but with a price rider of Rs 500 per kit.

- The kits are being manufactured at a facility at the Andhra Pradesh MedTech Zone (AMTZ) in Vishakhapatnam, and are expected to be available in the market in the next 10 days.

### Scientists break down three stages of infection, suggest individualised treatment for patients

- Scientists have described three distinct phases of COVID-19 disease progression in patients, urging medical professionals to consider an individualised treatment approach for patients based on their symptoms corresponding to these stages of infection.
- According to the scientists, including those from the University of Florence in Italy, three distinct phases of COVID-19 infection, with variable degrees of symptoms have been observed in people who test positive for the deadly disease.

### NASA's next Mars rover honors medical teams fighting virus

- NASA's next Mars rover is honoring all the medical workers on the front lines of the coronavirus battle around the world. With just another month until liftoff, the space agency revealed a commemorative plate attached to the rover, aptly named Perseverance. The rover team calls it the COVID-19 Perseverance plate, designed in the last couple months.
- The black and white aluminum plate — 8-by-13 centimeters — shows planet Earth atop a staff entwined with a serpent, a symbol of the medical community. The path of the spacecraft also is depicted, with its origin from Cape Canaveral. The rover's name, Perseverance, has taken on added meaning the last few months.
- NASA is pressing ahead with a July 20 launch, even as the number of COVID-19 cases continue to rise in Florida. This mission—to seek signs of past microbial life on Mars and collect rock and soil samples for eventual return to Earth—is considered essential by the space agency.
- If the rover isn't launched by mid-August, it would need to wait until 2022 when Earth and Mars are back in proper alignment. A two-year delay could add another \$500 million to the nearly \$3 billion mission.

Mars 2020 is a Mars rover mission by NASA's Mars Exploration Program that includes the Perseverance rover with a planned launch on 22 July 2020 at 13:35 UTC, and touch down in Jezero crater on Mars on 18 February 2021. It will investigate an astrobiologically relevant ancient environment on Mars and investigate its surface geological processes and history, including the assessment of its past habitability, the possibility of past life on Mars, and the potential for preservation of biosignatures within accessible geological materials.

### India joins Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI) as a founding member to support the responsible and human-centric development and use of AI

- India joined the league of leading economies including USA, UK, EU, Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, and Singapore to launch the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI or Gee-Pay).
- GPAI is an international and multi-stakeholder initiative to guide the responsible development and use of AI, grounded in human rights, inclusion, diversity, innovation, and economic growth.
- This is also a first initiative of its type for evolving better understanding of the challenges and opportunities around AI using the experience and diversity of participating countries. In order to achieve this goal, the initiative will look to bridge the gap between theory and practice on AI by supporting cutting-edge research and applied activities on AI-related priorities.

### Government launches AarogyaPath portal for healthcare supply chain

- AarogyaPath, a web based solution for the healthcare supply chain was launched to serve manufacturers, suppliers and customers to effectively deal with the Covid-19 pandemic. This national healthcare supply chain portal will remove supply chain bottlenecks during the Covid-19 pandemic.

- The vision of this initiative is to set up an information management and forecasting database platform at national level. It will capture demand and supply scenarios for key healthcare needs items. This public platform will help healthcare users like hospitals, pathology laboratories, research institutes, medical colleges and patients.

### Health Minister Harsh Vardhan launches 'eBloodServices' mobile App

- Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan launched the 'eBloodServices' mobile App developed by the Indian Red Cross Society through a video conference. The Health Minister is also the Chairman of Indian Red Cross Society.
- This application is developed by the E-Raktkosh team of Centre for Development of Advanced Computing under the Digital India scheme launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2015.

The Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) is a voluntary humanitarian organization to protect human life and health based in India. It is part of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and so shares the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It is headquartered in New Delhi.

### Citizens with mild to medium colour blindness can also obtain Driving License

- The Road Transport and Highways Ministry has said that Citizens with mild to medium colour blindness can also obtain the Driving License. The Ministry has issued a notification for amendment in the Central Motor Vehicles Rules. It said, the Ministry has been taking many measures to enable divyangjan citizens to avail transport related services and especially relating to the obtaining of the Driving Licence.
- The Ministry received representations that the Colour Blind Citizens are not able to have the driving licence due to the requirements of physical fitness or the Medical certificate. The issue was taken up with the Medical Expert Institution and advice was sought. They allowed mild to medium colour blind citizens to drive and put restrictions only on the severe colour blind citizens from driving. This is also allowed in other parts of the world.

### China successfully launches last satellite for its BeiDou Navigation Satellite System

- China successfully launched the last satellite of its BeiDou Navigation Satellite System (BDS), touted to be a competitor to the Global Positioning System (GPS) of the US, taking another step to becoming a major space power.
- The satellite was launched from the Xichang Satellite Launch Centre in southwest China's Sichuan Province. The satellite, the 55<sup>th</sup> in the family of BeiDou that means "Big Dipper" in Chinese, was successfully sent into space by a Long March-3B carrier rocket, according to the China Satellite Navigation Office, state-run CGTN reported.
- The launch will mark the completion of the country's domestically developed BeiDou network, one of the four global navigation networks alongside with the US' GPS, Russia's GLONASS and the European Union's Galileo.

### IIM Ahmedabad launches 'IIM Ahmedabad Endowment Fund'

- Indian Institute of Management- IIM Ahmedabad has launched the 'IIM Ahmedabad Endowment Fund'. According to the official press release, the fund has been launched with an initial commitment of Rs. 100 Crore from 10 founding alumni. The endowment aims to raise Rs.1000 crore over a period of five years.
- The Chairperson of IIMA Board of Governors Mr. Kumar Mangalam Birla said that the fund will ensure financial health of the institute. IIMA is the first management school in India to come up with this fund setting a benchmark and inspiring other institutes.

### First blockchain-based solar energy trading initiative works

- Blockchain technology has been largely confined to finance and cryptocurrency. The distributed ledger system's relevance in other areas of business are slowly coming to light. The first use of the technology in the world of renewable energy happened in Australia.

- According to a report by the RENeW Nexus project team the trial shows that **peer-to-peer solar energy trading in ‘technically feasible.’**
- In addition to that, **the Australian government’s smart cities initiative funded the project. They operate it on Power Ledger’s blockchain technology.** Also involved in the project are Curtin University and Murdoch University.

### **IIT-Bombay to go completely online next semester, other IITs likely to follow suit**

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- **Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay will go completely online next semester in view of the COVID-19 pandemic** so there is no compromise on the safety and well being of students.
- **The decision, the first by any IIT, followed deliberations. This is the first time in the institute’s 62-year history that a new academic year will start with no students on campus.** Other IITs are likely to follow suit with similar announcements for the autumn semester that runs from July till December.

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Career  
Launcher



## Inventions/ Discoveries

### Indian Navy inducts indigenously developed Torpedo Decoy System Maareech

- **Anti-Submarine Warfare capability of the Indian Navy received a major boost with the induction of Advanced Torpedo Decoy System Maareech capable of being fired from all frontline warships.**
- **Design and Development of this anti-torpedo decoy system has been undertaken indigenously by DRDO labs- (NSTL and NPOL). The Bharat Electronics Limited, a Defence PSU, would undertake the production of this decoy system.**
- **This induction not only stands testimony to the joint resolve of the Indian Navy and DRDO towards indigenous development of defence technology, but has also given a major fillip to the government's 'Make in India' initiative and the country's resolve to become 'atmanirbhar' (self-reliant) in niche technology, the Navy said. Bharat Electronics Limited, a defence PSU, would undertake the production of this decoy system, the Navy stated.**

**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.**

### South Africa, Nasa collaborate to support human missions to Moon, Mars and beyond

- **South Africa has partnered with NASA to host a deep-space ground station, which will support human spaceflight missions to the Moon, Mars and beyond. With this collaboration, South Africa became the fourth country after the US, Spain and Australia to host a deep space ground station.**
- **The partnership between the South African National Space Agency (SANSA) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to host the space station followed an earlier agreement between the two organisations for the establishment of the station at Matjiesfontein town in the Western Cape Province. "The station will support human spaceflight missions to the Moon, Mars and beyond.**

**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.**

### Detection of fluorine in hot Extreme Helium Stars solves their evolution mystery

- **An extreme helium star or EHe is a low-mass supergiant that is almost devoid of hydrogen, the most common chemical element of the universe. There are 21 of them detected so far in our galaxy. The origin and evolution of these Hydrogen deficient objects have been shrouded in mystery.**
- **Their severe chemical peculiarities challenge the theory of well-accepted stellar evolution as the observed chemical composition of these stars do not match with that predicted for low mass evolved stars.**
- **A study by the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) an autonomous institute of Department of Science and Technology which detected the presence of singly ionised fluorine for the first time in the atmospheres of hot Extreme Helium Stars makes a strong case that the main formation of these objects involves a merger of a carbon-oxygen (CO) and a Helium (He) white dwarf.**
- **The research published in the Astrophysical Journal, led by Anirban Bhowmick (Ph.D. student, IIA, Bengaluru), Prof. Gajendra Pandey (IIA) and Prof. David Lambert (University of Texas at Texas-Austin), which showed fluorine abundances determined from singly ionized fluorine (F II) lines suggest a very high enrichment of fluorine, about a factor of 100 to 10000 times higher than normal stars.**

- **High-resolution echelle spectra of 10 hot EHes were obtained from Hanle Echelle Spectrograph (HESP) mounted on the 2-m Himalayan Chandra Telescope at the Indian Astronomical Observatory (IAO) in Hanle, Ladakh, (remotely operated by IIA) including data from McDonald Observatory, USA, and ESO archives.**
- **The detection of enhanced fluorine abundances in the atmospheres of hot EHes solves a decade-old mystery about their formation. It firmly places hot EHes in an evolutionary sequence with cool EHes and other hydrogen-deficient stars and zeros in on the evolutionary scenario, which involves the merger of two double degenerate white dwarfs (WDs).**

### **IIT-Bombay develops Dhruva, Indian receiver chip for NAVIC, GPS satellites**

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- **IIT-Bombay has developed a homegrown receiver chip - Dhruva – that can be used in smartphones and navigation devices to find locations and routes within the country.**
- **Dhruva will receive signals from India's NAVIC group of navigation satellites as well as the US Global Positioning System-based satellites to determine these accurately under all weather conditions. The radio frequency receiver chip was designed in 18 months by students and researchers at IIT Bombay.**
- **It can receive in multiple frequency bands and handle weak signals. Besides, it can be converted into digital bits and processed by any standard digital signal processor (DSP) to determine one's location precisely. "There were many design challenges to make the receiver work under all environmental conditions.**

### **IIT Mandi researchers develop technology for making high efficiency masks from waste plastic bottles**

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- **Researchers at IIT Mandi claim to have developed a technology for making high efficiency masks using waste pet bottles that are not only more breathable than commercially available masks but also can be washed and reused up to 30 times.**
- **The team at the Indian Institute of Technology Mandi has also filed a patent for the waste plastic bottles derived filter membrane technology based on electrospinning. The researchers shredded waste plastic bottles and dissolved the pieces using a combination of solvents and extruded nanofibres from the solution.**

### **Scientists found a 'Mirror Image' Of Our Planet and the Sun**

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- **Max Planck Institute for Solar System Research (MPS) in Göttingen is reporting that a project it led has found just that; an Earth-like, probably rocky planet called KOI-456.04 that orbits a star called Kepler-160. In fact, the only major difference between KOI-456.04 and Earth is that the exoplanet is almost twice the size of Earth. In short, Kepler-160 is an astrophysical portrayal of our own parent star.**

### **Scientists at ARCI develop a rare earth based magnetocaloric material for cancer treatment**

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- **Scientists at International Advanced Research Centre for Powder Metallurgy and New Materials (ARCI) have developed a rare earth based magnetocaloric material that can be used in treatment of cancer.**
- **The materials developed by ARCI are currently being tested at Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences & Technology (SCTIMST). Magnetocaloric materials can provide controlled heating which can be used to kill tumor cells.**
- **With the help of controlled heating provided by Magnetocaloric materials and used in conjunction with radio therapy will reduce not only the side effects like blood pressure but also the time taken for the treatment. A rare earth alloy was chosen for the studies as some of the material is compatible with the human body.**

### **23-year-old Indian boy creates world's first 'internet-controlled' robot for COVID-19 hospitals**

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- **A 23-year old Thane engineer, Pratik Tirodkar has made a first-of-its kind 'Internet-controlled' robot specifically to address the needs of hospitals treating COVID-19 patients. The gizmo, aptly called 'Coro-bot' independently dispenses food, water, beverages, medicines - and even some good advice - to Corona patients without the needs for nurses, ward staff or other care-givers.**
- **Designed and created by Pratik Tirodkar, founder of a start-up PNT Solutions, Dombivali, recently, the first Coro-bot is currently deployed successfully at the Holy Cross Hospital in Kalyan.**

- **‘This aCoro-bot’ eliminates the need of physical presence or contact of nurses or ward boys** with the patient. It can deliver food, water, medicines and interact with the patients through a camera. Through a speaker, it can also advise patients on various precautions like sanitizing their hands before picking up anything from the robotic tray.
- Most importantly, the company has **created a special App to operate Coro-bot from any location in the world using Internet of Things (IoT) technology - a first anywhere in the world** that this technique is being deployed in the medical field.

### DIAT Pune develops Nano-technology based disinfectant spray to combat COVID-19

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- **Defence Institute of Advanced Technology, a Deemed University, Pune has developed a Nano-technology based disinfectant spray to combat COVID-19 by disinfecting all types of surfaces.** It has been named **“ANANYA”**. This can be **used by anyone, from a common man to a healthcare worker**, for individual as well as large scale use.
- This spray can be **used on masks, PPEs, hospital linens, as well as other likely contaminated surfaces** such as medical instruments, elevator buttons, door knobs, corridors and rooms.
- This Nano-technology assisted formulation will not **only stop the novel coronavirus from entering human body, but it will also kill the virus** when the virus comes in contact with this formulation layer on masks and PPEs. This is a water based spray and will be effective for more than 24 hours after spray.
- This formulation **adheres very effectively to fabric, plastic and metallic objects, and its toxicity to humans is negligible. The shelf life of the spray is said to be more than 6 months.** Commercial production of this spray is in progress. It will be available in various sizes - from small handy bottles for personal use to atomiser sprays for large areas.

### IT, BHU to re-purpose approved drugs from DrugBank database for treating COVID-19 by targeting SARS-CoV-2 main protease

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- **The Science and Engineering Research Board has approved support for research at IIT (BHU) Varanasi to identify lead compound(s) from available and approved drugs for fast-track anti-SARS-CoV-2 drug molecule.** Scientists and healthcare professionals over the world are trying for a cure for the pandemic, which afflicts the world.
- At present, available treatments are focused only on symptomatic relief to help the patient overcome the infection. Repurposing of pre-existing drugs could help circumvent both the time and money required to find an effective cure. **The research group of Prof. Vikash Kumar Dubey** is working on developing new drug candidates against SARS-CoV-2 by exploring DrugBank (DrugBank is a database of FDA approved drug compounds).
- This database will be **used for searching drug against SARS-CoV-2) database compounds as an inhibitor of SARS-CoV-2 main protease, a key enzyme required for SARS-CoV-2 assembly and multiplication.** They will be carrying out extensive computational and experimental studies **to identify an inhibitor of SARS-CoV-2 main protease.**

### Astronomers Discover Trojan Asteroid near Jupiter’s Orbit for the First Time

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- Astronomers have detected an object near Jupiter’s orbit which appears to be a cross between an asteroid and a comet. According to the reports, the **Institute for Astronomy at the University of Hawaii’s Asteroid Terrestrial-impact Last Alert System (ATLAS)** has revealed that they have **found a new asteroid with a comet-like tail orbiting in the same path used by Jupiter to revolve around the sun.**
- As per the reports, **these objects are known as active asteroids. These objects appear to be asteroids at first and then develop activity such as tails which looks quite similar to comets.** According to the reports, **they are generally known as Trojan asteroids** and it is the **first one of its kind to be seen with a comet-like-tail.**

### World’s first self-drifting solar boat

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- **Engineers from Peter the Great St. Petersburg Polytechnic University (SPbPU) in Russia are developing a world’s first self-drifting boat powered by solar panels.**

- **The small craft is a wing-in-ground-effect vehicle (GEV)** and can achieve sustained times over water surfaces through the ground effect, which is the interaction between the wings of a vehicle and flat surfaces. Pilotless ground-effect vehicles are often used for water patrols, to conduct search and rescue operations, and to deliver cargo.
- **The scientists will test the first prototype this summer on the Neva River near St. Petersburg.** “Our wing-in-ground-effect vehicle has long wings, thus it moves along the air cushion itself,” they said. **The solar panels are installed on the craft’s hull and wings, while a storage system is embedded in its core.**

### Astronomers discover ‘cosmic baby’, youngest-known magnetar that is 240-yrs-old

- **By most standards, an over 200-year-old object would be called a relic. Apparently not,** when it comes to astronomy as it usually studies events that happened million or billions of years ago and objects that have been around just as long.
- That may be the reason **why astronomers at NASA and European Space Agency ESA,** who recently **discovered a neutron star estimated to be about 240 years old,** are calling it a newborn by cosmic standards.
- **Called Swift J1818.0-1607, the neutron star was first discovered** in March this year when it released a massive burst of X-rays. Follow-up studies later revealed more details about the star including its age.
- **Neutron stars are dense clusters of stellar material** that are remnants of a star going supernova and exploding. A teaspoon of neutron star material would weigh 4 billion tons on Earth! **According to NASA, Swift J1818.0-1607 packs twice the mass of our Sun into a volume more than one trillion times smaller.**
- Another feature of Swift J1818.0-1607 is that it belongs to a **special class of objects called magnetars which are the most magnetic objects in the universe.** It’s magnetic field is up to 1,000 times stronger than a typical neutron star and about 100 million times stronger than the most powerful magnets made by humans.
- In addition to X-rays, **magnetars can release huge bursts of gamma rays, the highest energy form of light in the universe, and steady beams of radio waves, the lowest energy form of light in the universe.** Neutron stars which emit these **radio waves are called radio pulsars,** and Swift J1818.0-1607 is one of only five known magnetars that are also radio pulsars.
- Also, **while there are over 3,000 known neutron stars, scientists have identified just 31 confirmed magnetars - including this newest entry.**

**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.



## Health/ Disease

### Scientists spot 29 new genes behind problem drinking

- Scientists have identified 29 new genetic variants linked to problem drinking, tripling the number of known genetic risks associated with alcohol disorders. The team from Yale University in the US identified the new variants after a genome-wide analysis of more than 435,000 people.
- “The new data triple the number of known genetic risk loci associated with problematic alcohol use,” said study senior author Joel Gelernter from Yale University in the US. In genetics, a locus is a specific, fixed position on a chromosome where a particular gene or genetic marker is located.
- The study, published in the journal Nature Neuroscience, includes genome-wide analysis of people of European ancestry contained in four separate biobanks or datasets. “This gives us ways to understand causal relations between problematic alcohol use traits such as psychiatric states, risk-taking behaviour, and cognitive performance,” said study lead author Hang Zhou.

### Scientists find second most common coronavirus type in India

- Scientists at multiple CSIR laboratories have identified a coronavirus type that maybe the second most prevalent in India and may comprise 3.5% of the genomes globally.
- The most dominant coronavirus clade in India is the A2a and of 361 genomes analysed by the group, 45% of them were A2a. The newly identified, that the scientists have christened A3i, comprised 41% of those analysed. With the new clade, there are 11 SARS-CoV-2 types identified globally with at least six of them identified in India.

### India's drug regulator grants Gilead Sciences marketing authorisation for remdesivir

- India's drug regulator has granted US pharma giant Gilead Sciences marketing authorisation for its anti-viral drug remdesivir for “restricted emergency use” on hospitalised COVID-19 patients in view of the crisis posed by the pandemic.
- The drug has been allowed for restricted emergency use for treatment of suspected or laboratory-confirmed cases of COVID-19 in adults and children hospitalised with severe symptoms, subject to several safeguards, the source said. Gilead Sciences had on May 29 applied for marketing authorisation for remdesivir in India. The drug is being touted as a potential treatment for COVID-19. The medicine has been issued an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to treat hospitalised coronavirus-infected patients.

Remdesivir is a broad-spectrum antiviral medication developed by the biopharmaceutical company Gilead Sciences. It is administered via injection into a vein. As of 2020, remdesivir is being tested as a specific treatment for COVID-19, and has been authorized for emergency use in the US, India, Singapore.

### FabiFlu: India's first COVID-19 drug launched, priced at Rs 103 per tablet

- Drug firm Glenmark Pharmaceuticals, under the brand name FabiFlu, has launched an antiviral drug Favipiravir, to cure patients with mild to moderate coronavirus at a price tag of about Rs 103 per tablet.
- According to Glenmark Pharmaceuticals, the medication will be available in the form of a 200 mg tablet and with this FabiFlu also becomes the first oral favipiravir-approved medication for the treatment of COVID-19 in India.

### IIT-Kharagpur develops COVID-19 predictive model

- IIT Kharagpur has developed a model to help predict the future spread of COVID-19 which can facilitate decision making in health-care, industry and even academics.
- The study also indicates that the disease may continue to prevail in the country till September-end, a statement issued by the institute said. Prof. Abhijit Das from the Department of Computer Science and Engineering has developed the logistic model which can be used to fit the available daily counts of infection cases.

### Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh launches COVID BEEP, India's first physiological parameters monitoring system for COVID-19 patients

- Union Minister for Development of North Eastern Region, Dr. Jitendra Singh said 'awareness' and not 'anxiety' is the key to fighting COVID-19. **Launching COVID BEEP, India's first indigenous, cost effective, wireless physiological parameters monitoring system for COVID-19 patients**, Dr Singh said COVID BEEP is to emerge as an antidote to the original COVID.
- **COVID BEEP (Continuous Oxygenation & Vital Information Detection Biomed ECIL ESIC Pod) is India's first indigenous, cost effective, wireless physiological parameters monitoring system for COVID-19 patients, developed by ESIC Medical College Hyderabad** in collaboration with IIT Hyderabad and Department Of Atomic Energy. Dr Singh stressed on the importance of prevention and awareness in dealing with this pandemic effectively, now that the process of unlock has started in a phased manner after an effective and timely lockdown for close to two months.

**Jitendra Singh** is an Indian physician and politician. He is the **Minister of State (Independent Charge)** for the **Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region and Minister of State for Prime Minister's Office; Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions; Department of Atomic Energy and Department of Space**. He won the **Udhampur seat** in the **Indian general election, 2014 and 2019** for the **16<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha and 17<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha**.

### Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan releases annual TB Report 2020

- **Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan released the annual TB Report 2020** through a virtual event. According to the report, **over 24 lakh TB patients have been notified in 2019. This amounts to a 14 percent increase in TB notification** as compared to 2018.
- **Near-complete on-line notification of TB patients** have been achieved through the **NIKSHAY** system. There has been a **reduction in the number of missing cases to 2.9 lakh cases** as against more than 10 lakhs in 2017. Private sector notifications increased by 35 percent with 6.78 lakh TB patients notified.
- Due to easy availability of molecular diagnostics, the proportion of children diagnosed with TB increased to 8 percent in 2019 compared to 6 percent in 2018. **Provision of HIV testing for all notified TB patients increased from 67 percent in 2018 to 81 percent in 2019.** Expansion of treatment services has resulted in a 12 percent improvement in the treatment success rate of notified patients.
- The Minister also released a Joint Monitoring Mission report, **a manual on Direct Benefit Transfer to TB patients under NIKSHAY system, a Training Module, and the quarterly newsletter NIKSHAY Patrika.**

**Tuberculosis (TB)** is an infectious disease usually caused by **Mycobacterium tuberculosis (MTB) bacteria**. **Tuberculosis generally affects the lungs**, but can also affect other parts of the body. Most infections show no symptoms, in which case it is known as latent tuberculosis.

### Dr Harsh Vardhan Launches DBT – AMTZ Mobile Diagnostic Unit for Covid Testing- I-Lab

- The Minister for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences and Health & Family Welfare **Dr Harsh Vardhan inaugurated and flagged off India's first I-Lab (Infectious disease diagnostic lab) for Covid testing in rural and inaccessible areas of India.**
- Dr. Harsh Vardhan dedicated this facility to provide Covid testing access to rural India. This mobile testing facility will be deployed through the DBT testing hubs to remote regions of the country for Covid testing. There are now **over 20 hubs in the country with 100 testing laboratories** and these have **tested more than 2,60,000 samples.**

The **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** is an Indian government ministry charged with health policy in India. It is also **responsible for all government programs relating to family planning in India**. The Minister of Health and Family Welfare holds cabinet rank as a member of the Council of Ministers. **The current minister is Harsh Vardhan. He represents Chandni Chowk in Delhi as a Member of Parliament in the 17<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha. Rajkumari Bibiji Amrit Kaur was appointed the first Health Minister of India in 1947 and remained in office until 1957.**

## **ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT**



### **India's first climate change report offers a stern warning**

- **India's average temperature** has already **increased by around 0.7 degree Celsius during the 1901–2018 period** due to **greenhouse gases** and by the **end of 2100 it is expected to rise by approximately 4.4 degree Celsius** – relative to 1976–2005 average, in the worst-case scenario – warns the first-ever climate change assessment report by the Indian government.
- The report **Assessment of Climate Change over the Indian Region** prepared by the **Ministry of Earth Sciences' (MoES)** warned that the **rapid changes in the temperature would mean increasing stress on India's "natural ecosystems, agricultural output, and freshwater resources**, while also causing escalating damage to infrastructure." This ultimately means a serious impact on "country's biodiversity, food, water and energy security, and public health."
- It said that **several regions in India are global biodiversity hotspots** with numerous endemic species of plants and animals and with the "climate changing more rapidly than the usual pace of evolutionary adaptability of many species, they may face increasing threats on account of these changes."
- The global average temperature has risen by around one degree Celsius since pre-industrial times. **In 2015, at the Paris Agreement, the world decided to limit global warming to two degree Celsius below pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the increase to 1.5 degree Celsius.** At current **greenhouse gases** trajectories, **global average temperature may rise 3-5 degree Celsius** and perhaps higher if tipping points are triggered.
- The **Ministry of Earth Sciences' (MoES) 'Assessment of Climate Change over the Indian Region' is the first-ever attempt to document and assess climate change in different parts of India.**

The **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)** is an international environmental treaty adopted on **9 May 1992** and opened for signature at the **Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro** from 3 to 14 June 1992. The parties to the convention have met **annually from 1995 in Conferences of the Parties (COP)** to assess progress in dealing with climate change. In the **Paris Agreement**, India committed to achieve the following three targets **Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs)**. India's greenhouse gas emission intensity of its GDP will be **reduced by 33-35 % below 2005 levels by 2030. 40 % of India's power capacity would be based on non-fossil fuel sources.** India will create an additional 'carbon sink' of **2.5 to 3 billion tons of Co2 equivalent through additional forest and tree cover by 2030.**

### **Rare scorpionfish with venomous spine, ability to change colour found in Gulf of Mannar**

- **Scientists at the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI)** have found a **rare species of scorpionfish (Sarpaenopsis neglecta)** which can **change its colour** and carries stinging venomous spines. It is the first time that this species has been found in Indian waters.
- The **Kochi-based CMFRI** said the **fish was spotted along the Sethukarai coast in the Gulf of Mannar** during an underwater exploration. Camouflaged in sea-grass meadows, the band-tail scorpionfish can change its colour and blend with its surroundings to escape predators and while hunting for prey, the premier marine research body said.



- The fish is called ‘scorpionfish’ because its spines contain neurotoxic venom. “When the spines pierce an individual, the venom gets injected immediately and it can be extremely painful”.

Coral reefs are one of the most ancient and dynamic ecosystems of India. Coral reefs not only provide a sanctuary to a myriad of marine life but also play a key role in protecting the coastline from erosion. In India, major coral reef ecosystems are seen in Gulf of Mannar, Gulf of Kachchh, Andaman & Nicobar, and Lakshadweep Islands, which embrace all the three major reef types (atoll, fringing, and barrier) and include diverse and extensive reef areas of the Indian Ocean.

### Death of millions of bees triggers natural disaster in Croatia

- Croatian authorities declared a natural disaster in the country’s northernmost province after tens of millions of bees died from a suspected case of pesticide poisoning.
- Beekeepers discovered carpets of dead swarms last week in the region of Medzimirje, near the border with Hungary. About 1,150 hives were wiped out, with about a third of the area’s apiarists sustaining losses, Croatian Beekeeping Association Zeljko Vrbos.
- The natural disaster declaration allows the state to pay compensation for agricultural losses. The Adriatic nation is home to about 10,000 beekeepers, whose 500,000 hives produce some 8,000 tons of honey a year.

### IIT researchers develop technology for making high efficiency masks from waste plastic bottles

- Researchers at IIT Mandi claim to have developed a technology for making high efficiency masks using waste pet bottles that are not only more breathable than commercially available masks but also can be washed and reused up to 30 times.
- The team at the Indian Institute of Technology Mandi has also filed a patent for the waste plastic bottles derived filter membrane technology based on electrospinning. The researchers shredded waste plastic bottles and dissolved the pieces using a combination of solvents and extruded nanofibres from the solution.

### Uttarakhand preps for elephant census, will use drones for first time

- Uttarakhand will carry out an elephant census after a gap of five years and drones will be used for the first time in the exercise. According to Wild Elephant Population estimation carried out in 2015 by the state forest department, Uttarakhand had 1,797 elephants with Corbett landscape emerging as the main bastion of the jumbos in the state with as many as 1,035.
- The Dhikala range alone had 242 elephants. In Rajaji national park, another stronghold for the elephants in the state, 309 elephants were recorded. “The elephant census after a gap of five years will begin on June 6. According to the last elephant census, there were 1,797 wild elephants in the state. We are expecting a good surge in the elephant numbers across the state this time”.

Indian elephant (*Elephas maximus indicus*) is one of three extant recognised subspecies of the Asian elephant and native to mainland Asia. Since 1986, the Asian elephant has been listed as Endangered on the IUCN Red List as the wild population has declined by at least 50% since the 1930s to 1940s, i.e. three elephant generations. The Asian elephant is threatened by habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation. Project Elephant was launched in 1992 by the Government of India Ministry of Environment and Forests to provide financial and technical support to wildlife management efforts by states for their free-ranging populations of wild Asian Elephants.

### World Environment Day: Centre launches programme to increase forest cover in urban areas

- During the virtual celebration of World Environment Day 2020, themed as ‘Nature and Biodiversity’, Mr. Javadekar launched the Nagar Van or Urban Forests with 200 corporations and cities across India while urging people to actively participate and increase the tree cover in their areas.
- “Tree plantation is a very important step. This year’s target for tree plantation is 145 crores. We should take a serious pledge to protect forests and minimise the use of natural resources.



- **The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) annually organizes events for World Environment Day, which encourages worldwide awareness and action for the protection of the environment. It is celebrated on 5 June in over 100 countries.**

### New fish species discovered in Arunachal Pradesh

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- **A new species of fish has been discovered in Arunachal Pradesh. Dr. Keshav Kumar Jha, Associate Professor & Head, Department of Zoology, Jawaharlal Nehru College, Pasighat discovered a new fish species from genus Schizothorax.**
- **The fish species is named as Schizothorax sikusirumensis. The name of this fish species has been derived from the name of the rivers where it was found.** This fish was collected from the junction of River Siku and Sirum near Gakang area under Mebo circle of East Siang District. The fish inhabits the water logged area of torrential river drainage.

### Virtual celebrations on World Environment Day with focus on Urban Forest

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- **World Environment Day is celebrated across the globe on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2020.** It is the biggest annual event in the world run by the United Nations to mark the environmental awareness among the people. Its main aim is to raise awareness to protect nature and look at various environmental issues that are growing day by day.
- **World Environment Day 2020 focuses on the theme ‘Biodiversity’ and was hosted in Colombia in partnership with Germany.** In India, the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change was held virtual celebrations of World Environment Day on this year’s theme with focus on Nagar Van, Urban Forests.

### Large number of shark teeth found at Rajasthan’s fossil site

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- **A large number of shark teeth have been found at a new fossil site in Rajasthan’s Barmer district,** the study of which has provided valuable insight about the environmental changes in the region from warm, humid, coastal conditions to the present-day dry and desert-like climatic condition.
- **The research by the University of Delhi’s geology department** was recently published in the Geobios journal.
- **“To fill the fossil gap between Cretaceous to Eocene epoch, our team conducted a field investigation in the Barmer district which led to the discovery of a new fossil site known as Padma Rao open cast quarry located 40 kilometres from Barmer city and 3 kilometres south of Giral Lignite mine.**
- **A large number of shark teeth belonging to various sharks - namely Squatiscyllium nigeriensis, Ginglymostoma sokotoense, among others - were recovered from this site.”**

### India ranks 177 out of 180 in Environmental Performance Index

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- **India is among the bottom five countries on the Environmental Performance Index 2018, plummeting 36 points from 141 in 2016,** according to a biennial report by Yale and Columbia Universities along with the World Economic Forum.
- **While India is at the bottom of the list in the environmental health category, it ranks 178 out of 180 as far as air quality is concerned.** Its overall low ranking — 177 among 180 countries — was linked to poor performance in the environment health policy and deaths due to air pollution categories.
- **Switzerland leads the world in sustainability, followed by France, Denmark, Malta and Sweden in the EPI,** which found that air quality is the leading environmental threat to public health. Overall, India (at 177) and Bangladesh (179) come in near the bottom of the rankings, with Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Nepal rounding out the bottom five.

### IIT Mandi team develops infusion technology for herbs in mid-Himalayan region to help farmers

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- **Researchers at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Mandi have developed a herbal infusion technology as a sustainable means of income for local marginal farmers in the mid-Himalayan region.**
- **The team at the institute’s Botanical Garden and Medicinal Plant Lab analysed various herbs growing in the mid-Himalayan region in and around the villages surrounding IIT Mandi, Kamand region for developing value-added products in the form of herbal infusions known for their health benefits (mainly rich in anti-oxidants).**

According to the team, the technology is ready for licensing for potential industries who are keen to work with EWOK (a rural incubator at IIT Mandi) in the interest of uplifting the Kamand Valley farmers. “Till now, the team has **successfully formulated nine different herbal infusions with constituents such as tulsi, mint, rose, amla, bayleaf, turmeric, rhododendron and lemongrass.**

### Carbonhaus is the World’s First Building Made of Carbon Fiber Reinforced Concrete

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- **A two-story building on the campus of Technical University in Dresden, Germany is the world’s first building made from carbon fiber reinforced concrete.**
- **The world’s first building made of carbon fiber reinforced concrete, known as Carbonhaus, is a collaborative effort of engineers, designers, and researchers who have advocated for use of advanced materials in place of the traditional concrete and steel in construction for many years. The 5-million-euro project is being funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research.**
- **The 2,200 sq. ft. building consists of a precast box and a double-curved roof made possible because of the use of the lightweight and pliable composite materials. The carbon fiber being used in the project is produced from petroleum-based polyacrylonitrile (PAN) and provide the tensile strength of steel at one-quarter the weight.**

### Gujarat’s pride grows as it now hosts 674 Gir lions

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- **Gujarat prides itself on hosting Asiatic lions exclusively, and their numbers have now risen to an estimated 674 in the Gir forest region and other revenue areas of coastal Saurashtra. Once seen as threatened by extinction, the lion population has grown by almost 29% from the last count in 2015.**
- **Asiatic lions are present in Protected Areas and agro-pastoral landscapes of Saurashtra covering nine districts, over an expanse of about 30,000 sq. km.**

The Asiatic lion is a *Panthera leo leo* population in India. Its current range is **restricted to the Gir National Park and environs in the Indian state of Gujarat.** Historically, it inhabited much of Western Asia and the Middle East up to northern India. **On the IUCN Red List, it is listed under its former scientific name *Panthera leo persica* as Endangered** because of its small population size and area of occupancy.



## SPORTS



### Sports Personalities in News

#### Virat Kohli only Indian in 10 highest-earning athletes list on Instagram during lockdown

- India skipper **Virat Kohli** emerged as the **only cricketer in the world's top-10 list of highest-earning athletes** through **sponsored Instagram posts** during the lockdown, according to a report.
- The cricket superstar was **sixth on the list**, the figures for which were **collected by 'Attain'** during the period between March 12 and May 14, when the world literally shut down to stem the growth of the coronavirus outbreak. According to the list, **Kohli earned a total of 379,294 pounds through his sponsored posts, raking up 126,431 pounds per post.**
- **Portuguese footballer Cristiano Ronaldo tops the list with an estimated earnings of 1.8 million pounds** while **Argentina and FC Barcelona star Lionel Messi** and **PSG's Neymar** were second and third with earnings of 1.2 million and 1.1 million respectively.

#### Rohit Sharma Becomes IIFL Finance's First-ever Brand Ambassador

- India opener and limited-over vice-captain **Rohit Sharma** has **signed with IIFL Finance as it's first-ever brand ambassador.**
- Besides being the vice-captain of the Indian cricket team in limited-overs format, **Rohit also holds the record for the highest individual score in one-day internationals (ODI), the only player to hit three double centuries in ODIs, and four-times winning captain of Indian Premier League (IPL).**
- **IIFL Finance, one of India's leading Non-Banking Finance Companies, with over Rs 36,000 crore of assets under management, endeavours to stand out for talking straight and being honest with its customers.**

#### D K Jain gets one year extension as BCCI ethics officer and ombudsman

- **Former Supreme Court judge D K Jain will continue as BCCI's ethics officer and ombudsman** after getting a one-year extension from the cricket Board.
- **Jain was appointed by the Supreme Court in February 2019 as BCCI's first ever ombudsman.** He was later given the additional role of ethics officer.

#### Hari is the first Indian on the Tour.

- **The presence of Grandmaster P. Harikrishna is sure to see a major spike in Indian interest in the million-dollar Magnus Carlsen Chess Tour that continues with the \$150,000 Chessable Masters.**
- **Hari, the first Indian on the Tour, is part of a 12-player field that includes the world's top six - Magnus Carlsen (Norway), Fabiano Caruana (USA), Ling Diren (China), Ian Nepomniachtchi (Russia), Maxime Vachier-Lagrave (France) and Alexander Grishchuk (Russia) - on the classical format ranking list.**

#### Harbhajan Singh becomes first celebrity to support boycott of Chinese products

- **Supporting the call of boycotting goods from China, veteran Indian off-spinner Harbhajan Singh has decided not to endorse any Chinese brand in the wake of the ongoing tension between the two countries.**

- Earlier this week, **20 Indian Army soldiers were martyred during a violent face-off with the Chinese troops in Galwan Valley in Ladkhakh on June 15 night**. Backing the idea of banning Chinese products in India, Harbhajan declared that he would not endorse any Chinese product.

### Sunil Chhetri & Sourav Ganguly come together in JSW Cement's new TVC

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- JSW Cement, India's leading producer of Green Cement and part of US\$ 14 billion JSW Group, has brought on board former Indian cricket captain & current President of the Board of Control for Cricket in India, **Sourav Ganguly** and Captain of India's National Football Team & Bengaluru FC, **Sunil Chhetri** as its brand ambassadors. The company is rolling out its **new marketing campaign 'Leader's Choice'** featuring both these sports icons on **June 20<sup>th</sup>** across West Bengal, Bihar and Odisha. JSW Cement's Leader's Choice is the first marketing campaign featuring top Indian sports celebrities.

### Cricketer Clare Connor to be first female MCC president in 233 years

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- Former England women's captain **Clare Connor** is set to become the first female president of Marylebone Cricket Club in its 233-year history.
- Current incumbent **Kumar Sangakkara**, the first non-British MCC president, nominated Connor via video link from his native Sri Lanka during an annual general meeting. **Connor, now the England and Wales Cricket Board's head of women's cricket, is set to take up her new post on October 1, 2021**, subject to the membership's approval.

### Dope-cleared Sanjita Chanu to finally get Arjuna award for 2018

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- Cleared of the dope taint, **two-time Commonwealth Games gold-winning weightlifter Sanjita Chanu will finally get the coveted Arjuna award** which has been on hold since 2018.
- A Sports Ministry source confirmed that **Chanu will be conferred with the Arjuna award as per a 2018 Delhi High Court order**, which directed the selection committee to consider her and keep the decision in a sealed cover to be disclosed only if she was absolved of the doping charges.

### Rahul Dravid beats Sachin Tendulkar in Wisden poll on greatest Indian Test batsman

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- **Rahul Dravid is the greatest Indian Test batsman, according to a poll conducted on social media by Wisden India. Dravid beat Tendulkar by a narrow margin of votes in the final round of voting.**
- **Dravid got 52 per cent of the votes, with as many as 11,400 fans taking part in the final round of voting.** "Much like Dravid batted during his playing career, he dug in and fought back in the poll, eventually crossing the line with a decent lead at the very end," said the Wisden India report.



## Sport Events

### Sports Ministry launches Khelo India Community Coach Development Programme

- The Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Kiren Rijiju has inaugurated 25-day Khelo India Community Coach Development Programme for Community Coaches and 15,000 PE Teachers across India. The Programme has been launched by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. Kiren Rijiju defined the programme as a critical and far-reaching initiative that will boost India's hopes of becoming a powerful force in the field of sports.
- In the inaugural session, Professor Rosa Lopez De'Amico, President of the International Association of Physical Education and Sport for Girls and Women, and Professor Darlene Kluka, Vice President of the International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education, were the guest speakers.

### Fit India launched special films promoting 10 indigenous sports of India under Ek Bharat, Shrestha Bharat

- Sports Ministry's flagship programme Fit India is joining hands with the Department of School Education and Literacy, to launch a series of special films promoting 10 indigenous sports of India under the Ek Bharat, Shrestha Bharat initiative. The series is aimed at creating awareness about not just the indigenous games but also the culture and heritage of the states to which they belong.
- Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat aims to create awareness among youngsters about the culture and heritage of states across India. This initiative aims to further that effort.

### Football: India bags right to host Women's Asian Cup 2022

- In Football, India has bagged the right to host the Women's Asian Cup 2022. The Asian Football Confederation awarded the hosting rights of the tournament to India after the AFC Women's Football Committee meeting. This is the first time that India will be hosting the event since 1979, in which India had finished as the runner-ups.

### ICC approves replacements in test cricket, bans use of saliva to shine ball

- International Cricket Council (ICC) has approved substitution in case a player shows symptoms of COVID-19 during a Test match besides ratifying the interim ban on using saliva to shine the ball. ICC has also re-introduced non-neutral umpires for bilateral series as part of its interim playing regulations to tackle the threat posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- In the five new regulations, recommended by the Anil Kumble-chaired Cricket Committee, and ratified by the Chief Executives Committee (CEC), the teams will also be allowed an additional DRS call as home umpires will now be officiating in bilateral Test series.
- The ICC in a press release said that a 32-inch additional logo would also be permitted on the players' jerseys, for Boards to make up for financial losses due to pandemic. However, the regulation for COVID-19 replacements will not be applicable in ODIs and T20Is, it added.
- The ICC said, ban on use of saliva was taken as it is considered to be a transmitter of novel coronavirus unlike sweat which will still be allowed to shine the ball. Repeated violation of the ban would at first invite a warning before a five-run penalty is imposed.
- It added, A team can be issued up to two warnings per innings but repeated use of saliva on the ball will result in a 5-run penalty to the batting side. Whenever saliva is applied to the ball, the umpires will be instructed to clean the ball before play recommences.

International Cricket Council (ICC) is the world governing body of cricket. It was founded as the Imperial Cricket Conference in 1909 by representatives from Australia, England and South Africa. It was renamed as the International Cricket Conference in 1965, and took up its current name in 1989. Zaheer Abbas served as the last president of ICC. In 2016 the position of the president of ICC was abolished. Now Chairman and CEO are head of the council. Present CEO is Manu Sawhney. ICC is headquartered in Dubai.

### 4<sup>th</sup> Asian Youth Para Games to be held in Bahrain in December 2021

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- The Asian Paralympic Committee (APC) announced that the **fourth Asian Youth Para Games will take place in Bahrain from December 1-10, 2021.**
- Around 800 athletes under 20 years of age are expected to **compete in nine sports: athletics, badminton, boccia, goalball, para taekwondo, powerlifting, swimming, table tennis and wheelchair basketball.** The competition will take place across numerous venues in Khalifa Sports City, a multi-use stadium in Isa Town, and Isa Sports City.

### Sports Ministry all set to establish Khelo India State Centres of Excellence

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- **The Sports Ministry is all set to establish Khelo India State Centres of Excellence under the Khelo India Scheme.** One such centre will be identified in each State and Union Territory with an aim to create a robust sporting ecosystem in the entire country.
- **In the first leg, the Ministry has identified state-owned sports facilities in eight states including Karnataka, Odisha, Kerala, Telangana, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland** which will be upgraded into Khelo India State Centre of Excellence.

### Australia and New Zealand named hosts for 2023 Women's World Cup

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- **Australia and New Zealand were handed the right to host the 2023 Women's World Cup football tournament** by a comfortable margin after a vote by the FIFA Council.
- **Their joint proposal beat a rival bid from Colombia to host the tournament** which is being expanded to 32 teams.



## AWARDS



### Biocon's Kiran Mazumdar is EY world entrepreneur of the year 2020

- **Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, Executive Chairperson of Biocon Limited, was named EY 'World Entrepreneur Of The Year 2020' in a virtual award ceremony.**
- She was picked from among 46 award winners from across 41 countries and territories vying for the title. **In the award's 20-year history, Ms. Mazumdar-Shaw became the third EY 'World Entrepreneur Of The Year' awardee from India.**
- She follows former Indian world title winners **Uday Kotak of Kotak Mahindra Bank (2014)** and **Narayana Murthy of Infosys Technologies Limited (2005)**. She also became the **second woman to hold the title**, following Olivia Lum of Hyflux Limited of Singapore in 2011.

The **EY Entrepreneur of the Year Awards** previously **Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Awards** is an award sponsored by Ernst & Young in recognition of entrepreneurship. **Founded in 1986, in Milwaukee, as a single award, as of 2016, twenty-five programs were run in all 50 states of the United States, and more than 60 countries.**

### Delhi-based NGO wins WHO award

- The **World Health Organization (WHO)** has conferred the **World No Tobacco Day Award 2020 to the Socio-Economic and Educational Development Society (SEEDS)**, an NGO, for its efforts to ban pan masala, gutkha, e-cigarettes and hookah in Bihar and Jharkhand.
- On the occasion of World No Tobacco Day on May 31, the **WHO selects organisations and individuals from its six regions every year for their exceptional contribution in the field of tobacco control.** The SEEDS is among the three awardees selected from the South-East Asia Region.

### Indian writer wins regional award for Asia in Commonwealth Short Story Prize

- Every year, The **Commonwealth Short Story Prize** is awarded for the best unpublished short fiction. Commonwealth citizens aged 18 and above are eligible for it.
- Winners of this year were recently announced and Indian writer **Kritika Pandey has won the coveted honour of the regional award for Asia in 2020 for The Great Indian Tee and Snakes.** It talks about love in an age of hatred and prejudice. Pandey had been previously **nominated for the Pushcart Prize.**

The **Commonwealth Short Story Prize** is awarded annually for the best piece of unpublished short fiction (2,000 to 5,000 words). The prize is open to **Commonwealth citizens aged 18 and over.** The **Commonwealth Short Story Prize** is managed by **Commonwealth Writers, the cultural initiative of the Commonwealth Foundation**, which was set up in 2012 to inspire, develop and connect writers and storytellers across the Commonwealth. The **Prize replaced the Commonwealth Short Story Competition**, a roughly similar competition that existed from 1996 to 2011 and was discontinued by the **Commonwealth Foundation**, along with the **Commonwealth Writers' Prize.**

## Indian-American soil scientist Rattan Lal gets 2020 World Food Prize

- Eminent Indian-American soil scientist **Rattan Lal** has been named this year's recipient of the **World Food Prize for developing and mainstreaming a soil-centric approach** to increasing food production that conserves natural resources and mitigates climate change. The announcement was made by **World Food Prize Foundation president Barbara Stinson** in an online ceremony from Washington on June 11.
- Lal, a native of India and a citizen of the United States, will receive the **2.5 lakh dollar award that honours his contribution throughout his career spanning more than five decades** and four continents to promote innovative soil-saving techniques that benefit the livelihoods of more than 500 million smallholder farmers, improve the food and nutritional security of more than two billion people and saves hundreds of millions of hectares of natural tropical ecosystems.
- PAU Vice-Chancellor Dr B S Dhillon, in a statement, said PAU may be the **only institution in the world to have two alumni as World Food Laureates**. The honour was earlier won by PAU alumnus **Dr Gurdev Singh Khush**, a plant breeder and pioneer in rice genetics. Responding to the congratulatory message from PAU V-C, the winning scientist **Rattan Lal** remarked, "To be a graduate from PAU is a great honour in itself."

The World Food Prize is an international award recognizing the achievements of individuals who have advanced human development by improving the quality, quantity, or availability of food in the world. The prize was instituted in 1987. Dr. Monkombu Sambasivan Swaminathan received the first World Food Prize in 1987 for spearheading the introduction of high-yielding wheat and rice varieties to India's farmers. Norman Ernest Borlaug was an American agronomist who led initiatives worldwide that contributed to the extensive increases in agricultural production termed the Green Revolution. Borlaug was awarded multiple honors for his work, including the Nobel Peace Prize, the Presidential Medal of Freedom and the Congressional Gold Medal. Norman Borlaug, the "Father of the Green Revolution", who received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1970.

## Australian honour for Indian musician

- **Shobha Sekhar**, founder of Kalakruthi, music organisation in Australia figures in the **Queen's Birthday 2020 Honours List**.
- The Montreal-based artiste and lecturer, University of Melbourne, figures in the **Queen's Birthday 2020 Honours List** and will be conferred the **Medal of the Order of Australia** later this year.

## Javed Akhtar becomes first Indian to receive Richard Dawkins Award

- Veteran writer-lyricist **Javed Akhtar** said he is honoured to be named this year's recipient of the **Richard Dawkins Award** as he has been a huge fan of the world-renowned English evolutionary biologist in whose name the recognition is bestowed.
- Akhtar became the first Indian to be given the honour for critical thinking, holding religious dogma up to scrutiny, advancing human progress and humanist values.
- Every year, the award recognises a distinguished individual from the field of science, scholarship, education, or entertainment, who publicly proclaims the values of secularism and rationalism and upholding scientific truth.

**Richard Dawkins Award** is an annual award that was presented by the Atheist Alliance of America up until July 2019 when it moved to the Center for Inquiry (CFI). The award has been presented since 2003, and is named after Richard Dawkins, an English evolutionary biologist who was named the world's top thinker in a 2013 reader's poll of the Prospect Magazine

## For the first time in history, the Oscars get postponed by 2 months

- For the fourth time in its history, the Oscars are being postponed. The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and the ABC Television Network said that the **93<sup>rd</sup> Academy Awards** will now be held **April 25, 2021**, eight weeks later than originally planned because of the pandemic's effects on the movie industry.



- The Academy's Board of Governors also decided to extend the eligibility window beyond the calendar year to **Feb. 28, 2021**, for feature films, and delay the opening of the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures from December until April 30, 2021.

Academy Awards, popularly known as the Oscars, are awards for artistic and technical merit in the film industry. Given annually by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS), the awards are an international recognition of excellence in cinematic achievements, as assessed by the Academy's voting membership. The various category winners are awarded a copy of a golden statuette, **officially called the "Academy Award of Merit", although more commonly referred to by its nickname, the "Oscar"**. The statuette depicts a knight rendered in the Art Deco style. The Academy Awards ceremony was first broadcast by radio in 1930 and was televised for the first time in 1953. The South Korean film **Parasite** led the ceremony with four awards and became the first film in a language other than English to win Best Picture, as well as the first South Korean submission to be nominated for (and win) Best International Feature Film at the 92<sup>nd</sup> Academy Award.

### Short film made in Odisha village wins award in COVID-19 film festival

- **Martyapura Re Jamaraj ('Yamaraj on earth')**, a short film produced by a group from the Ankushpur village of Odisha's Ganjam district has won a special jury award at the COVID-19 International Film Festival 2020. The 13-minute short film in Odia seeks to **spread awareness in rural areas on preventive measures to check the spread of the coronavirus through humour**. The online festival of short films focused on the COVID-19 pandemic.
- In May, a group of young people from Ankushpur got together to make the film. **Stitadhi Rath, a well-known painter from the district, directed it**. Sadanand Sahu, Rabindranath Sahu and Kanhu Behera of Ankushpur played the three major characters in the short film; other youth from the village essayed minor roles. **Sanyasi Moharana produced it. Cameraman Basant Maharana also hails from Ankushpur**. All necessary precautions were taken during the shooting of the short film, which has been dedicated to frontline COVID-19 personnel.

### Hyderabad's Deccan Development Society wins Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation Award

- **Hyderabad-based Deccan Development Society has won the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation Award**, one of the most coveted environmental awards in the world for the year 2020. **In a global teleconference the award** was announced by the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation Vice President and CEO, Olivier Wenden.
- This is in recognition of **"the individuals who dedicate their actions and organisations for their deep commitment to preserving our planet**, in each of the Foundation's three priority areas: limiting the effects of climate change, preserving biodiversity, managing water resources and fighting against desertification."
- The award of 40,000 Euros (approximately Rs 35 lakhs) has been given to the society **"in recognition of the work of DDS women to rehabilitate degraded lands and promote biodiversity"**.

### India's first solar ferry sails into global contest

- **India's first solar-powered ferry, Aditya**, which became an icon on the Vaikom-Thavanakadavu route in Kerala, is among 12 such ferries that have been **shortlisted for the Gustave Trouvé Award**. It is the sole entrant from Asia. There are three award categories: one for electric boats up to 8m in length, electric boats more than 8 m long and electric ferry boats (passenger boats), the category in which Aditya is in the fray.
- **Gussies Electric Boat Awards were instituted in memory of Gustave Trouvé, a French electrical engineer and pioneer in electric cars and boats**. Trouvé was a prolific inventor with over 75 patents. **Back in 1881, he developed a 5-m-long prototype electric boat**.

### Amartya Sen to be awarded the 2020 Peace Prize of the German Book Trade for his work on issues around global justice

- Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen has been awarded the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade for his decades-long work around issues of global justice.

- To be presented by the German Publishers and Booksellers Association, Borsenverein, the award will recognise the Indian economist's contribution in addressing questions around social inequality in education and healthcare.
- The award ceremony traditionally takes place at the end of the Frankfurt Book Fair on October 18 and is broadcast live on television. The Peace Prize of the German Book Trade has been awarded annually since 1950. It comes with a cash prize of €25,000 euros (\$28,000).
- Its aim is to honor individuals "who have made an outstanding contribution to the realization of the idea of peace primarily through his activities in the fields of literature, science and art."
- Last year, the Brazilian photographer Sebastião Salgado received the prize.

### Folk artist Gulabbai Sangamnerkar to get lifetime honour

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- The Maharashtra government announced the Vithabai Narayangaokar lifetime achievement award to folk artist Gulabbai Sangamnerkar. The Annasaheb Kirloskar award will be conferred upon veteran theatre actress-singer Madhuvanti Dandekar. The awards were announced by culture minister Amit Deshmukh.
- The award carries the cash prize of Rs 5 lakh, a citation and a memento. Sangamnerkar has been performing since the age of nine.

### Beyoncé to get Humanitarian Award at 'BET Awards 2020' for her philanthropic work

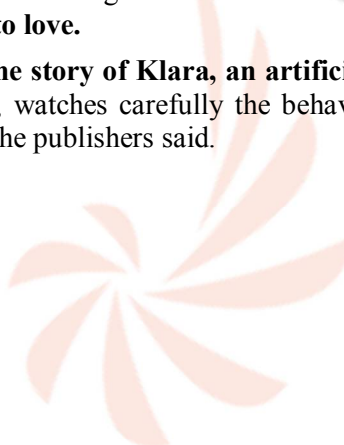
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- Popstar Beyonce will be honoured with the Humanitarian Award at the 20<sup>th</sup> edition of the 'BET Awards'.
- The American award show, which was established in 2001 by the Black Entertainment Television network, aims to celebrate African Americans and other minorities in music, acting, sports and other fields of entertainment over the past year. French anti-racist activist Assa Traore has been named BET International's Global Good Recipient.

### Nobel winner Kazuo Ishiguro's new novel 'Klara and the Sun' out in March 2021

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- Nobel Prize-winning author Kazuo Ishiguro will come out with his new novel *Klara and the Sun* next March which asks: what does it mean to love.
- This is the first novel by Ishiguro since he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature. Nobel Prize-winning author Kazuo Ishiguro will come out with his new novel *Klara and the Sun* next March which asks: what does it mean to love.
- This is the story of Klara, an artificial friend with outstanding observational qualities, who, from her place in the store, watches carefully the behaviour of those who come in to browse, and of those who pass in the street outside, the publishers said.



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## PERSONS IN NEWS

### Gaitri Kumar appointed as next High Commissioner of India to UK

- **Gaitri I. Kumar** has been appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to the United Kingdom. She is an IFS officer of 1986 batch.
- She is presently Ambassador of India to the Kingdom of Belgium, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the European Union. Kumar replaces Ruchi Ghanshyam who retired.

### Karan Bilimoria elected president of UK business body

- **Karan Bilimoria**, member of the House of Lords and a leading Indian-origin entrepreneur, was elected president of the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), the representative body of 1.9 lakh UK companies employing nearly 7 million people.
- Hyderabad-born Bilimoria was elected by an overwhelming majority at CBI's annual general meeting to replace **John Allan**, who becomes the organisation's vice-president. Cambridge-educated Bilimoria becomes the first CBI chief from a non-white background.

### UTI mutual funds appoint Imtaiyazur Rahman as CEO

- **UTI Asset Management Board** appointed **Imtaiyazur Rahman** as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the UTI Asset Management Committee (AMC) after two years as the interim CEO. He will succeed **Leo Puri** whose 5-year tenure was over in August 2018.

### Nita Ambani only Indian among top global philanthropists of 2020, features alongside Oprah, Tim Cook

- Reliance Foundation Chairperson **Nita Ambani** became the only Indian to feature in **Town & Country** magazine's top global philanthropists of 2020 list.
- While **RIL's Mukesh Ambani**, with a net worth of \$64.5 billion, recently became the only Asian tycoon among the world's top 10 richest people, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, wife **Nita** was recognised by T&C among the top philanthropists "who are saving lives and our sense of hope" during the pandemic.
- **Ambani** features alongside prominent global individuals including as **Tim Cook**, **Oprah Winfrey**, **Laurene Powell Jobs**, the **Lauder Family**, **Donatella Versace**, **Michael Bloomberg** and **Leonardo Di Caprio** among others.
- The magazine highlighted **Ambani** for leading **Reliance Foundation's** efforts in feeding frontline workers and the underprivileged, a contribution of \$72 million to an emergency fund for relief work, and for setting up India's first Covid-19 hospital.

### DU student to be first wheelchair-bound Indian to study at Oxford

- **Hoshiarpur-based Pratistha Deveshwar** can be spotted on a wheelchair on Delhi roads with shopping bags hanging on either sides. A high ranker in academics says people with disabilities can achieve anything. In fact, she will be the first Indian who is dependent on a wheelchair, to study at Oxford.

### Priyanka Chopra, Anurag Kashyap named among ambassadors at TIFF 2020

- **Actor Priyanka Chopra** and filmmaker **Anurag Kashyap** are among the **Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF)** ambassadors for 2020.
- **Chopra** and **Kashyap** will be in the grand company of **Ava DuVernay**, **Taika Waititi**, **Nicole Kidman**, **Martin Scorsese**, **Nadine Labaki**, **Alfonso Cuarón**, **Tantoo Cardinal**, **Riz Ahmed**, **Rian Johnson**, **Jason Reitman**, **Isabelle Huppert**, **Claire Denis**, **Atom Egoyan**, **Viggo Mortensen**, **Zhang Ziyi**, **David Oyelowo**, **Lulu Wang**, **Rosamund Pike**, **Sarah Gadon**, and **Denis Villeneuve**, among others.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### NatGeo Film on Swachh Bharat Revolution gets Premiered Virtually

- **‘Wash your hands with soap and water frequently, clean frequently touched surfaces and objects’** are public health measures advised by experts to fight COVID-19. In short, a step towards cleanliness and personal hygiene are significant ways to win this pandemic. Government of India’s Swachh Bharat Mission has started working on these lines years before, even at grassroot levels, for the welfare of citizens across the country.
- **National Geographic channel in collaboration with Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation** has come together to make a film titled **‘Swachh Bharat: India’s Sanitary Revolution’**. The film has been premiered at a special screening for the President of India at Rashtrapati Bhawan in March this year. It has also been screened on the NatGeo channel. It is now available on YouTube channel of Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen, where it has been virtually premiered on May 27, 2020.

### Uttar Pradesh signs MoUs with industry associations to create 10 lakh jobs for migrants

- In a major breakthrough in the ongoing process of employment generation for migrant workers in Uttar Pradesh, stage is now set for employment of 10 lakh workers.

### Many industries associations signed MoUs with state government in this regard which will give a boost to the MSME sector in state.

- In the presence of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the MSME department of state signed MOUs with Industries and Business Chambers for providing 9.5 lakhs skilled and semi-skilled manpower.

### Delhi launches app to help track hospital beds for Covid-19 patients

- **Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal** launched a mobile application to help people know how many beds are lying vacant in which hospital in the national capital.
- The Delhi government has made adequate arrangement for Covid-19 patients - in terms of number of hospitals, beds in there, the ICU facility in those hospitals and how many ventilators are there,”

### Hardeep Singh Puri launches three advisories on World Environment Day

- **Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs Hardeep Singh Puri** has launched three advisories on the occasion of World Environment Day.
- These advisories are- Advisory on Material Recovery Facilities for Municipal Solid Waste, Advisory on Landfill Reclamation and a Draft advisory on On-site and Off-site Sewage Management Practices.

### Plantation drive named “Thank Mom” started in Madhya Pradesh

- In Madhya Pradesh, a plantation drive named “Thank Mom” has been started on the premises of Social Justice and Disabled Welfare Directorate on World Environment Day.
- The employees will take care of the plant just like her mother. Plants of Neem, Guava, Mango, Moonlight, Parijat and Tulsi were planted in the premises.

### Noyyal river rejuvenation scheme inaugurated on World Environment Day

- The World Environment day was started by the UN in 1972 to mark the beginning of the Stockholm Environment Summit. This year’s theme for the day this year is “Biodiversity”. In connection with this, a 230 crore Noyyal river rejuvenation scheme was inaugurated in Coimbatore Tamil Nadu.
- The 180 km long tributary of the Cauvery River arises in the Velangiri foothills of the Western Ghats and ends in the Noyyal village in Karur district. The scheme envisages cleaning up the river, clearing it of predominantly plastic waste and weeds, building and strengthening embankments etc.
- A song, an invocation on Nature, in Sanskrit language and is based on the Yajur Veda, was also released at the function. This UNO recognised song has been composed in three popular ragas of Carnatic Music by Dr Kannan Warriar of the IFGTB.



## Ayush Ministry launches 'My Life, My Yoga' international video-blogging competition

- **Ayush Ministry has launched the My Life, My Yoga international video-blogging competition.** To participate in the My Life, My Yoga initiative, participants have been asked to post their videos of up to three minutes on social media accounts by tagging the Ministry of Ayush.
- **Participants should also hashtag My Life, My Yoga in the comment section of the social media platforms** while sharing the video blogs. Winners will be rewarded a cash prize up to one lakh rupees.
- **The Ministry of Ayush has informed that ahead of the International Day of Yoga on 21<sup>st</sup> of this month,** a series of Yoga Discourses by renowned Yoga Gurus will be available on its social media platforms from 7.30 in the evening, which will also be broadcast by Doordarshan.

## Nitin Gadkari launches national awareness campaign on Prevention of Human, Animal Mortality on Highways

- Road, Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari launched national awareness campaign on Prevention of Human and Animal Mortality on Highways.
- Launching the campaign through Video Conference, Mr Gadkari underlined the need for **generating awareness and education for the masses at large towards reducing or eliminating mortality on the roads.** He said, ecology and sustainability are most important for human life.
- The Minister informed that the **country witnesses nearly five lakh road accidents every year, in which about 1.5 lakh lives are lost.** Mr Gadkari said, he is endeavoring to bring down these figures by 20 to 25 per cent by March next year. Over five thousand black spots have been identified, and the process for their rectification including temporary and permanent measures is being carried out on urgent basis.

## Centre has approved Rs 1,407 crore for implementation of Jal jeevan mission in Assam during the year 2020-21.

- Jal Shakti Ministry said, **Assam has planned to provide functional tap connections to 13 lakh rural households in 2020-21, out of total 63 lakh households.**
- The state has planned to immediately **provide household tap connections to all remaining households belonging to weaker and marginalised sections on a priority basis.** A defined roadmap has also been charted for the effective implementation of Village Action Plan with the active participation of the rural community.

## ITBP-BSF launch 'belly-less 2020' mission, maiden 'couples fitness course'

- India-China LAC guarding force **Indo-Tibetan Border Police** has decided to **launch the first-ever 'couples fitness course'** for its officers and embarked on a mega project to create fitness-oriented infrastructure across its countrywide campuses.
- **The initiative is the brainchild of ITBP Director General (DG) S S Deswal** and is being replicated in the **Border Security Force (BSF)** too as he is also heading the about 2.5 lakh personnel-strong force tasked to guard Indian fronts with Pakistan .

**Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)** is India's primary border patrol organization with its border with China (Tibet). It is one of the five Central Armed Police Forces of India, raised on 24 October 1962, under the CRPF Act, in the wake of the Sino-Indian War of 1962. **Border Security Force (BSF)** is the border guarding organisation of India. It is one of the seven Central Armed Police Forces of India, and was raised in the wake of the 1965 War on 1 December 1965, "for ensuring the security of the borders of India and for matters connected there with". It currently stands as the world's largest border guarding force. BSF has been termed as the First Line of Defence of Indian Territories.

## Himachal CM launches green belt development scheme for rural senior citizens

- Chief minister Jai Ram Thakur launched 'Panchvati Yojna' under which parks and gardens would be developed for senior citizens of rural areas in the state. The scheme is being implemented by the rural development department.

- The CM said the main objective of the scheme is to **provide opportunity to the elderly to spend their leisure time strolling in parks and gardens.**
- He said such green belts would be **developed on minimum of one bigha land with convergence of MGNREGA, Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) and 14<sup>th</sup> finance commission** to enhance the life expectancy keeping in view the health requirements of senior citizens.

### Shri Narendra Singh Tomar launches SahakarMitra: Scheme on Internship Programme

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- In keeping with Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's clarion call for AtmaNirbhar Bharat (Self Reliant India) emphasizing the importance of local for vocal, **Sahakar Mitra: Scheme on Internship Programme (SIP)** was **launched by Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare Shri Narendra Singh Tomar.**
- Launching the scheme, Shri Tomar said that the **unique cooperative sector development finance organization, National Cooperative Development Corporation, NCDC** has embarked upon a series of initiatives in the cooperative sector entrepreneurship development ecosystem through capacity development, **paid internship to youth and assured project loans on liberalized terms to young cooperators on start-up mode.** SahakarMitra scheme will help cooperative institutions access new and innovative ideas of young professionals while the interns will gain experience of working in the field to be self-reliant.

### Petroleum Ministry Constitutes Committee To Inquire Assam Gas Well Fire

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- **The three-member committee comprising SCL Das, DG of Directorate General of Hydrocarbons, BC Bora, former chairman ONGC and TK Sengupta, former Director, ONGC** will identify the **lapses in following protocols and procedures which led to the accident.**
- The committee will also **recommend short and long-term measures to prevent the recurrence** of such incidents including identification of any gaps in the existing standard operating procedures (SOPs).

### MoS Home G Kishan Reddy, 9 others named on new panel for freedom fighters

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- The **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** has **reconstituted a committee to look into the welfare of freedom fighters**, with the **minister of state for home affairs G Kishan Reddy** as the **chairman and nine "eminent freedom fighters" from across the country as its members.** The ministry has a separate division to serve freedom fighters who are alive and their families.

### UP CM directs officials to commission TruNAT machines in all 75 districts by June 15

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- In Uttar Pradesh, **Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath** has **directed to commission TruNAT machines in all 75 districts** by 15<sup>th</sup> of June. These machines are reaching the state and with the help of these machines number of tests can be increased. Recently the Chief Minister had handed over his own official plane to bring necessary machines from Goa.

### MP becomes country's top wheat procurer; farmers get Rs 25,000 crore boost

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- **Madhya Pradesh is set to pump in around Rs 25,000 crore into its rural economy by the time its all-time high wheat procurement draws to a close.** This has made the **state the country's largest wheat purchaser in 2020-21.**
- **To date, the state procured around 12.77 million tonnes of wheat,** which is expected to reach 13 million tonnes by the time the process ends in the next few weeks. **Punjab has closed its procurement for this year at 12.76 million tonnes.** However, due to the massive procurement, the state government is facing some challenges on the storage front.

### Odisha's unique festival Raja Parba begins

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- **On Raja Parba, Prime Minister Narendra Modi** has **greeted the people Of Odisha** hoping that the **festival strengthens the spirit of brotherhood in society.** Chief Minister of Odisha Naveen Patnaik also sent his heartfelt wishes on the occasion of the Raja festival.
- **Raja Parba, Odisha's three-day unique festival celebrating the onset of monsoon and the earth's womanhood has begun.** As a mark of respect towards the earth during her menstruation days, all agricultural works, like ploughing, sowing are suspended for the three days.

## STREE scheme to empower women in Hyderabad

- With an aim of empowering women and supporting the victims of domestic violence and abuse, the Hyderabad City Police in association with Hyderabad City Security Council (HCSC) launched a programme STREE (She Triumph's through Respect, Equality and Empowerment).
- As part of the programme, the local police will form STREE group at the police station by involving women from different sections of the society. "A pro-active woman will be selected as a volunteer from each group to form as SABALA Shakti. Representatives from NGO's/ representatives of Department of Women and Child Development, an advocate and the local SHO will be member of the group".

## 5 highest-paid celebs in the world

- Actor Akshay Kumar is the only Indian to feature on Forbes 2020 list of World's 100 Highest-Paid Celebrities, and in an interesting coincidence, his rank is the same as his age, 52. Kylie Jenner and Kanye West topped the list, but sports stars, including Roger Federer and Lionel Messi, dominated the top 10.
- Akshay's rank and earnings saw a drop with the actor placed on 52<sup>nd</sup> spot with estimated \$48.5 million earnings (approximately Rs 366 crore); he was on the 33<sup>rd</sup> spot last year with earnings of \$65 million.
- Forbes estimated that Kylie Jenner earned \$590 million in the last 12 months, mostly from the sale of a 51% stake in her Kylie Cosmetics line to Coty in 2019.

## Tamil Nadu: 13 year old Madurai girl appointed Goodwill Ambassador of UNADAP

- In Tamil Nadu, a thirteen-year old Madurai girl Nethra has been appointed the Goodwill Ambassador of the United Nations Association for Development and Peace (UNADAP). It was in recognition of her role in feeding the poor during the COVID-19 lockdown by her father, a hairdresser by profession.

## Odisha becomes first state to get ISO Certification for Tribal Hostels

- Odisha has become the first state in the country to receive ISO certification for hostels meant for tribal students.
- The ST&SC Welfare Department had earlier launched the 'Mission Suvidya' project to provide all the tribal hostels of the state uniform standards of infrastructure, amenities and human resources.

## Amish announces his new book, Legend of Suheldev: The King Who Saved India

- There has been a flurry of book announcements of late, and the latest one is by Amish. The author of The Immortals of Meluha has announced the launch of his new book, Legend of Suheldev: The King Who Saved India. Published by Westland Publications Pvt Ltd, his latest fiction is set in 11<sup>th</sup>-century, India.
- The book begins with Mahmud of Ghazni's invasion and the massacre of the holy Somnath Temple. It then proceeds to document the adventure of the warrior-king Suheldev and the way he brings together people from various faiths.
- "The idea behind writing Legend of Suheldev: The King Who Saved India, was to bring to national consciousness an inspiring story that has been ignored in the pages of Indian history.

## Lockdown Liaisons: Book 2 eBook by Shobhaa De

- Lockdown Liaisons is a collection of short stories, from the varying perspectives of both men and women – young and old, brave and cowardly, cheerful and weighed down – each story an unique offering from a writer who understands how very fragile human relationships can be as they break, suffer and are redefined under trying circumstances. The book is authored by Shobhaa.

## 19<sup>th</sup> Great June Uprising Day observed in Manipur

- The 19<sup>th</sup> Great June Uprising Day was observed in Imphal and other places. President of the United Committee Manipur and chairman of the Observation Committee Sunil Karam said, "This time, we did not invite the titular king, Leishemba Sanajaoba, as many sections have started boycotting him. Mr. Sanajaoba incurred the wrath of the people for stooping to become an MP without abdicating his kingship.

### India's first COVID-19 care ashram has been set up in Mumbai by the Mumbai Port Trust

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- The 70-bed ashram spread on two acres of land was **set up by the Mumbai Port Trust Hospital**, where coronavirus patients will be treated through yoga, related therapies along with some form of alternative medication. **The COVID-19 ashram will help in reducing a load of coronavirus in infected patients at several hospitals and will also offer holistic treatment to patients.**

### Prakash Javadekar virtually inaugurates India Pavilion at Cannes Films Market 2020

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- **Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar virtually inaugurated the India Pavilion at the Cannes Film Market.** The film market includes virtual pavilions for institutions such as film funds and filming boards from across the globe as well as virtual booths for sales companies to screen their projects-in-work and connect with buyers. **The Cannes Film Festival, one of the biggest gatherings of filmmakers and cinema lovers, could not take place this year in May due to the coronavirus pandemic.**

### Noida Metro to have 'She-Man' station for transgenders

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- **In a first-of-its-kind initiative by a metro rail system in northern India, the Noida-Greater Noida Metro has decided to convert the Sector 50 station into a "She-Man" station that will have special facilities and employment for the transgender community.** "The 'She-Man' station will be on the lines of the Pink stations, which were inaugurated on March 8 this year and provided special facilities for women passengers."

### Jagan Mohan Reddy releases Rs 15,000 each to Kapu community women

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- **Launching the YSR Kapu Nestham scheme intended to provide financial assistance of Rs 15,000 per annum each to members of the Kapu community, Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy said that about Rs 354 crore was transferred to over 2.36 lakh women aged between 45 and 60 having rice cards and belonging to Kapu, Balija, Telaga and Ontari communities as part of the scheme.**
- The amount was deposited as 'unencumbered' amount into the bank accounts of the beneficiaries. **In five years, the beneficiaries will be getting a total of Rs 75,000.**

### HRD Ministry releases roadmap for NCERT for year 2020-21

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- **Human Resource Development Ministry has released roadmap for NCERT for the year 2020-21.** Under it, the NCERT has been asked to prepare info graphics, posters and presentations explaining each of the learning outcome, for each subject and grade for classes one to five by October this year and for classes 6 to 12 by March next year.
- **The online teacher training courses have to be prepared for teachers of each grade for classes 1 to 5 by December this year and for classes 6 to 12 by June, 2021.**

### Tripura to launch new initiative for school students

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- **The Tripura government, in a bid to engage students in the learning process even as educational institutes across the country continue to remain closed amid the COVID-19 pandemic, is starting an initiative.**
- **So, we have decided to launch a new project — 'Ektu Khelo, Ektu Padho' — from June 25, for students up to class VIII,"** he said. People even in remote villages in the State had mobile phones, even if internet access or cable TV network was not available.

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## IMPORTANT DAYS

### World No Tobacco Day

- **World No Tobacco Day (WNTD)** is observed around the world every year on **31 May 2020**. This year's theme is protection of younger generations, focusing on **“Protecting youth from industry manipulation and preventing them from tobacco and nicotine use”**.
- This yearly celebration informs the public on the dangers of using tobacco, the **business practices of tobacco companies**, what the **World Health Organization (WHO)** is doing to fight against the use of tobacco, and what people around the world can do to claim their right to health and healthy living and to protect future generations.

### World Milk Day

- World Milk Day is an international day **established by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)** of the United Nations to recognize the importance of milk as a global food. It has been **observed on June 1** each year since 2001.
- The theme for World Milk day 2020 is **‘the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of World Milk Day’**. The day is being celebrated to promote the health benefits of milk and dairy products. **India has become the largest producer of milk in the world with over 150 million tonnes of production in the last few years.**

### World Bicycle Day 2020 – June 3

- **Acknowledging the uniqueness, longevity and versatility of the bicycle**, which has been in use for two centuries, and that it is a simple, affordable, reliable, clean and environmentally fit sustainable means of transportation, fostering environmental stewardship and health, the **General Assembly decided to declare 3 June World Bicycle Day.**

### World Environment Day

- **World Environment Day is celebrated on 5 June every year**, and is the United Nations' principal vehicle for encouraging awareness and action for the protection of our environment.
- **The theme for World Environment Day 2020 is, ‘Biodiversity,’** with a focus on its role in providing the essential infrastructure that supports life on Earth and human development.

### Global Day of Parents 2020

- **Global Parents Day is celebrated on June 1 every year to honour** all the parents around the world for their selfless commitment and lifelong sacrifice they do for their children.
- The day was declared as the **Global Day of Parents by the UN General Assembly in 2012**. This was done to appreciate all parents for their **“selfless commitment to children and their lifelong sacrifice towards nurturing this relationship.”**

### World Food Safety Day being celebrated on 7<sup>th</sup> June

- **The second World Food Safety Day (WFSN)** was celebrated on **7 June 2020 to draw attention and inspire action to help prevent, detect and manage foodborne risks**, contributing to food security, human health, economic prosperity, agriculture, market access, tourism and sustainable development.
- **Under the theme “Food safety, everyone’s business”**, the action oriented campaign will promote global food safety awareness and call upon countries and decision makers, the private sector, civil society, UN organizations and the general public to take action.

### World Oceans Day 2020

- **June 8 is celebrated as World Oceans Day across the world to remind the people about the importance of the role played by oceans in the lives of human beings.**
- **The day is celebrated by United Nations to highlight the role of the oceans in everyday life and inspires action to protect the ocean and sustainably use marine resources.**

## World Brain Tumour Day 2020

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- **World Brain Tumour Day** is observed annually on June 8 which also coincides with World Ocean Day.

## World Accreditation Day 2020 – June 9

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- **9 June 2019** marks **World Accreditation Day** as a global initiative, jointly established by the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC), to raise awareness of the importance of accreditation.

## World Day Against Child Labour 12 June

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- This year, the **World Day** is conducted as a virtual campaign and is being organized jointly with the **Global March Against Child Labour** and the International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture (IPCCLA).
- As per the United Nation's website, **World Day Against Child Labour 2020** focuses on the impact of the crisis on child labour.

## World Blood Donor Day being observed

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- **On 14<sup>th</sup> June 2020** is **World Blood Donor Day**. The day is celebrated to raise awareness of the need for safe blood and blood products and to thank blood donors.
- This year the theme is - **Safe blood saves lives**. Blood is an important resource, both for planned treatments and urgent interventions. It can help patients suffering from life-threatening conditions and supports complex medical and surgical procedures.

## International Yoga Day to be celebrated on June 21

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- **International Day of Yoga** will be celebrated on **21<sup>st</sup> of June**. AYUSH Minister Shripad Yesso Naik has urged everyone to participate in the Yoga Day from their home as this year no public congregation has been planned due to COVID-19 pandemic.
- He has also urged everyone to **participate in My Life, My Yoga**, the international video blogging contest, announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- The theme for International Yoga Day 2020 is 'Yoga at Home and Yoga with Family'.

## World Day Against Child Labour 2020

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- The United Nations and International Labour Organization (ILO) observe **12 June every year as the world day against child labour**, to highlight how a large section of young population is forced into menial jobs. However, this year the focus is specifically on the impact of the **COVID-19 crisis on child labour**.
- The theme of World Against Child Labour 2020 is "Protect children from child labour, now more than ever".

## Green Mizoram Day 2020

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- In Mizoram, **Green Mizoram Day** was celebrated throughout the state on **11 June** with distribution and planting trees and taking pledge to work for green environment and maintaining ecological balance. The state has been celebrating the day for the last 20 years.

## 2020 Desertification and Drought Day will focus on links between consumption and land

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- **Desertification and Drought Day**, a United Nations observance day held on **17 June each year**, will in 2020 focus on changing public attitudes to the leading driver of desertification and land degradation: humanity's relentless production and consumption. Desertification and Drought Day, running under the slogan "**Food. Feed. Fibre.**"

## International Day of Family Remittances 16 June

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- The **International Day of Family Remittances (IDFR)** is a universally-recognized observance adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and celebrated every year on **16 June**.

- The day recognizes the contribution of over 200 million migrants to improve the lives of their 800 million family members back home, and to create a future of hope for their children.

### World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

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- The World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) happens each year on June 15<sup>th</sup>. It was officially recognized by the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution December 2011, following a request by the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA), who first established the commemoration in June 2006.

### Global Wind Day 2020

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- Global Wind Day occurs annually on 15 June and is a day for discovering wind, its power and the possibilities it holds to reshape our energy systems.

### World Sickle Cell Awareness Day

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- June 19<sup>th</sup> was officially designated as World Sickle Cell Awareness Day. The international awareness day is observed annually with the goal to increase public knowledge and an understanding of sickle cell disease, and the challenges experienced by patients and their families and caregivers.

### International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict, 19 June

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- A virtual event took place on 19 June 2020 to mark the sixth annual International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict.
- Co-hosted by the Office of the SRSG on Sexual Violence in Conflict, the Office of the SRSG for Children and Armed Conflict, and the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations.

### World Refugee Day-2020

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- World Refugee Day, international observance observed June 20 each year, is dedicated to raising awareness of the situation of refugees throughout the world. The theme of World Refugee Day this year is “every action counts.”

### International Day of Yoga

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- The International Day of Yoga has been celebrated annually on 21 June since 2015, following its inception in the United Nations General Assembly in 2014.
- The theme set by United Nations for this year is “Yoga for Health - Yoga at Home”.

### World Music Day being celebrated

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- World Music Day or Fête de la Musique is being celebrated. June 21 is celebrated as World Music Day or Fête de la Musique as an annual celebration that was founded by Jack Lang and Maurice Fleuret in 1981.
- Every year free concerts are organized across the globe to make music accessible to all. However, this year due to restrictions in place to fight COVID-19, musicians and music lovers across the world are celebrating the day within the family, or virtually by jamming from the safety of their homes or by enjoying music of all genres on popular music sites.

### World Hydrography Day

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- World Hydrogen Day is celebrated every year on 21 June, it highlights the importance of hydrography and why it is still relevant. The focus this year is on the key role hydrography can play in support of autonomous technologies. This includes aerial, surface and underwater survey drones as well as autonomous ships.

### International Olympic Day, 2020

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- The annual Olympic Day is celebrating sport and Olympic values. This year the day is celebrated 23<sup>rd</sup> of June with a 24-hour online Olympic workout.

- The global COVID-19 pandemic postponed this Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 and since the worldwide lockdown, the Olympic athletes have shared their daily workouts online in connection to IOC's #StayStrong, #StayActive, #StayHealthy campaign. The Olympic Day 2020 takes this campaign even further with a 24-hour online workout.

### United Nations Public Service Day

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- **United Nations Public Service Day is observed globally on 23<sup>rd</sup> June every year.** This day is to highlight the contribution of public service in the development process and to value public service to the community.

### Day of the Seafarer 2020

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- **This year, the annual Day of the Seafarer (DotS) will be celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary on 25 June.** This year, the Day of the Seafarer campaign calls on Member States to recognize seafarers as key workers – and to provide them with the support, assistance and travel options open to all key workers during the pandemic.

### June 26 observed as International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

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- **In 1987, the United Nations General Assembly decided to observe 26<sup>th</sup> June as the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking** as an expression of its determination to strengthen action and cooperation to achieve the goal of an international society free of drug abuse.
- **The theme for this year's International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking is "Better Knowledge for Better Care".**
- **The theme emphasizes the need to improve the understanding of the world drug problem and how in turn, better knowledge** will foster greater international cooperation for countering its impact on health, governance and security.





**QUESTIONS**

1. World No Tobacco Day (WNTD) is observed around the world every year on:  
(a) 29<sup>th</sup> May (b) 30<sup>th</sup> May (c) 31<sup>st</sup> May (d) 1<sup>st</sup> June
2. Which is the first state to complete the migration of workers to their home state through Shramik Special trains?  
(a) Maharashtra (b) Gujarat (c) Telangana (d) Tamil Nadu
3. Recently, Mudra Shishu loan has been announced for:  
(a) Small Marginal Farmers (b) Self Help Groups  
(c) Small Business and Cottage industries (d) Khadi Industries
4. The platform, collaboration with Foundation for Ecological Security (FES) \_\_\_\_\_ as its main nodal point, is called CoAST India (Collaboration/Covid Action Support Group).  
(a) Sabarmati (b) Anand (c) Jodhpur (d) Mandla
5. The 26<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 26) to the UNFCCC, which was scheduled to meet in November this year in \_\_\_\_\_ will now take place from November 1-20, 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.  
(a) Glasgow (b) Brussels (c) London (d) Paris
6. Recently, Thierry Delaporte has been appointed as the new chief executive officer and managing director of which of the following IT companies?  
(a) Wipro (b) HCL (c) TCS (d) IBM
7. Who has been recently appointed as chief executive officer of India's apex food regulator Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)?  
(a) Deepak Luthra (b) Sanjay Kothari  
(c) Mahesh Chandravarkar (d) Arun Singhal
8. Recently, the ministry of finance appointed PR Jaishankar as the managing director of the India Infrastructure Finance Company Ltd (IIFCL) for \_\_\_\_\_ years.  
(a) One (b) Two (c) Three (d) Five
9. Scientists at the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) have found a rare species of scorpionfish (*Sorpaenospsis neglecta*) for the first time that this species has been found in Indian waters. Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) headquarters is at:  
(a) Paradip (b) Kochi (c) Kutch (d) Port Blair
10. In a major breakthrough in the ongoing process of employment generation for migrant workers in \_\_\_\_\_ stage is now set for employment of 10 lakh workers.  
(a) Bihar (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Madhya Pradesh (d) Jharkhand
11. Which of the following countries has launched the world's first app that utilised the Exposure Notification API developed by Apple and Google?  
(a) Germany (b) Sweden (c) Switzerland (d) France
12. Which of the following countries is constructing its first strategic stealth bomber, capable of delivering nuclear weapons, under the Perspective Aviation Complex for Long-Range Aviation (PAK DA) programme?  
(a) USA (b) Germany (c) France (d) Russia
13. Who has been appointed as the Chief Executive of General Atomics Global Corporation?  
(a) Mangesh Agarkar (b) Muneesh Yogi (c) Vivek Lall (d) Mudit Paranjape

14. Indian Railways' first isolation coach has been deployed to aid the treatment of coronavirus patients in:  
(a) Jaipur (b) Delhi (c) Charbagh (d) Gorakhpur
15. "Artificial Intelligence Portal has been jointly developed by:  
(a) Ministry of Power (b) Ministry of Electronics and IT Industry  
(c) Ministry of Commerce and Industry (d) Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
16. Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the technology platform \_\_\_\_\_ a one-stop-shop solution of the MSME Ministry that would attempt to make smaller entrepreneurship evolve and grow by solving their grievances.  
(a) CHAMPIONS (b) LEADER (c) FASTTRACK (d) DESPERATE
17. The sixth International Day of Yoga (IDY) is going to be observed in:  
(a) 5<sup>th</sup> June (b) 13<sup>th</sup> June (c) 19<sup>th</sup> June (d) 21<sup>st</sup> June
18. Recently, Moody's Investors Service downgraded India's sovereign rating to \_\_\_\_\_ from 'Baa2', and its short-term local-currency rating to P-3 from P-2.  
(a) 'Baa3' (b) 'Baa4' (c) 'Baa5' (d) 'Caa2'
19. Recently, The team from Yale University in the US identified \_\_\_\_\_ new genetic variants linked to problem drinking, tripling the number of known genetic risks associated with alcohol disorders.  
(a) 12 (b) 18 (c) 23 (d) 29
20. The World Milk Day is established by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) celebrated every year on:  
(a) 1<sup>st</sup> June (b) 2<sup>nd</sup> June (c) 3<sup>rd</sup> June (d) 5<sup>th</sup> June
21. Which of the following has launched a mobile application to help people know how many beds are lying vacant in which hospital in the state/ union territory?  
(a) Delhi (b) Haryana (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Lakshadweep
22. Who among the following launched the development of a new Greenfield connectivity to Amritsar City from Nakodar via Sultanpur Lodhi, Goindwal Sahib, Khadoor Sahib as part of Delhi-Amritsar Expressway?  
(a) Narendra Modi (b) Nitin Gadkari  
(c) Narendra Singh Tomar (d) Venkaih Naidu
23. Which of the following companies has inked pact with NIIFL and Ayana Renewable Power for exploring opportunities in solar energy sector?  
(a) RITES Limited (b) Ircon International Ltd  
(c) DHFL Limited (d) HDFC Bank
24. The International Hydropower Association (IHA) released its 2020 Hydropower Status Report. India is now \_\_\_\_\_ largest Hydropower generator.  
(a) 2<sup>nd</sup> (b) 4<sup>th</sup> (c) 5<sup>th</sup> (d) 9<sup>th</sup>
25. According to the global innovation mapping and research company StartupBlink, which gathers local data of every country to rank their startup ecosystem India has moved to .....this year out of 100 countries.  
(a) 12<sup>th</sup> (b) 17<sup>th</sup> (c) 21<sup>st</sup> (d) 23<sup>rd</sup>
26. Recently, Citing concerns regarding African swine fever (ASF), \_\_\_\_\_ has announced that it will put a ban on imports of pigs, wild boar and related products from India.  
(a) China (b) USA (c) France (d) Canada
27. The Science and Engineering Research Board has approved support for research at \_\_\_\_\_ to identify lead compound(s) from available and approved drugs for fast-track anti-SARS-CoV-2 drug molecule.  
(a) IIT Kanpur (b) IIT (BHU) Varanasi (c) IIT Hyderabad (d) IIT Mandi

28. National Geographic channel in collaboration with Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation has come together to make a film titled \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) 'Swachh Bharat: India's Sanitary Revolution'  
(b) 'Saaf Bharat'  
(c) 'Swachh Bharat: India's Cleanliness Revolution'  
(d) 'Saaf Bharat: India's Sanitary Revolution Free'
29. Global Parents Day is celebrated on \_\_\_\_\_ every year to honour all the parents around the world for their selfless commitment and lifelong sacrifice they do for their children.  
(a) 24<sup>th</sup> May (b) 27<sup>th</sup> May (c) 31<sup>st</sup> May (d) 1<sup>st</sup> June
30. Who has been appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to the United Kingdom?  
(a) Veerendra III Sharma (b) Gaitri I. Kumar (c) Mahesh II Jain (d) Deepak R Kumar
31. The Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Kiren Rijiju has inaugurated 25-day Khelo India Community Coach Development Programme for Community Coaches and 15,000 PE \_\_\_\_\_ across India.  
(a) Teachers (b) Scientists (c) Sports person (d) Lawyers
32. Telangana CM inaugurates Kondapochamma Reservoir in Siddipet, which will lift .....water to a reservoir.  
(a) Krishna (b) Tungabhadra (c) Godavari (d) Penganga
33. Recently, Union Government has launched a new initiative \_\_\_\_\_ to conduct a skill mapping exercise of the returning citizens under the Vande Bharat Mission.  
(a) SWADES (b) Apna DESH (c) Sasakt Bharat (d) Hamara Bharat
34. The Union Cabinet approved the renaming of Kolkata Port as \_\_\_\_\_ after the founder of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh.  
(a) Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port (b) Atal Bihari Vajpayee Port  
(c) Deen Dayal Upadhyay Port (d) Yasodhara Raje Schindhia Port
35. Which of the following countries ordered a state of emergency and criticised a subsidiary of metals giant Norilsk Nickel after a massive diesel spill into a Siberian river?  
(a) Sweden (b) Russia (c) Norway (d) Finland
36. The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) announced new office-bearers for the year 2020-21. Who was elected as CII President?  
(a) Uday Kotak (b) Sanjiv Puri (c) Rahul Bajaj (d) Mahesh Mandhata
37. Astronomers have detected an object near \_\_\_\_\_ orbit which appears to be a cross between an asteroid and a comet.  
(a) Mars (b) Saturn (c) Jupiter (d) Neptune
38. Which of the following countries has recently partnered with NASA to host a deep-space ground station, which will support human spaceflight missions to the Moon, Mars and beyond?  
(a) USA (b) South Africa (c) United Kingdom (d) France
39. Recently, World No Tobacco Day was celebrated on:  
(a) 23<sup>rd</sup> May (b) 25<sup>th</sup> May (c) 28<sup>th</sup> May (d) 31<sup>st</sup> May
40. Name the Indian writer who won the regional award for Asia in Commonwealth Short Story Prize.  
(a) Sukirti Kandpal (b) Mehek Bajaj (c) Deepa Ganguly (d) Kritika Pandey

41. Human Resources Development Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri launched a joint initiative, TULIP aimed at providing internships to the \_\_\_\_\_ students in the country.  
(a) Medical (b) Engineering (c) Commerce (d) Horticulture
42. Which of the following banks launched a mobile application based facility where customer can open current bank account in just few hours?  
(a) HDFC (b) ICICI bank (c) IndusInd Bank (d) Bandhan Bank
43. The first state in India to provide free internet to the poor is  
(a) Karnataka (b) Kerala (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Maharashtra
44. Name the Indian who was appointed as senior advisor to the World Bank Executive Director.  
(a) Animesh Bajpayee (b) Rajeev Topno (c) Deepak Bhatnagar (d) Mahesh Dadwal
45. Which of the following states will carry out an elephant census after a gap of five years and drones will be used for the first time in the exercise?  
(a) Kerala (b) Karnataka (c) Uttarakhand (d) Assam
46. With recent amendment to Essential Commodities Act, few commodities have been removed from list of essential commodities. Which of the following commodities is not in the list?  
(a) Tomatoes (b) Oilseeds (c) Pulses (d) Cereals
47. The first ever India-Australia Virtual Summit was held between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Australian counterpart \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Scott Morrison (b) Julia Gillard (c) Malcolm Turnbull (d) Alexander Abraham
48. Recently, A large number of shark teeth have been found at a new fossil site in Rajasthan's \_\_\_\_\_ district.  
(a) Jodhpur (b) Barmer (c) Udaipur (d) Churu
49. Mission Indradhanush aim is to ensure full vaccination of the country's \_\_\_\_\_ including those in the remote parts of the vast nation.  
(a) Toddler (b) Children and Pregnant Women\*  
(c) Animals (d) Girls under Age of 16 Years
50. The World Environment Day is celebrated every year on \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) 1<sup>st</sup> June (b) 3<sup>rd</sup> June (c) 5<sup>th</sup> June (d) 7<sup>th</sup> June
51. Who is the only Indian to feature on Forbes 2020 list of World's 100 Highest-Paid Celebrities?  
(a) Salman Khan (b) Deepika Padukone (c) Akshay Kumar (d) Amitabh Bachchan
52. Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs Hardeep Singh Puri has launched \_\_\_\_\_ Advisories on the occasion of World Environment Day.  
(a) two (b) three (c) four (d) five
53. Recently, Union Power Minister R K Singh initiated the \_\_\_\_\_ campaign on the occasion of World Environment Day.  
(a) '#iContact' (b) '#iCommit' (c) '#iCommitment' (d) '#iPower'
54. Which of the following brands has been ranked No. 1 in the list of the strongest Indian brands by Brand Finance in its 'India 100 2020' report?  
(a) Jio (b) Taj (c) Maruti Suzuki (d) HPCL
55. The most dominant coronavirus clade in India is the \_\_\_\_\_ and of 361 genomes analysed by the group.  
(a) A1a (b) A2a (c) A3b (d) A5c



56. The theme of World Environment Day 2020 was:  
(a) 'Nature and Biodiversity' (b) "Air pollution"  
(c) 'Connecting People with Nature' (d) Beating plastic pollution
57. Which of the following countries has bagged the right to host the Women's Asian Cup football 2022?  
(a) Mauritius (b) Maldives (c) India (d) Nepal
58. Who has been named EY 'World Entrepreneur of The Year 2020' in a virtual award ceremony?  
(a) Nita Ambani (b) Indra Nooyi  
(c) Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw (d) Anu Agha
59. Which of the following ministries flagship programme Fit India is joining hands with the Department of School Education and Literacy, to launch a series of special films promoting 10 indigenous sports of India under the Ek Bharat, Shrestha Bharat initiative?  
(a) Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region  
(b) Ministry of Sports  
(c) Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship  
(d) Ministry of Human Resource Development
60. The host country for this year World Environment Day 2020 is \_\_\_\_\_ in partnership with Germany.  
(a) Colombia (b) Siberia (c) Finland (d) Iceland
61. The World Environment Day 2020 focuses on 'Biodiversity' and was hosted in Colombia in partnership with \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) France (b) Germany (c) South Africa (d) Belgium
62. Which of the following states launched a plantation drive named "Thank Mom" on World Environment Day?  
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Jharkhand (d) Chhattisgarh
63. Which of the following ministries has launched the My Life, My Yoga international video-blogging competition?  
(a) Ministry of AYUSH (b) Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers  
(c) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (d) Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas
64. Name the Indian company which signed a joint declaration with UN Global Compact urging governments to align their COVID-19 recovery efforts with the latest climate science.  
(a) Wipro (b) HCL (c) TCS (d) Tech Mahindra
65. Which of the following states has launched a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) tracking portal that will be integrated with its single window system Nivesh Mitra?  
(a) Bihar (b) Madhya Pradesh  
(c) West Bengal (d) Uttar Pradesh
66. Which of the following is creating a Payments Infrastructure Development Fund to push digital payments across the country?  
(a) NABARD (b) Ministry of Finance  
(c) Ministry of Corporate Affairs (d) Reserve Bank of India
67. The World Economic Forum (WEF) will adopt a new twin-summit format for its next annual Davos meeting in January 2021, by bringing together leaders from across the globe for in-person as well as virtual dialogues with a theme of \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) 'The Great Reset' (b) 'The Great Resort'  
(c) 'The Highest Report' (d) 'The Highest Methodology'

68. According to a report, who has emerged as the only cricketer in the world's top-10 list of highest-earning athletes through sponsored Instagram posts during the lockdown?  
(a) Steve Smith (b) Ben Stokes (c) Virat Kohli (d) Chris Gayle
69. The theme for World Environment Day 2020 is:  
(a) 'Science & Technology' (b) 'Biodiversity'  
(c) 'Sports & Lifestyle' (d) 'Forests & Wildlife'
70. Fuji Rock Festival is \_\_\_\_\_ biggest annual music event, which will be cancelled for the first time ever due to the coronavirus pandemic.  
(a) South Korea (b) China (c) Japan (d) Malaysia
71. Which of the following states launched India's first online waste exchange website?  
(a) Telangana (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Karnataka (d) Tamil Nadu
72. India's first indigenous, cost effective, wireless physiological parameters monitoring system for COVID-19 patients \_\_\_\_\_ is to emerge as an antidote to the original COVID.  
(a) COVID BELL (b) COVID BEEP (c) COVID SIGNAL (d) COVID INFORM
73. Recently, Government has constituted a task force to examine issues related to age of motherhood, lowering Maternal Mortality Rate and improvement of nutritional levels. The task force will be headed by:  
(a) Mamata Sharma (b) Maneka Gandhi (c) Vrinda Karat (d) Jaya Jaitly
74. The Group of 20 rich and emerging economies has pledged more than \_\_\_\_\_ billion to fight the coronavirus.  
(a) \$11 (b) \$16 (c) \$21 (d) \$25
75. Who among the following formally becomes the Democratic presidential nominee to run for the White House against President Donald Trump in the elections in November this year?  
(a) Hilary Clinton (b) Joe Biden (c) Bill Sanders (d) Antonie Marthe
76. Which of the following Indian airports received the highest Platinum Recognition in the Airports Council International (ACI) Asia-Pacific Green Airports Recognition 2020 in the 15-35 million passengers per annum (MPPA) category?  
(a) Mumbai International Airport (b) Hyderabad International Airport  
(c) Chennai International Airport (d) Bengaluru International Airport
77. Which of the following companies closed a \$7 billion rights issue, India's largest ever, luring buyers in with a rare deferred payment offer?  
(a) Wipro (b) Reliance Industries (c) TCS (d) Adani Wilmar
78. Name the Indian who has been recently appointed the Goodwill Ambassador of the United Nations Association for Development and Peace, the UNADAP.  
(a) Nethra (b) Meenakshi (c) Mahalaxmi (d) Meena
79. Recently, Researchers at \_\_\_\_\_ claim to have developed a technology for making high efficiency masks using waste pet bottles that are not only more breathable than commercially available masks but also can be washed and reused up to 30 times.  
(a) IIT Mandi (b) IIT Hyderabad (c) IIT Madras (d) IIT Kanpur
80. World Food Safety Day is being celebrated on:  
(a) June 2<sup>nd</sup> (b) June 4<sup>th</sup> (c) June 5<sup>th</sup> (d) June 7<sup>th</sup>
81. Which of the following states has adopted the patriotic song Bande Utkala Janani as the state anthem?  
(a) Maharashtra (b) West Bengal (c) Assam (d) Odisha

82. Which of the following states launched “Meghasandesha” App that would provide real-time information as well as forecast on rains, flooding and thunderstorm alerts?  
(a) Tamil Nadu (b) Maharashtra (c) Karnataka (d) Kerala
83. Recently, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has mandated a strip of \_\_\_\_\_ colour of one centimetre width on top of the existing sticker carrying details of registration for BS-VI vehicles of any fuel type.  
(a) Green (b) Blue (c) Yellow (d) Orange
84. With an aim to boost economic growth of \_\_\_\_\_ through agriculture and horticulture, Chief Minister N. Biren Singh inaugurated a Plant Health Clinic.  
(a) Manipur (b) Mizoram (c) Assam (d) Sikkim
85. Which of the following states launched the Raj Kaushal Portal and Online Shramik Employment Exchange through video conferencing?  
(a) Haryana (b) Gujarat (c) Rajasthan (d) Madhya Pradesh
86. What was the rank of India in the recently released Environmental Performance Index?  
(a) 121<sup>st</sup> (b) 134<sup>th</sup> (c) 149<sup>th</sup> (d) 177<sup>th</sup>
87. Recently, Scientists at International Advanced Research Centre for Powder Metallurgy and New Materials (ARCI) have developed a rare earth based magnetocaloric material that can be used in treatment of cancer. ARCI is located in:  
(a) Bengaluru (b) Ahmedabad (c) Hyderabad (d) Jaipur
88. Which of the following states launched Street Vendor Registration Portal and “Mukhyamantri Shahri Path Vyavsayi Utthan Yojana” and transferred Rs 300 crore to urban local bodies?  
(a) Gujarat (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Rajasthan (d) Punjab
89. The World Brain Tumour Day is observed annually on:  
(a) 2<sup>nd</sup> June (b) 3<sup>rd</sup> June (c) 6<sup>th</sup> June (d) 8<sup>th</sup> June
90. Recently, who became the first Indian to receive Richard Dawkins Award?  
(a) Salim Khan (b) Javed Akhter (c) A.R. Rehman (d) Prasoon Joshi
91. Recently, Gairsain was declared as the summer capital of:  
(a) Himachal Pradesh (b) Uttarakhand (c) Sikkim (d) Arunachal Pradesh
92. According to Mercer’s ‘2020 Cost of Living Survey’, which Indian city has emerged as the most expensive city in the country for expatriates in terms of cost of living?  
(a) New Delhi (b) Bengaluru (c) Hyderabad (d) Mumbai
93. According to the QS World University Rankings, which is India’s highest ranked university among top 200 global universities?  
(a) Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru  
(b) Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi  
(c) Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay  
(d) Indian Institute of Technology, Madras
94. Recently, The US Senate unanimously confirmed \_\_\_\_\_ as chief of staff of the U.S. Air Force, making him the first black officer to lead one of the nation’s military services.  
(a) Gen. Charles Brown Jr. (b) Gen. Mchart Johnson  
(c) Gen. Charles Smith Sr. (d) Gen. Robert Carlos Jr.

95. Which of the following companies won the first of its kind manufacturing-linked solar agreement from the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI)?  
(a) Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL) (b) Reliance Green Energy Ltd (RGEL)  
(c) Tata Green Energy Ltd (TGEL) (d) Wipro Green Energy Ltd (WGEL)
96. Recently, State-owned BHEL announced commissioning of 270 megawatt (MW) thermal power plant in:  
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Telangana (c) Karnataka (d) Tamil Nadu
97. Name the first-of-its kind 'Internet-controlled' robot specifically to address the needs of hospitals treating COVID-19 patients developed by Thane engineer.  
(a) 'Covid-bot' (b) 'Coro-bot' (c) 'All-bot' (d) 'Covo-bot'
98. Recently, Max Planck Institute for Solar System Research (MPS) in Göttingen has reported a project that has found; an Earth-like, probably rocky planet called KOI-456.04 that orbits a star called \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Kepler-160 (b) Planc 67 (c) Solar-156 (d) Rotator 56
99. What is the name of the disinfectant spray to combat COVID-19 by disinfecting all types of surfaces developed by Defence Institute of Advanced Technology, Pune?  
(a) Twarit (b) Ahook (c) Ananya (d) Rahat
100. World Oceans Day is celebrated across the world on:  
(a) 1<sup>st</sup> June (b) 4<sup>th</sup> June (c) 7<sup>th</sup> June (d) 8<sup>th</sup> June
101. Recently, The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has reconstituted a committee to look into the welfare of freedom fighters. Who is the chairman of this committee?  
(a) Shri Amit Shah (b) Shri Narendra Modi (c) Shri Nityanand Rai (d) Shri G Kishan Reddy
102. In the five new regulations, recommended by the \_\_\_\_\_ chaired Cricket Committee, and ratified by the Chief Executives Committee (CEC), the teams will also be allowed an additional DRS call as home umpires will now be officiating in bilateral Test series.  
(a) Anil Kumble (b) Mike Atherton (c) Graham Gooch (d) Daniel Vettori
103. Recently, Recykal, a digital technology company in the waste management space, has partnered with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Hindustan Coca-Cola Beverages (HCCB) for \_\_\_\_\_ a joint initiative for developing sustainable plastic waste management practices in the country.  
(a) Project Prithvi (b) Project Bhoomi (c) Project Dharti (d) Project Matrabhoomi
104. Flipkart-owned digital payments platform PhonePe, along with ICICI Lombard announced the launching of a comprehensive, industry-first domestic multi-trip insurance cover, which will be exclusively available for PhonePe users.  
(a) HDFC ergo (b) PNB MetLife (c) ICICI Lombard (d) SBI life Insurance
105. Recently, Central government has allocated \_\_\_\_\_ crore as annual allotment to states for the current financial year under "Per Drop More Crop" component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY-PDMC).  
(a) Rs 2,000 (b) Rs 3,000 (c) Rs 4,000 (d) Rs 5,000
106. Empays Payment Systems India Pvt Ltd, which built and runs the IMT Payment System, announced a partnership with \_\_\_\_\_ to enable contact-free ATM cash withdrawals in India.  
(a) Maestro (b) VISA (c) Mastercard (d) UPI
107. Who has been given best-ever safety performance during the past year with zero passenger fatalities?  
(a) Indian Airlines (b) Indian Railways  
(c) Andhra Pradesh Road State Corporation (d) Indian Navy



108. Recently, S&P retained India's sovereign rating at "\_\_\_\_\_" with a stable outlook, saying that while risks to growth are rising, the economy and fiscal position will stabilise and begin to recover from 2021 onwards.  
(a) BBB- (b) ABC+ (c) AAA (d) CCC+
109. In Uttar Pradesh, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has directed to commission \_\_\_\_\_ machines in all 75 districts by 15<sup>th</sup> of this month.  
(a) GruNAT (b) TruNAT (c) Covid 19 Nat (d) COVNAT
110. The World Accreditation Day 2020 as a global initiative is celebrated on:  
(a) 2<sup>nd</sup> June (b) 4<sup>th</sup> June (c) 7<sup>th</sup> June (d) 9<sup>th</sup> June
111. Which of the following states has launched a welfare scheme 'Jagananna Chedodu' benefiting tailors, Rajakas (dhobis) and Nayee Brahmins (barbers), who had lost their livelihood due to COVID-19 pandemic?  
(a) Telangana (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Karnataka (d) Tamil Nadu
112. The Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle (DSRV) Complex was inaugurated at:  
(a) Chennai (b) Panaji (c) Paradip (d) Visakhapatnam
113. Recently, India and \_\_\_\_\_ are likely to hold their first of six bilateral meetings on the desert locust incursion issue on June 18 under an existing institutional mechanism.  
(a) Pakistan (b) Afghanistan (c) Iraq (d) Iran
114. Recently, Union Minister for Human Resource Development Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank virtually released India Rankings-2020 for Higher Educational Institutions, \_\_\_\_\_ retains first position in Overall Ranking as well as in Engineering.  
(a) IIT, Madras (b) IIT, Delhi (c) IIT, Bombay (d) IIT, Kanpur
115. Recently, Indian Railways has created a new world benchmark by successfully running first Double-Stack Container Train in high-rise in Over Head Equipment electrified territory on:  
(a) Eastern Railway (b) Western Railway (c) Northern Railway (d) North Central Railway
116. Recently, The \_\_\_\_\_ has introduced a first-of-its-kind India standard gold and silver delivery, under the 'futures and options' (F&O) bullion contracts. This move could potentially elevate India's status as a 'price-setter' for the metals.  
(a) BSE (b) NSE (c) Gift City (d) Madras Stock Exchange
117. Recently, ePaiza, a point of sale (POS) solution provider in India, has entered into a partnership with First Alliance Bank (Z) Ltd in \_\_\_\_\_ to provide mobile point of sale (mPOS) solution to small and medium enterprises and other businesses in the country.  
(a) Zambia, Africa (b) South Korea, Asia (c) Taiwan, Asia (d) South Africa, Africa
118. Which of the following states has recently renamed its Environment Ministry as Environment and Climate Change Ministry?  
(a) Gujarat (b) Maharashtra (c) Rajasthan (d) Haryana
119. The World Day against Child Labour is celebrated on:  
(a) 2<sup>nd</sup> June (b) 5<sup>th</sup> June (c) 9<sup>th</sup> June (d) 12<sup>th</sup> June
120. Recently, Azim Premji-promoted Wipro Ltd opened the country's first hospital dedicated for covid-19 treatment in:  
(a) Chennai (b) Mumbai (c) Pune (d) Gurugram
121. Recently, Petroleum Ministry constitutes committee to inquire Assam gas well fire. The three-member committee will be headed by:  
(a) M Mohanty (b) BC Chhatterjee (c) DC Bannerjee (d) SCL Das

122. What is the name of the first construction sector organisation to go 'Fully Digital'?
- (a) IRCON (b) LNT (c) NHAI (d) RITES
123. Who among the following launched the SahakarMitra: Scheme on Internship Programme?
- (a) Shri Narendra Modi (b) Shri Ramnath Kovind  
(c) Shri Narendra Singh Tomar (d) Shri Nitin Gadkari
124. Name the Indian Musician who figures in the Queen's Birthday 2020 Honours List and will be conferred the Medal of the Order of Australia later this year.
- (a) Astha Dhiman (b) Mayoore Deepak (c) Shobha Sekhar (d) Ankita Ratra
125. Raja Praba is a unique festival celebrated in:
- (a) Haryana (b) Rajasthan (c) Odisha (d) Jharkhand
126. Recently, Researchers at \_\_\_\_\_ claim to have developed a technology for making high efficiency masks using waste pet bottles that are not only more breathable than commercially available masks but also can be washed and reused up to 30 times.
- (a) IIT Mandi (b) IIT Guwahati (c) IIT Delhi (d) IIT Bombay
127. Name the Eminent Indian-American soil scientist who has been named this year's recipient of the World Food Prize for developing and mainstreaming a soil-centric approach to increasing food production that conserves natural resources and mitigates climate change.
- (a) Mahesh Deshmukh (b) Vijay Sahgal (c) Rattan Lal (d) Meenakshi Sahu
128. Recently, India's foreign exchange reserves have surged by a massive 8.22 billion dollars to cross the \_\_\_\_\_ mark for the first time.
- (a) half-a-trillion (b) trillion  
(c) one and half –a-trillion (d) two trillion
129. Recently, 500-year-old temple dates back to the late 15<sup>th</sup> or early 16<sup>th</sup> century was found submerged in:
- (a) Subarnarekha (b) Mahanadi (c) Chilika Lake (d) Chambal
130. Recently, the third India-ASEAN youth dialogue that was held established the revival and re-establishment of:
- (a) Nalanda University (b) Vikramshila University  
(c) Dhar University (d) Pataliputra University
131. Name the railway zone which has launched a Robotic 'CAPTAIN ARJUN' (Always be Responsible and Just Use to be Nice) to intensify the screening and surveillance.
- (a) North Central Railway (b) Central Railway  
(c) Northern Railway (d) Eastern Railway
132. Which of the following states has recently launched 'Panchvati Yojna' under which parks and gardens would be developed for senior citizens of rural areas in the state?
- (a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Haryana (c) Himachal Pradesh (d) Uttarakhand
133. Name the web based solution for the healthcare supply chain which was launched to serve manufacturers, suppliers and customers to effectively deal with the Covid-19 pandemic.
- (a) AarogyaPath (b) Ayushman Path  
(c) AtmanirbharPath (d) Self Sufficient Path
134. Recently, India's first infectious disease diagnostic lab is now ready. This rapid response mobile labrotary is part of government \_\_\_\_\_.
- (a) Aatmnirbhar Bharat (b) Ayushman Bharat (c) Made In India (d) Sakshar Bharat

135. Name India-China LAC guarding force which has decided to launch the first-ever 'couples fitness course' for its officers and embarked on a mega project to create fitness-oriented infrastructure across its countrywide campuses.  
(a) BSF (b) BSF  
(c) Indo-Tibetan Border Police (d) CISF
136. Who among the following made history by becoming the first observant Sikh to graduate from the prestigious United States Military Academy at West Point?  
(a) Aniket Barua (b) Parijat Kishore (c) Animesh Tripathy (d) Anmol Narang
137. The Reserve Bank of India has constituted a five-member Internal Working Group to review the guidelines related to ownership, governance and corporate structure of private sector banks. Who will be the head of this committee?  
(a) P K Mohanty (b) Bhaskar Rawat (c) Mahesh Shandilya (d) Seepak Khajuria
138. Which of the following IIT's researchers of 36 strains of gut bacteria commonly found in the gut reveals their metabolism and could bring added rigour into the development of probiotics?  
(a) IIT Delhi (b) IIT Bombay (c) IIT Madras (d) IIT Kharagpur
139. The International Day of Yoga will be celebrated on:  
(a) 16<sup>th</sup> June (b) 19<sup>th</sup> June (c) 17<sup>th</sup> June (d) 21<sup>st</sup> June
140. Recently, World Blood Donor Day was celebrated on:  
(a) 7<sup>th</sup> June (b) 9<sup>th</sup> June (c) 12<sup>th</sup> June (d) 14<sup>th</sup> June
141. Which of the following states has recently become the first state in the country to receive ISO certification for hostels meant for tribal students?  
(a) West Bengal (b) Jharkhand (c) Odisha (d) Madhya Pradesh
142. Recently, UTI Asset Management Board appointed \_\_\_\_\_ as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the UTI Asset Management Committee (AMC) after two years as the interim CEO.  
(a) Imtaiyazur Rahman (b) Samar Rathore  
(c) Mahesh Nandan Sharma (d) Prabhakar Thikore
143. Recently, with an aim of empowering women and supporting the victims of domestic violence and abuse, the Hyderabad City Police in association with Hyderabad City Security Council (HCSC) launched a programme \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) STREE (b) SAMMAN (c) NARI GAURAV (d) MAHILA GAURAV
144. Which of the following states is set to pump in around Rs 25,000 crore into its rural economy by the time its all-time high wheat procurement draws to a close?  
(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Bihar (d) Rajasthan
145. Which of the following banks relaunched its Aadhaar-based instant digital savings account facility for customers who want to open an online account using the Yono platform?  
(a) Union Bank of India (b) Punjab National Bank  
(c) State Bank of India (d) Canara Bank
146. The United Nations and International Labour Organization (ILO) observe \_\_\_\_\_ every year as the world day against child labour, to highlight how a large section of young population is forced into menial jobs.  
(a) 10<sup>th</sup> June (b) 12<sup>th</sup> June (c) 13<sup>th</sup> June (d) 15<sup>th</sup> June
147. Recently, Scientists have described \_\_\_\_\_ distinct phases of COVID-19 disease progression in patients, urging medical professionals to consider an individualised treatment approach for patients based on their symptoms corresponding to these stages of infection.  
(a) Two (b) Three (c) Five (d) Seven

148. Name the IIT which became the first academic institute to get a nod from the Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR) for its COVID-19 test kit.  
(a) IIT Madras (b) IIT Delhi (c) IIT Bombay (d) IIT Kanpur
149. 'Lockdown Liaisons: Book 2' is an eBook authored by:  
(a) Madhurima Tuli (b) Arundhati Roy (c) Nidhi Razdan (d) Shobhaa De
150. Recently, In Mizoram, Green Mizoram Day was celebrated throughout the state on:  
(a) 5<sup>th</sup> June (b) 7<sup>th</sup> June (c) 9<sup>th</sup> June (d) 11<sup>th</sup> June
151. India, along with \_\_\_\_\_ other countries, has led an initiative here aimed at spreading fact-based content to counter misinformation on the coronavirus, with over 130 nations endorsing the global call to fight the "infodemic" relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.  
(a) 6 (b) 8 (c) 12 (d) 16
152. Recently, Union Minister of State for Home affairs G. Kishan Reddy launched \_\_\_\_\_ a device developed by Atal Incubation Centre & Association of Lady Entrepreneurs of India-Women Entrepreneurs HUB.  
(a) 'GermiBAN' (b) 'GermiGAS' (c) 'GermiHUB' (d) 'GermiGYAN'
153. Who among the following launched the Indian Gas Exchange (IGX), first nationwide online delivery-based gas trading platform, in an e-ceremony?  
(a) Shri Narendra Modi (b) Shri Narendra Singh Tomar  
(c) Shri Nitin Gadkari (d) Shri Dharmendra Pradhan
154. Which of the following countries Prime Minister has resigned amid a scandal over whether the government illegally sold radio frequencies?  
(a) Kyrgyzstan (b) Turkmenistan (c) Turkey (d) Kazakhstan
155. Which of the following came up with a modified oversight framework for financial market infrastructure and retail payment systems with a view to ensure safety and stability of payment structure?  
(a) Ministry of Finance (b) Ministry of Corporate Affairs  
(c) Reserve Bank of India (d) State Bank of India
156. Which of the following banks announced the launch of a facility, that enables its Salary Account customers to get approval for overdraft (OD) instantaneously and in a paperless manner Called, 'Insta Flexicash'?  
(a) HDFC Bank (b) Axis Bank (c) ICICI Bank (d) RBL Bank
157. The RBI has proposed an upper age limit of \_\_\_\_\_ for CEOs and whole-time directors of banks and a maximum term of 10 years for those belonging to the promoter group, as part of the exercise to improve governance in the banking sector.  
(a) 60 years (b) 62 years (c) 65 years (d) 70 years
158. The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and the ABC Television Network said that the \_\_\_\_\_ Academy Awards will now be held April 25, 2021, eight weeks later than originally planned because of the pandemic's effects on the movie industry.  
(a) 87<sup>th</sup> (b) 89<sup>th</sup> (c) 91<sup>st</sup> (d) 93<sup>rd</sup>
159. Recently, Martyapura Re Jamaraj ('Yamaraj on earth'), a short film produced by a group from the Ankushpur village of \_\_\_\_\_ district has won a special jury award at the COVID-19 International Film Festival 2020.  
(a) Odisha's Bhubaneswar  
(b) Odisha's Ganjam  
(c) Odisha's Nabrangpur  
(d) Odisha's Puri



160. The World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) happens each year on:  
(a) 7<sup>th</sup> June (b) 12<sup>th</sup> June (c) 14<sup>th</sup> June (d) 16<sup>th</sup> June
161. Which of the following states has become the top state in the country to provide employment to the workers under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme MGNREGA?  
(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Maharashtra (d) Bihar
162. The Global Wind Day occurs annually on \_\_\_\_\_ and is a day for discovering wind, its power and the possibilities it holds to reshape our energy systems.  
(a) 11<sup>th</sup> June (b) 13<sup>th</sup> June (c) 15<sup>th</sup> June (d) 17<sup>th</sup> June
163. According to UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) report, India is the world's \_\_\_\_\_ largest recipient of Foreign Direct Investments (FDI).  
(a) Second (b) Sixth (c) Ninth (d) Twelfth
164. India continues to remain ranked \_\_\_\_\_ on an annual World Competitiveness Index compiled by Institute for Management Development (IMD).  
(a) 21<sup>st</sup> (b) 29<sup>th</sup> (c) 36<sup>th</sup> (d) 43<sup>rd</sup>
165. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), India has \_\_\_\_\_ nuclear warheads.  
(a) 80 (b) 110 (c) 150 (d) 180
166. Who was recently elected as the President of the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), the representative body of 1.9 lakh UK companies employing nearly 7 million people?  
(a) Deepak Raheja (b) Mukesh Makhija (c) Mithun Padmakar (d) Karan Bilimoria
167. Which of the following payments banks announced the 'Suraksha Salary' account, MSMEs and other organisations will be able to make cashless payments and also provide financial security blanket to their employees?  
(a) Airtel Payments Bank (b) Paytm Payments Bank  
(c) Indian Post Payments Bank (d) Fino Payments Bank
168. Which of the following states has set up a special commission for the employment generation and safeguarding the interests of workers?  
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Maharashtra (c) Madhya Pradesh (d) Karnataka
169. Recently, fish species named Schizothorax sikusirumensis has been discovered in:  
(a) Karnataka (b) Madhya Pradesh  
(c) Arunachal Pradesh (d) Meghalaya
170. Name the former Supreme Court judge who will continue as BCCI's ethics officer and ombudsman after getting a one-year extension from the cricket Board?  
(a) Amit Sadh (b) D.K Jain  
(c) M.S. Sudhamurthy (d) Mahesh Chandra Deshmukh
171. In a first, Indian Railways' Central Railway zone has installed a newly innovated ATMA – Automated Ticket Checking & Managing Access machine at the:  
(a) Nagpur railway station (b) Nellore railway station  
(c) Vijaywada railway station (d) Gorakhpur railway station
172. Recently, Indian Council of Medical Research, the body leading the COVID-19 response in the country, has validated the first \_\_\_\_\_ based testing kit in India that will allow infected patients to be diagnosed much faster.  
(a) antigen (b) antibody (c) antibiotics (d) antipathogen

173. Which of the following countries was the sole candidate for a non-permanent seat from the Asia-Pacific category for the 2021-22 term?  
(a) Bangladesh (b) India (c) Pakistan (d) Sri Lanka
174. Recently, A SEBI panel suggested measures to strengthen markets watchdog's enforcement mechanism and improve the system of recovery of siphoned off money. The committee is headed by \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Prabhakar Chhaterjee (b) Anil Dave (c) Mahesh Jain (d) Mukesh Meena
175. Recently, Two Indian firms - ZestMoney and Stellapps - figure in a new list of Tech Pioneers released by the \_\_\_\_\_ which described these 100 entities as future headline-makers addressing global issues with cutting-edge technology.  
(a) World Bank (b) International Monetary Fund  
(c) World Economic Forum (d) New Development Bank
176. Recently, WhatsApp has launched its 'WhatsApp Pay' in \_\_\_\_\_ two years after it began testing the payments service in India.  
(a) Brazil (b) Mexico (c) Belgium (d) Netherlands
177. Name the country whose authorities declared a natural disaster in the country's northernmost province after tens of millions of bees died from a suspected case of pesticide poisoning.  
(a) Finland (b) Ireland (c) Iceland (d) Croatia
178. Recently, NASA's next \_\_\_\_\_ rover is honoring all the medical workers on the front lines of the coronavirus battle around the world.  
(a) Venus (b) Mars (c) Jupiter (d) Neptune
179. The Asian Paralympic Committee (APC) announced that the fourth Asian Youth Para Games will take place in:  
(a) Bahrain (b) Kuwait (c) Seoul (d) Dubai
180. The Desertification and Drought Day, a United Nations observance day is held on \_\_\_\_\_ each year.  
(a) 11<sup>th</sup> June (b) 14<sup>th</sup> June (c) 16<sup>th</sup> June (d) 17<sup>th</sup> June
181. The Sports Ministry is all set to establish \_\_\_\_\_ State Centres of Excellence under the Khelo India Scheme.  
(a) Come On India (b) Bharat India (c) Khelo India (d) Play India
182. Which state's finance minister Buggana Rajendranath Reddy presented the budget for 2020-21 in the state assembly with an outlay of Rs 2.24 lakh crore and a revenue deficit of Rs 18,434 crore?  
(a) Telangana (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Karnataka (d) Tamil Nadu
183. Name the Union territory which has been conferred with three prestigious Deen Dayal Upadhyay Sashaktikaran Puraskar awards for its outstanding contribution to the socio-economic development of the Gram Panchayats across the Union Territory.  
(a) Lakshadweep (b) Jammu & Kashmir (c) Ladakh (d) Andaman & Nicobar Islands
184. India sent a 75-member Tri-Service contingent to participate in the military parade in \_\_\_\_\_ on the occasion of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the victory in the Second World War.  
(a) Moscow (b) Berlin (c) New York (d) Zurich
185. Name the company which has joined the Climate Pledge, a commitment co-founded by Internet giant Amazon and environment firm Global Optimism to meet the Paris Agreement 10 years early.  
(a) Wipro (b) Infosys (c) TCS (d) HCL

186. Recently, Beijing-based Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has approved a \_\_\_\_\_million loan to India to help strengthen its response to the adverse impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on millions of poor and vulnerable households.  
(a) \$300 (b) \$500 (c) \$750 (d) \$900
187. Recently, Engineers from Peter the Great St. Petersburg Polytechnic University (SPbPU) in \_\_\_\_\_are developing a self-drifting boat powered by solar panels.  
(a) Germany (b) Russia (c) France (d) USA
188. India's first solar-powered ferry is  
(a) Surya (b) Aditya (c) Markandeya (d) Bhanu
189. According to the report, India's average temperature has risen by around \_\_\_\_\_during 1901–2018 and projects that the frequency of summer (April–June) heat waves over India.  
(a) 0.2 °C (b) 0.3°C (c) 0.5°C (d) 0.7°C
190. The International Day of Family Remittances (IDFR) is a universally-recognized observance adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and celebrated every year on:  
(a) 7<sup>th</sup> June (b) 11<sup>th</sup> June (c) 14<sup>th</sup> June (d) 16<sup>th</sup> June
191. Which of the following countries has been elected as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, will serve as the president of the powerful 15-nation UN body for the month of August, 2021?  
(a) New Zealand (b) Cyprus (c) India (d) South Korea
192. The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) has constituted a project development cell to attract investment in the clean energy sector, particularly \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Wind (b) Water (c) Solar (d) Air
193. Recently, Who inaugurated India's first I-Lab (Infectious disease diagnostic lab) for Covid testing in rural and inaccessible areas of India?  
(a) Shri Narendra Modi (b) Shri Amit Shah (c) Shri Rajnath Singh (d) Dr Harsh Vardhan
194. Jio Platforms, owned by Reliance Industries announced that \_\_\_\_\_based Public Investment Fund (PIF) will invest Rs 11,367 crore for 2.32 per cent stake in the company.  
(a) Kuwait (b) Saudi Arabia (c) United Kingdom (d) Australia
195. According to Asian Development Outlook (ADO), Hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Indian economy is expected to contract by \_\_\_\_\_during the current financial year.  
(a) 1% (b) 3% (c) 4% (d) 10%
196. According to BP Statistical Review released, India was \_\_\_\_\_biggest growth driver of primary energy consumption in the world.  
(a) Second (b) Third (c) Fifth (d) Seventh
197. Recently, Researchers at \_\_\_\_\_have developed a herbal infusion technology as a sustainable means of income for local marginal farmers in the mid-Himalayan region.  
(a) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Mandi  
(b) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Hyderabad  
(c) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur  
(d) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur
198. Recently, Astronomers discover \_\_\_\_\_youngest-known magnetar that is 240-yrs-old.  
(a) 'X-ray baby' (b) 'Cosmic baby' (c) 'Neuron baby' (d) 'Neutron baby'

199. Recently, the 19<sup>th</sup> Great June Uprising Day was observed in \_\_\_\_\_  
(a) Goa (b) Kerala (c) Manipur (d) Uttar Pradesh
200. In June, World Sickle Cell Awareness Day was celebrated on:  
(a) 3<sup>rd</sup> June (b) 7<sup>th</sup> June (c) 14<sup>th</sup> June (d) 19<sup>th</sup> June
201. Who took charge as Chairman of the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP) from June 22?  
(a) Raghuram Rajan (b) Urjit Patel (c) Bimal Jalan (d) C Rangarajan
202. Which of the following ministries recently announced the launch of a portal “SATYABHAMA”?  
(a) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (b) Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises  
(c) Ministry of Mines (d) Ministry of New and Renewable Energy
203. Recently, A virtual event took place on \_\_\_\_\_ to mark the sixth annual International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict.  
(a) 19 June 2020 (b) 16 June 2020 (c) 13 June 2020 (d) 21 June 2020
204. According to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, who is the only Asian tycoon in the exclusive club of the world's top 10 richest people?  
(a) Li Maa (b) Jack Ma (c) Mukesh Ambani (d) Laxmi Niwas Mittal
205. According to the Guinness World Records, the world's first 3D-printed commercial building was unveiled in:  
(a) Greece (b) Italy (c) Dubai (d) Germany
206. Recently, Fitch Ratings revised India's outlook to \_\_\_\_\_ from 'stable', stating that the coronavirus pandemic has significantly weakened the country's growth prospects for the year and exposed the challenges associated with a high public-debt burden.  
(a) Positive (b) Negative (c) Most negative (d) Outstanding
207. Recently, Niti Aayog has formed a panel including top officials of tech companies like Google, Microsoft and Tech Mahindra to develop a job platform for migrant labours. Who will be the head of this panel?  
(a) Amitabh Kant (b) Ramesh Chand (c) Sidhushree Khullar (d) Mahesh Kumar Jain
208. Recently, Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry signs MoU to engage \_\_\_\_\_ as implementation agency for PM SVANidhi.  
(a) NABARD (b) RBI (c) SIDBI (d) Ministry of Finance
209. The first Indian to join world elite in Chessable Masters is  
(a) Anoop Saini (b) Deepak Chudasma (c) Veeresh Rawat (d) P. Harikrishna
210. World Refugee Day is observed every year on \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) 2<sup>nd</sup> June (b) 11<sup>th</sup> June (c) 17<sup>th</sup> June (d) 20<sup>th</sup> June
211. The International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), with its headquarters in West Bengal organized the world's first digital Rath Yatra that was covered \_\_\_\_\_ continents during the Covid-19 pandemic on June 23.  
(a) Three (b) Four (c) Five (d) Six
212. Recently, the solar eclipse took place on the summer solstice, which is the longest day in the \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Northern Hemisphere (b) Southern Hemisphere  
(c) Pacific Ocean (d) Mariana Trench
213. Which of the following countries builds 'world's first gold-plated hotel'?  
(a) Vietnam (b) Laos (c) Cambodia (d) Thailand



214. Which of the following countries debt to GDP ratio has become more than 100% for the first time since the financial year ending 1963?  
(a) Britain (b) France (c) Japan (d) Canada
215. According to the Global Status Report on Preventing Violence Against Children 2020, Half of the world's children \_\_\_\_\_ are affected by physical, sexual or psychological violence.  
(a) one billion every year (b) two billion every year  
(c) five billion every year (d) nine billion every year
216. An extreme \_\_\_\_\_ star or EHe is a low-mass supergiant that is almost devoid of hydrogen, the most common chemical element of the universe.  
(a) Hydrogen (b) Helium (c) Boron (d) Neon
217. Recently, A two-story building on the campus of Technical University in \_\_\_\_\_ is the world's first building made from carbon fiber reinforced concrete.  
(a) Paris, France (b) Dresden, Germany (c) Mumbai, India (d) Seoul, South Korea
218. Who has become the first celebrity to support boycott of Chinese products?  
(a) Yuvraj Singh (b) Harbhajan Singh (c) Sonu Nigam (d) Anupam Kher
219. World Music Day or Fête de la Musique is being celebrated every year on:  
(a) 11<sup>th</sup> June (b) 14<sup>th</sup> June (c) 16<sup>th</sup> June (d) 21<sup>st</sup> June
220. Name the famous Indian author who recently has announced the launch of his new book, Legend of Suheldev: The King Who Saved India?  
(a) Arundhati Roy (b) Aravind Adiga (c) Amish Tripathi (d) Vandana Makkar
221. Who is the only Indian to feature in Town & Country magazine's top global philanthropists of 2020 list?  
(a) Nita Ambani (b) Shobana Bharatiya  
(c) Kiran Mazumdar Shah (d) Anu Aga
222. Who among the following launched the Food Processing Edition of the Exclusive Investment Forum?  
(a) Shri Ram Vilas Paswan (b) Shri Narendra Singh Tomar  
(c) Shri Prakash Javadekar (d) Smt Harsimrat Kaur Badal
223. The first Indian firm to hit a market valuation of \$150 billion helped by a continuous rally in its share price is  
(a) HDFC Bank (b) Indian Oil (c) Reliance Industries (d) NALCO
224. Which of the following banks has partnered with fintech startup Affordplan to launch a co-branded health card to address healthcare needs?  
(a) Axis Bank (b) Yes Bank (c) RBL Bank (d) HDFC Bank
225. Who has been awarded the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade for the work around issues of global justice?  
(a) Kailash Satyarthi (b) Malala Yousafzai (c) Amartya Sen (d) Mohammad Yunus
226. World Hydrography Day is celebrated every year on:  
(a) 21<sup>st</sup> May (b) 11<sup>th</sup> June (c) 18<sup>th</sup> June (d) 21<sup>st</sup> June
227. Who among the following inaugurated one of India's largest and first Virtual Healthcare and Hygiene EXPO 2020?  
(a) Shri Narendra Modi  
(b) Shri Mansukh Mandaviya  
(c) Shri Amit Shah  
(d) Shri Prahlad Patel

228. Which of the following IIT's has developed a homegrown receiver chip - Dhruva – that can be used in smartphones and navigation devices to find locations and routes within the country?  
(a) IIT-Delhi (b) IIT-Madras (c) IIT-Bombay (d) IIT-Kanpur
229. Recently, Drug firm Glenmark Pharmaceuticals, under the brand name FabiFlu, has launched an antiviral drug \_\_\_\_\_ to cure patients with mild to moderate coronavirus.  
(a) Favipiravir (b) Favicovid (c) Favi 19 (d) Favico 20
230. Name the DU student who is to be first wheelchair-bound Indian to study at Oxford.  
(a) Akriti Singh (b) Mahima Bhutani (c) Meenakshi Talreja (d) Pratistha Deveshwar
231. Which is the first management school in India to come up with 'Endowment Fund' setting a benchmark and inspiring other institutes?  
(a) Indian Institute of Management- IIM Ahmedabad  
(b) Indian Institute of Management- IIM Bangalore  
(c) Indian Institute of Management- IIM Calcutta  
(d) Indian Institute of Management- IIM Lucknow
232. In a first-of-its-kind initiative by a metro rail system in northern India \_\_\_\_\_ has decided to have a "She-Man" station that will have special facilities and employment for the transgender community.  
(a) Noida-Greater Noida Metro (b) Lucknow Metro  
(c) Chandigarh Metro (d) Delhi Metro
233. Recently, India's first COVID-19 care ashram has been set up in:  
(a) Dehradun (b) Guwahati (c) Mumbai (d) New Delhi
234. Recently, Union Minister of HRD, Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank', launched an initiative \_\_\_\_\_ to help systematically assimilate technologies having commercial potential and information related to incubated startups in our higher education institutions.  
(a) 'YUKTI 1.0' (b) 'YUKTI 2.0' (c) 'MUKTI 4.0' (d) 'GYAN 2.0'
235. Which of the following banks has launched a new product KBL Micro Mitra, wherein financial assistance up to Rs.10 lakhs can be provided to the Micro manufacturing and service enterprises either for working capital or for investment purposes?  
(a) Karnataka Bank (b) RBL Bank (c) Axis Bank (d) IDFC Bank
236. Recently, Central government has re-nominated \_\_\_\_\_ as a part-time non-official director on the Reserve Bank of India's central board, for a further period of two years.  
(a) Natarajan Chandrasekaran (b) Sunadaram Pillai  
(c) Swaminathan N.C (d) Mayoor Maheshwari
237. In collaboration with International Transport Forum, which of the following launched the 'Decarbonising Transport in India' project with the intention to develop a pathway towards a low-carbon transport system for India?  
(a) Ministry of Road and Surface Transport (b) NITI Aayog  
(c) Reserve Bank of India (d) Ministry of Railways
238. Recently, the world's first yoga university outside India has been launched in:  
(a) Los Angeles (b) Las Vegas (c) Paris (d) Chicago
239. Which of the following countries recently successfully launched the last satellite of its BeiDou Navigation Satellite System (BDS)?  
(a) South Korea (b) Japan (c) North Korea (d) China
240. United Nations Public Service Day is observed globally on:  
(a) 22<sup>nd</sup> June (b) 21<sup>st</sup> June (c) 23<sup>rd</sup> June (d) 24<sup>th</sup> June

241. Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Minister \_\_\_\_\_ launched the Credit Guarantee Scheme for Sub-ordinate Debt, CGSSD.  
(a) Nitin Gadkari (b) Narendra Singh Tomar  
(c) Smriti Irani (d) Mahendra Nath Pandey
242. Recently, which of the following state governments announced the Vithabai Narayangaokar lifetime achievement award to folk artist Gulabbai Sangamnerkar?  
(a) Gujarat (b) Maharashtra (c) Rajasthan (d) Uttar Pradesh
243. According to the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI), India has retained its position as the \_\_\_\_\_ largest economy in the world in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP).  
(a) Second (b) Third (c) Fourth (d) Fifth
244. Recently, Union Cabinet approved a scheme for interest subvention of \_\_\_\_\_ for a period of 12 months, to all Shishu loan accounts under Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) to eligible borrowers.  
(a) 1 per cent (b) 2 per cent (c) 4 per cent (d) 5 per cent
245. Recently, Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan released the annual TB Report 2020 through a virtual event. According to the report, over \_\_\_\_\_ TB patients have been notified in 2019.  
(a) 14 lakh (b) 20 lakh (c) 24 lakh (d) 29 lakh
246. Recently, IBMC Financial Professionals Group, an internationally recognized financial services institution and business consultants, has joined hands with US Gold Currency Inc and Blockfills to bring the world's first monetary gold-backed digital gold currency to \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Japan (b) China (c) Russia (d) India
247. Which of the following countries parliament has approved the nominations of the country's Vice President and Prime Minister made by the newly elected President Evariste Ndayishimiye?  
(a) Fiji (b) Panama (c) Burundi (d) Angola
248. Recently, International Chamber of Commerce, the institutional representative of 45 million companies, has elected MasterCard CEO \_\_\_\_\_ as Chair.  
(a) Mukesh Jain (b) Vrijpal Mathur (c) Ajay Banga (d) Anoop Kapoor
249. The Justice Rohini Commission- set up in October 2017 to recommend sub categorization of the \_\_\_\_\_ and ensure that marginalized sub castes get due benefits- is set to get its ninth extension.  
(a) Other Backward Classes (OBCs) (b) Schedule Castes (SCs)  
(c) Schedule Tribes (STs) (d) General Category
250. The UK Atomic Energy Authority's \_\_\_\_\_ is among five Indian-origin engineers to be named among the UK's Top 50 Women in Engineering for 2020.  
(a) Anju Jain (b) Chitra Srinivasan  
(c) Bhumika Hitakshri (d) Poornima Mahajan
251. Name the two-time Commonwealth Games gold-winning weightlifter who will finally get the coveted Arjuna award which has been on hold since 2018?  
(a) Sanjita Chanu (b) Meerabhai Chanu (c) Gracie Nagpal (d) Amruta Sanyal
252. Who is set to become the first female President of Marylebone Cricket Club in its 233-year history?  
(a) Sarah Taylor (b) Belinda Clarke (c) Diana Eduljee (d) Clare Connor
253. The first use of the technology in the world of renewable energy happened in:  
(a) South Africa (b) Australia (c) New Zealand (d) USA

254. Recently, the world's first yoga varsity outside India was named as:  
(a) Patanjali Yoga University (b) Gopal Krishna Gokhale Yoga University  
(c) Vivekananda Yoga University (d) Swami Ramdev Yoga University
255. Recently, Pakistan has started the construction process of a Rs 10 crore Hindu temple – the first in Islamabad. The temple is named as:  
(a) Ram Temple (b) Krishna Temple (c) Durga Temple (d) Shiva Temple
256. In a setback for Pakistan, the global terror financing watchdog Financial Action Task Force (FATF) has decided to keep Pakistan in the \_\_\_\_\_ for terror financing.  
(a) Purple List (b) Grey List (c) Black List (d) Red List
257. Recently, Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan launched the \_\_\_\_\_ mobile App developed by the Indian Red Cross Society.  
(a) 'eBloodServices' (b) 'eBloodSewa' (c) 'eKhoonServices' (d) 'eRaktServices'
258. Which of the following Indian states has recently launched a new project — 'Ektu Khelo, Ektu Padho' — from June 25, for students up to class VIII?  
(a) Assam (b) West Bengal (c) Tripura (d) Odisha
259. Which of the following countries has emerged as the winner with its world's fastest supercomputer?  
(a) China (b) Japan (c) South Korea (d) Canada
260. Name the Nobel Prize-winning author who will come out with his new novel Klara and the Sun next March.  
(a) Kazuo Ishiguro (b) Olga Tokarczuk (c) Peter Handke (d) Bob Dylan
261. Which of the following Asian countries has become a founding member of an Alliance for Poverty Eradication at the UN, launched by the President of the General Assembly, aimed at focussing on efforts to boost global economy in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic?  
(a) China (b) Japan (c) Bangladesh (d) India
262. Which of the following states has launched a scheme – Mukhyamantri Matru Pushti Uphaar – under which it would provide nutrition kits, containing ghee, jaggery among other items, to pregnant and lactating women?  
(a) Assam (b) Meghalaya (c) Tripura (d) Manipur
263. The \_\_\_\_\_ connecting Nagpur and Mumbai will include 10 overpasses, a first in the country, among other wildlife mitigation structures taken up by the project.  
(a) Pragati Mahamarg (b) Unnati Mahamarg  
(c) Samruddhi Mahamarg (d) Utthaan Mahamarg
264. Which of the following states has recently launched YSR Kapu Nestham scheme intended to provide financial assistance of Rs 15,000 per annum each to members of the Kapu community?  
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Telangana (c) Odisha (d) Madhya Pradesh
265. Recently, the annual Day of the Seafarer (DotS) celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary on:  
(a) 17<sup>th</sup> June (b) 19<sup>th</sup> June (c) 23<sup>rd</sup> June (d) 25<sup>th</sup> June
266. Anti-Submarine Warfare capability of the Indian Navy received a major boost with the induction of Advanced Torpedo Decoy System \_\_\_\_\_ capable of being fired from all frontline warships.  
(a) Jamwant (b) Maareech (c) Angad (d) Hanuman
267. For the first time in India, an Aviation Weather Monitoring System has been installed at the \_\_\_\_\_ at both ends of the runway.  
(a) Lucknow airport (b) Bangalore airport (c) Indore airport (d) Hyderabad airport



268. Which of the following Indian union ministries had conducted a webinar on 'Vedic Food and Spices of India' under Dekho Apna Desh webinar series?  
(a) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare  
(b) Tourism Ministry  
(c) Ministry of Science and Technology  
(d) Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
269. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the unique and path-breaking initiative scheme of Atma Nirbhar \_\_\_\_\_ Rojgar Yojana through video conferencing.  
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Gujarat (d) Bihar
270. According to a poll conducted on social media by Wisden India, who is the greatest Indian Test batsman?  
(a) Sachin Tendulkar (b) Rahul Dravid (c) Sunil Gavaskar (d) VVS Lakshman
271. Recently, Keeping in mind the safety of senior citizens amid rising cases of the coronavirus, the age limit for voters to opt for postal ballot in Lok Sabha and assembly elections has been reduced. Which will be the first state to benefit from the amended rules?  
(a) West Bengal (b) Bihar (c) Assam (d) Sikkim
272. Which of the following states recently has become first state to amend Industries (Facilitation) Act for Small, Medium & Large-Scale Industries?  
(a) Tamil Nadu (b) Kerala (c) Karnataka (d) Maharashtra
273. Recently, The Road Transport and Highways Ministry has said that Citizens with mild to medium \_\_\_\_\_ can also obtain the Driving License.  
(a) Colour blindness (b) Night blindness (c) Tuberculosis (d) Cataract
274. In a bid to attract fresh industrial investments which of the following states announced a new plan called 'Maha Parwana', which will offer several incentives and offer a single-window clearance system for project execution?  
(a) Gujarat (b) Maharashtra (c) Rajasthan (d) Uttar Pradesh
275. As per the latest data from Switzerland's central bank, India has moved down three places to rank in terms of money parked by its citizens and enterprises with Swiss banks at the end of 2019.  
(a) 34<sup>th</sup> (b) 43<sup>rd</sup> (c) 52<sup>nd</sup> (d) 77<sup>th</sup>
276. Which of the following banks launched its digital wallet solution 'Yuva Pay' in partnership with UDMA Technologies to enable contactless payments for its customers?  
(a) HDFC Bank (b) ICICI bank (c) Yes Bank (d) RBL Bank
277. Which of the following will be first IIT to go completely online next semester in view of the COVID-19 pandemic so that there is no compromise on the safety and well-being of students?  
(a) Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi (b) Indian Institute of Technology-Kanpur  
(c) Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay (d) Indian Institute of Technology-Madras
278. Which two countries were handed the right to host the 2023 Women's World Cup football tournament?  
(a) India and Pakistan (b) Australia and New Zealand  
(c) West Indies and USA (d) Bangladesh and Myanmar
279. Who will be honoured with the Humanitarian Award at the 20<sup>th</sup> edition of the 'BET Awards'?  
(a) Beyonce (b) Ricky Martin (c) Britney Spears (d) Little Richard
280. In 1987, the United Nations General Assembly decided to observe \_\_\_\_\_ as the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.  
(a) 23<sup>rd</sup> June (b) 24<sup>th</sup> June (c) 26<sup>th</sup> June (d) 28<sup>th</sup> June

**ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION**

1. c World No Tobacco Day (WNTD) is observed around the world every year on 31 May.
2. b Gujarat is the first state to complete the migration of workers to their home state through Shramik Special trains.
3. c A 1500 crore interest subvention for small business and cottage industries has been announced under Mudra Shishu loan.
4. b The platform, collaboration with Foundation for Ecological Security (FES), Anand as its main nodal point, is called CoAST India (Collaboration/Covid Action Support Group).
5. a The 26<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 26) to the UNFCCC, which was scheduled to meet in November this year in UK's Glasgow, will now take place from November 1-20, 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
6. a India's Wipro Ltd named Thierry Delaporte as the new chief executive officer and managing director of the IT company, replacing Abidali Neemuchwala.
7. d The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet approved the appointment of Arun Singhal as chief executive officer of India's apex food regulator Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).
8. c The ministry of finance appointed PR Jaishankar as the managing director of the India Infrastructure Finance Company Ltd (IIFCL) for three years.
9. b The Headquarters of the ICAR-CMFRI is located in Kochi, Kerala. Initially the institute focused its research efforts on creating a strong database on marine fisheries sector by developing scientific methodologies for estimating the marine fish landings and effort inputs, taxonomy of marine organisms and the biological aspects of the exploited stocks of finfish and shellfish on which fisheries management were to be based.
10. b In a major breakthrough in the ongoing process of employment generation for migrant workers in Uttar Pradesh, stage is now set for employment of 10 lakh workers.
11. c Switzerland has launched the world's first app that utilised the Exposure Notification API developed by Apple and Google. The app will be rolled out to a wider audience once the Swiss MPs debate and approve the app. The Swiss government hopes to achieve this by mid-June.
12. d Russia is modernising its military at an extremely fast pace and has now started constructing its first strategic stealth bomber, capable of delivering nuclear weapons, under the Perspective Aviation Complex for Long-Range Aviation (PAK DA) programme.
13. c Vivek Lall, a prominent Indian-American aerospace and defence expert who played key roles in some of the major defence deals between India and the US, has been appointed as the Chief Executive of General Atomics Global Corporation at its headquarters in San Diego, California.
14. b Indian Railways' first isolation coach has been deployed to aid the treatment of coronavirus patients in Delhi.
15. b "Artificial Intelligence Portal has been jointly developed by the Ministry of Electronics and IT Industry.
16. a Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the technology platform CHAMPIONS, a one-stop-shop solution of the MSME Ministry that would attempt to make smaller entrepreneurship evolve and grow by solving their grievances.
17. d It focuses on the transformative impact of yoga on the lives of individuals and it comes as one of the activities related to the observation of the sixth International Day of Yoga (IDY) coming up on June 21.
18. a Moody's Investors Service downgraded India's sovereign rating to 'Baa3' from 'Baa2', and its short-term local-currency rating to P-3 from P-2.
19. d Scientists have identified 29 new genetic variants linked to problem drinking, tripling the number of known genetic risks associated with alcohol disorders.

- 20. a** World Milk Day is an international day established by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations.
- 21. a** Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal launched a mobile application to help people know how many beds are lying vacant in which hospital in the national capital.
- 22. b** Nitin Gadkari announces development of new Greenfield expressway to Amritsar.
- 23. b** Ircon International Ltd has inked pact with NIIFL and Ayana Renewable Power for exploring opportunities in solar energy sector.
- 24. c** India is now world's 5<sup>th</sup> largest hydropower producer.
- 25. d** According to the global innovation mapping and research company StartupBlink, which gathers local data of every country to rank their startup ecosystem based on the quality of startups, business environment coupled with the quantity, India has moved down from 17<sup>th</sup> position in 2019 to 23<sup>rd</sup> this year out of 100 countries.
- 26. a** Citing concerns regarding African swine fever (ASF), China has announced that it will put a ban on imports of pigs, wild boar and related products from India.
- 27. b** The Science and Engineering Research Board has approved support for research at IIT (BHU) Varanasi to identify lead compound(s) from available and approved drugs for fast-track anti-SARS-CoV-2 drug molecule.
- 28. a** National Geographic channel in collaboration with Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation has come together to make a film titled 'Swachh Bharat: India's Sanitary Revolution'.
- 29. d** Global Parents Day is celebrated on June 1 every year to honour all the parents around the world for their selfless commitment and lifelong sacrifice they do for their children.
- 30. b** Gaitri I. Kumar has been appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to the United Kingdom. She is an IFS officer of 1986 batch.
- 31. a**
- 32. c** Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao inaugurated a pump house in Siddipet district which will lift Godavari water to a reservoir which is at a height of 618 meters from the source—Godavari river.
- 33. a** Union Government has launched a new initiative SWADES- Skilled Workers Arrival Database for Employment Support to conduct a skill mapping exercise of the returning citizens under the Vande Bharat Mission.
- 34. a** The Union Cabinet approved the renaming of Kolkata Port as Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port, after the founder of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh.
- 35. b** Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered a state of emergency and criticised a subsidiary of metals giant Norilsk Nickel after a massive diesel spill into a Siberian river.
- 36. a** The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) announced new office-bearers for the year 2020-21. Uday Kotak was elected as CII President and Sanjiv Bajaj assumed office as the Vice-President.
- 37. c** Astronomers have detected an object near Jupiter's orbit which appears to be a cross between an asteroid and a comet.
- 38. b** South Africa has partnered with NASA to host a deep-space ground station, which will support human spaceflight missions to the Moon, Mars and beyond.
- 39. d** On the occasion of World No Tobacco Day on May 31, the WHO selects organisations and individuals from its six regions every year for their exceptional contribution in the field of tobacco control.
- 40. d** Winners of this year were recently announced and Indian writer Kritika Pandey has won the coveted honour of the regional award for Asia in 2020 for The Great Indian Tee and Snakes. It talks about love in an age of hatred and prejudice.

- 41. b** Human Resources Development Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri launched a joint initiative, TULIP aimed at providing internships to the engineering students in the country.
- 42. c** The IndusInd Bank launched a mobile application based facility where customer can open current bank account in just few hours.
- 43. b** Kerala Govt has declared that their ambitious broadband project: Kerala Fibre Optic Network (K-FON) project will roll out from December.
- 44. b** Rajeev Topno, the 1996 batch IAS officer who has served as a key aide to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has been appointed as senior advisor to the World Bank Executive Director.
- 45. c** Uttarakhand will carry out an elephant census after a gap of five years and drones will be used for the first time in the exercise.
- 46. a** Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar said, with the amendment to Essential Commodities Act, commodities like cereals, pulses, oilseeds, edible oils, onion and potatoes have been removed from list of essential commodities.
- 47. a** First ever India-Australia Virtual Summit held between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Australian counterpart Scott Morrison.
- 48. b** A large number of shark teeth have been found at a new fossil site in Rajasthan's Barmer district, the study of which has provided valuable insight about the environmental changes in the region from warm, humid, coastal conditions to the present-day dry and desert-like climatic condition.
- 49. b** Mission Indradhanush, which aims to ensure full vaccination of the country's children and pregnant women, including those in the remote parts of the vast nation.
- 50. c** World Environment Day is celebrated on 5 June every year, and is the United Nations' principal vehicle for encouraging awareness and action for the protection of our environment.
- 51. c** Actor Akshay Kumar is the only Indian to feature on Forbes 2020 list of World's 100 Highest-Paid Celebrities, and in an interesting coincidence, his rank is the same as his age, 52.
- 52. b** Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs Hardeep Singh Puri has launched three advisories on the occasion of World Environment Day.
- 53. b** Power Minister R K Singh initiated the '#iCommit' campaign on the occasion of World Environment Day.
- 54. b** The iconic Taj brand of Tata Group's Indian Hotels Company Ltd. (IHCL) has been ranked No. 1 in the list of the strongest Indian brands by Brand Finance in its 'India 100 2020' report.
- 55. b** The most dominant coronavirus clade in India is the A2a and of 361 genomes analysed by the group.
- 56. a** During the virtual celebration of World Environment Day 2020, themed as 'Nature and Biodiversity', Mr. Javadekar launched the Nagar Van or Urban Forests with 200 corporations and cities across India while urging people to actively participate and increase the tree cover in their areas.
- 57. c** In Football, India has bagged the right to host the Women's Asian Cup 2022. The Asian Football Confederation awarded the hosting rights of the tournament to India after the AFC Women's Football Committee meeting.
- 58. c** Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, Executive Chairperson of Biocon Limited, was named EY 'World Entrepreneur Of The Year 2020' in a virtual award ceremony.
- 59. b** Sports Ministry's flagship programme Fit India is joining hands with the Department of School Education and Literacy, to launch a series of special films promoting 10 indigenous sports of India under the Ek Bharat, Shrestha Bharat initiative.
- 60. a** The host for this year is Colombia in partnership with Germany. Due to the ongoing pandemic, over 100 countries will virtually commemorate this day. It will include events, seminars and discussions on various topics.



- 61. b** World Environment Day 2020 focuses on Biodiversity and was hosted in Colombia in partnership with Germany.
- 62. b** In Madhya Pradesh, a plantation drive named “Thank Mom” has been started on the premises of Social Justice and Disabled Welfare Directorate on World Environment Day.
- 63. a** Ayush Ministry has launched the My Life, My Yoga international video-blogging competition.
- 64. d** Tech Mahindra a provider of digital transformation, consulting and business reengineering services signed a joint declaration with UN Global Compact urging governments to align their COVID-19 recovery efforts with the latest climate science.
- 65. d** Uttar Pradesh has introduced a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) Monitoring Mechanism in a move that aims at better implementation of investment proposals through handholding interested investors and better tracking of the MoUs signed.
- 66. d** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is creating a Payments Infrastructure Development Fund to push digital payments across the country.
- 67. a** The World Economic Forum (WEF) will adopt a new twin-summit format for its next annual Davos meeting in January 2021, by bringing together leaders from across the globe for in-person as well as virtual dialogues with a theme of ‘The Great Reset’.
- 68. c** India skipper Virat Kohli emerged as the only cricketer in the world’s top-10 list of highest-earning athletes through sponsored Instagram posts during the lockdown, according to a report.
- 69. d** World environment day is celebrated on June 5 every year. Focusing on pressing environmental issues, this day has been celebrated since 1974. This year, the theme is ‘Biodiversity.’
- 70. c** Fuji Rock Festival, Japan’s biggest annual music event, will be cancelled for the first time ever due to the coronavirus pandemic, organisers said.
- 71. b** Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy launched the online waste exchange website of Andhra Pradesh Environment Management Corporation (APEMC) on the occasion of World Environment Day.
- 72. b** Launching COVID BEEP, India’s first indigenous, cost effective, wireless physiological parameters monitoring system for COVID-19 patients, Dr Singh said COVID BEEP is to emerge as an antidote to the original COVID.
- 73. d** Government has constituted a task force to examine issues related to age of motherhood, lowering Maternal Mortality Rate and improvement of nutritional levels. The task force will be headed by Jaya Jaitly and it will submit its report by 31<sup>st</sup> July of next month.
- 74. c** The Group of 20 rich and emerging economies has pledged more than \$21 billion to fight the coronavirus.
- 75. b** Former US Vice President Joe Biden, has formally become the Democratic presidential nominee to run for the White House against President Donald Trump in the elections in November this year.
- 76. b** GMR-led Hyderabad International Airport received the highest Platinum Recognition in the Airports Council International (ACI) Asia-Pacific Green Airports Recognition 2020 in the 15-35 million passengers per annum (MPPA) category.
- 77. b** India’s oil-to-telecoms giant Reliance Industries closed a \$7 billion rights issue, India’s largest ever, luring buyers in with a rare deferred payment offer.
- 78. a** In Tamil Nadu, a thirteen-year old Madurai girl Nethra has been appointed the Goodwill Ambassador of the United Nations Association for Development and Peace, the UNADAP.
- 79. a** Researchers at IIT Mandi claim to have developed a technology for making high efficiency masks using waste pet bottles that are not only more breathable than commercially available masks but also can be washed and reused up to 30 times.
- 80. d** The World Food Safety Day is celebrated every year on June 7 to draw global attention to the health consequences of contaminated food and water. Hence, to mark the importance of food safety, the World Food Safety Day is celebrated every year.

- 81. d** Almost two decades after the then speaker of the assembly ruled that the patriotic song Bande Utkala Janani should be adopted as the state anthem, the Odisha cabinet accorded the status to it.
- 82. c** The Karnataka government launched “Meghasandesha” App that would provide real-time information as well as forecast on rains, flooding and thunderstorm alerts in Bengaluru.
- 83. a** Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has mandated a strip of green colour of one centimetre width on top of the existing sticker carrying details of registration for BS-VI vehicles of any fuel type.
- 84. a** With an aim to boost economic growth of Manipur through agriculture and horticulture, Chief Minister N. Biren Singh inaugurated a Plant Health Clinic
- 85. c** Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot recently launched the Raj Kaushal Portal and Online Shramik Employment Exchange through video conferencing.
- 86. d** India’s overall low ranking — 177 among 180 countries — was linked to poor performance in the environment health policy and deaths due to air pollution categories.
- 87. c** International Advanced Research Centre for Powder Metallurgy and New Materials (ARCI) established in the year 1997, is an Autonomous Research and Development Centre of Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India with main campus at Hyderabad spread about 95 acres of land and with operations in Chennai and Gurgaon.
- 88. b** Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan launched Street Vendor Registration Portal and “Mukhyamantri Shahri Path Vyavsayi Utthan Yojana” and transferred Rs 300 crore to urban local bodies.
- 89. d** World Brain Tumour Day is observed annually on June 8.
- 90. b** Veteran writer-lyricist Javed Akhtar said he is honoured to be named this year’s recipient of the Richard Dawkins Award as he has been a huge fan of the world-renowned English evolutionary biologist in whose name the recognition is bestowed.
- 91. b** Gairsain in Chamoli district was declared as the summer capital of Uttarakhand.
- 92. d** India’s financial capital Mumbai has emerged as the most expensive city in the country for expatriates in terms of cost of living.
- 93. c** The Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, is India’s highest ranked university among top 200 global universities, with Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru, and IIT Delhi also figuring in the 200-bracket, according to the QS World University Rankings.
- 94. a** The Senate unanimously confirmed Gen. Charles Brown Jr. as chief of staff of the U.S. Air Force, making him the first black officer to lead one of the nation’s military services.
- 95. a** Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL) has won the first of its kind manufacturing-linked solar agreement from the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI).
- 96. b** State-owned BHEL announced commissioning of 270 megawatt (MW) thermal power plant in Telangana. Located at Manuguru in Kothagudem district of the state, the project was awarded to BHEL by Telangana State Power Generation Corporation Limited (TSGENCO)
- 97. b** The gizmo, aptly called ‘Coro-bot’ independently dispenses food, water, beverages, medicines - and even some good advice - to Corona patients without the needs for nurses, ward staff or other care-givers.
- 98. a** Max Planck Institute for Solar System Research (MPS) in Göttingen is reporting that a project it led has found just that; an Earth-like, probably rocky planet called KOI-456.04 that orbits a star called Kepler-160.
- 99. c** Defence Institute of Advanced Technology, a Deemed University, Pune has developed a Nano-technology based disinfectant spray to combat COVID-19 by disinfecting all types of surfaces. It has been named “ANANYA”. This can be used by anyone, from a common man to a healthcare worker, for individual as well as large scale use.

- 100. d** June 8 is celebrated as World Oceans Day across the world to remind the people about the importance of the role played by oceans in the lives of human beings.
- 101. d** The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has reconstituted a committee to look into the welfare of freedom fighters, with the minister of state for home affairs G Kishan Reddy as the chairman and nine “eminent freedom fighters” from across the country as its members.
- 102. a** In the five new regulations, recommended by the Anil Kumble-chaired Cricket Committee, and ratified by the Chief Executives Committee (CEC), the teams will also be allowed an additional DRS call as home umpires will now be officiating in bilateral Test series.
- 103. a** Recykal, a digital technology company in the waste management space, has partnered with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Hindustan Coca-Cola Beverages (HCCB) for Project Prithvi, a joint initiative for developing sustainable plastic waste management practices in the country.
- 104. c** Flipkart-owned digital payments platform PhonePe, along with ICICI Lombard announced the launching of a comprehensive, industry-first domestic multi-trip insurance cover, which will be exclusively available for PhonePe users.
- 105. c** The Central government has allocated Rs 4,000 crore as annual allotment to states for the current financial year under “Per Drop More Crop” component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY-PDMC).
- 106. c** Empays Payment Systems India Pvt Ltd, which built and runs the IMT Payment System, announced a partnership with Mastercard to enable contact-free ATM cash withdrawals in India.
- 107. b** Indian Railways has given best-ever safety performance during the past year with zero passenger fatalities due to railway accidents since April, 2019.
- 108. a** S&P retained India’s sovereign rating at “BBB-” with a stable outlook, saying that while risks to growth are rising, the economy and fiscal position will stabilise and begin to recover from 2021 onwards.
- 109. b** In Uttar Pradesh, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has directed to commission TruNAT machines in all 75 districts by 15<sup>th</sup> of this month.
- 110. d** 9 June marks World Accreditation Day as a global initiative, jointly established by the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC), to raise awareness of the importance of accreditation.
- 111. b** Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy launched a welfare scheme benefiting tailors, Rajakas (dhobis) and Nayee Brahmins (barbers), who had lost their livelihood due to COVID-19 pandemic. Titled ‘Jagananna Chedodu’, the scheme provides a one-time financial assistance of Rs.10, 000 each to the 2.47 lakh beneficiaries under 60 years of age.
- 112. d** The Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle (DSRV) Complex was inaugurated at Visakhapatnam by Vice Admiral Atul Kumar Jain.
- 113. a** India and Pakistan are likely to hold their first of six bilateral meetings on the desert locust incursion issue on June 18 under an existing institutional mechanism.
- 114. a** Union Minister for Human Resource Development Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank virtually released India Rankings-2020 for Higher Educational Institutions in New Delhi. IIT, Madras retains first position in Overall Ranking as well as in Engineering.
- 115. b** Indian Railways has created a new world benchmark by successfully running first Double-Stack Container Train in high-rise in Over Head Equipment electrified territory on Western Railway.
- 116. a** The BSE has introduced a first-of-its-kind India standard gold and silver delivery, under the ‘futures and options’ (F&O) bullion contracts. This move could potentially elevate India’s status as a ‘price-setter’ for the metals.
- 117. a** ePaiza, a point of sale (POS) solution provider in India, has entered into a partnership with First Alliance Bank (Z) Ltd in Zambia, Africa, to provide mobile point of sale (mPOS) solution to small and medium enterprises and other businesses in the country.

- 118. b** Days after being hit by cyclone Nisarga, Maharashtra has renamed its Environment Ministry as Environment and Climate Change Ministry. The department is handled by Shiv Sena MLA Aaditya Thackeray.
- 119. d** World Day Against Child Labour is celebrated on 12<sup>th</sup> June.
- 120. c** Azim Premji-promoted Wipro Ltd opened the country's first hospital dedicated for covid-19 treatment in Pune's Hinjewadi area in Maharashtra.
- 121. d** The three-member committee comprising SCL Das, DG of Directorate General of Hydrocarbons, BC Bora, former chairman ONGC and TK Sengupta, former Director, ONGC will identify the lapses in following protocols and procedures which led to the accident.
- 122. c** As one of the biggest reform, the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) under Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has gone 'Fully Digital', with the launch of unique cloud based and Artificial Intelligence powered Big Data Analytics platform – Data Lake and Project Management Software.
- 123. c** Launching the scheme, Shri Tomar said that the unique cooperative sector development finance organization, National Cooperative Development Corporation, NCDC has embarked upon a series of initiatives in the cooperative sector entrepreneurship development ecosystem through capacity development, paid internship to youth and assured project loans on liberalized terms to young cooperators on start-up mode.
- 124. c** Shobha Sekhar, founder of Kalakruthi, music organisation in Australia is a happy person. The Montreal-based artiste and lecturer, University of Melbourne, figures in the Queen's Birthday 2020 Honours List and will be conferred the Medal of the Order of Australia later this year.
- 125. c** On Raja Praba, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has greeted the people Of Odisha hoping that the festival strengthens the spirit of brotherhood in society.
- 126. a** Researchers at IIT Mandi claim to have developed a technology for making high efficiency masks using waste pet bottles that are not only more breathable than commercially available masks but also can be washed and reused up to 30 times.
- 127. c** Eminent Indian-American soil scientist Rattan Lal has been named this year's recipient of the World Food Prize for developing and mainstreaming a soil-centric approach to increasing food production that conserves natural resources and mitigates climate change.
- 128. a** India's foreign exchange reserves have surged by a massive 8.22 billion dollars to cross the half-a-trillion mark for the first time.
- 129. b** An ancient temple that remained submerged in Mahanadi in Odisha has been found, said experts who are leading a documentation project of heritage sites in the river valley. The 60-feet temple, believed to be around 500 years old, was located recently during an exercise as part of the project.
- 130. a** As per reports, the dialogue established that the revival and re-establishment of Nalanda University in Bihar as a seat of learning was a big step in the direction towards channelising youthful energy.
- 131. b** Central Railway added another feather in its cap to its many innovations during this lockdown. Railway Protection Force, Pune has launched a Robotic 'CAPTAIN ARJUN' (Always be Responsible and Just Use to be Nice) to intensify the screening and surveillance.
- 132. c** Chief minister of Himachal Pradesh Jai Ram Thakur launched 'Panchvati Yojna' under which parks and gardens would be developed for senior citizens of rural areas in the state.
- 133. a** AarogyaPath, a web based solution for the healthcare supply chain was launched to serve manufacturers, suppliers and customers to effectively deal with the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 134. a** India's first infectious disease diagnostic lab is now ready. This rapid response mobile labrotary is part of government.
- 135. c** India-China LAC guarding force Indo-Tibetan Border Police has decided to launch the first-ever 'couples fitness course' for its officers and embarked on a mega project to create fitness-oriented infrastructure across its countrywide campuses.



- 136. d** Anmol Narang has made history by becoming the first observant Sikh to graduate from the prestigious United States Military Academy at West Point, and the Second Lieutenant is hopeful that her efforts to represent her religion and community will encourage Americans to learn more about Sikhism.
- 137. a** RBI informed that RBI Central Board Director P K Mohanty will head the committee, which will submit its report by 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2020.
- 138. c** A study by IIT Madras researchers of 36 strains of gut bacteria commonly found in the gut reveals their metabolism and could bring added rigour into the development of probiotics.
- 139. d** International Day of Yoga will be celebrated on 21<sup>st</sup> of June.
- 140. d** On 14<sup>th</sup> June 2020 is World Blood Donor Day.
- 141. c** Odisha has become the first state in the country to receive ISO certification for hostels meant for tribal students.
- 142. a** UTI Asset Management Board appointed Imtaiyazur Rahman as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the UTI Asset Management Committee (AMC) after two years as the interim CEO.
- 143. a** With an aim of empowering women and supporting the victims of domestic violence and abuse, the Hyderabad City Police in association with Hyderabad City Security Council (HCSC) launched a programme STREE (She Triumph's through Respect, Equality and Empowerment).
- 144. a** Madhya Pradesh is set to pump in around Rs 25,000 crore into its rural economy by the time its all-time high wheat procurement draws to a close. This has made the state the country's largest wheat purchaser in 2020-21.
- 145. c** The State Bank of India (SBI) relaunched its Aadhaar-based instant digital savings account facility for customers who want to open an online account using the Yono platform.
- 146. b** The United Nations and International Labour Organization (ILO) observe 12 June every year as the world day against child labour, to highlight how a large section of young population is forced into menial jobs.
- 147. b** Scientists have described three distinct phases of COVID-19 disease progression in patients, urging medical professionals to consider an individualised treatment approach for patients based on their symptoms corresponding to these stages of infection.
- 148. b** The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi, which became the first academic institute to get a nod from the Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR) for its COVID-19 test kit, has given non-exclusive open licence to Bengaluru-based biotechnology firm Genie Laboratories for commercialising the test, but with a price rider of Rs 500 per kit.
- 149. d** Lockdown Liaisons: Book 2 eBook by Shobhaa De.
- 150. d** In Mizoram, Green Mizoram Day was celebrated throughout the state on 11 June with distribution and planting trees and taking pledge to work for green environment and maintaining ecological balance.
- 151. c** India, along with 12 other countries, has led an initiative here aimed at spreading fact-based content to counter misinformation on the coronavirus, with over 130 nations endorsing the global call to fight the "infodemic" relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 152. a** Union Minister of State for Home affairs G. Kishan Reddy launched 'GermiBAN', a device developed by Atal Incubation Centre & Association of Lady Entrepreneurs of India-Women Entrepreneurs HUB.
- 153. d** Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas & Steel Shri Dharmendra Pradhan launched the Indian Gas Exchange (IGX), first nationwide online delivery-based gas trading platform, in an e-ceremony.
- 154. a** The Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan has resigned amid a scandal over whether the government illegally sold radio frequencies.
- 155. c** The Reserve Bank came up with a modified oversight framework for financial market infrastructure and retail payment systems with a view to ensure safety and stability of payment structure.

- 156. c** ICICI Bank announced the launch of a facility, that enables its Salary Account customers to get approval for overdraft (OD) instantaneously and in a paperless manner. Called, 'Insta Flexicash', the end-to-end fully digital facility can be availed using the Bank's internet banking platform.
- 157. d** The RBI has proposed an upper age limit of 70 years for CEOs and whole-time directors of banks and a maximum term of 10 years for those belonging to the promoter group, as part of the exercise to improve governance in the banking sector.
- 158. d** The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and the ABC Television Network said that the 93<sup>rd</sup> Academy Awards will now be held April 25, 2021, eight weeks later than originally planned because of the pandemic's effects on the movie industry.
- 159. b** Martyapura Re Jamaraj ('Yamaraj on earth'), a short film produced by a group from the Ankushpur village of Odisha's Ganjam district has won a special jury award at the COVID-19 International Film Festival 2020.
- 160. d** The World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) happens each year on June 15<sup>th</sup>.
- 161. b** Uttar Pradesh has become the top state in the country to provide employment to the workers under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme MGNREGA.
- 162. c** Global Wind Day occurs annually on 15 June and is a day for discovering wind, its power and the possibilities it holds to reshape our energy systems.
- 163. c** India received 51 billion US dollar in foreign investment in 2019. UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in its report said, it was the world's ninth largest recipient of Foreign Direct Investments (FDI).
- 164. d** India continues to remain ranked 43<sup>rd</sup> on an annual World Competitiveness Index compiled by Institute for Management Development (IMD)
- 165. c** India has 150 nuclear warheads, while China and Pakistan have 320 and 160. The figures are until January.
- 166. d** Karan Bilimoria, member of the House of Lords and a leading Indian-origin entrepreneur, was elected president of the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), the representative body of 1.9 lakh UK companies employing nearly 7 million people.
- 167. a** Airtel Payments Bank announced a salary account for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME). Through the 'Suraksha Salary' account, MSMEs and other organisations will be able to make cashless payments and also provide financial security blanket to their employees. The benefits under the account include Hospicash Insurance and Personal Accidental insurance cover, given the low penetration of insurance in India.
- 168. a** In Uttar Pradesh, a special commission has been set up for the employment generation and safeguarding the interests of workers.
- 169. c** A new species of fish has been discovered in Arunachal Pradesh.
- 170. b** Former Supreme Court judge D K Jain will continue as BCCI's ethics officer and ombudsman after getting a one-year extension from the cricket Board.
- 171. a** In a first, Indian Railways' Central Railway zone has installed a newly innovated ATMA – Automated Ticket Checking & Managing Access machine at the Nagpur railway station.
- 172. a** Indian Council of Medical Research, the body leading the COVID-19 response in the country, has validated the first antigen based testing kit in India that will allow infected patients to be diagnosed much faster, at lower rates and without laboratory examinations of the samples.
- 173. b**
- 174. b** The committee headed by former Supreme Court Judge Anil Dave has proposed method of quantification of profit made by the defaulter and loss caused to investors.
- 175. c** Two Indian firms - ZestMoney and Stellapps - figure in a new list of Tech Pioneers released by the World Economic Forum (WEF) which described these 100 entities as future headline-makers addressing global issues with cutting-edge technology.

- 176. a** WhatsApp has launched its ‘WhatsApp Pay’ in Brazil, two years after it began testing the payments service in India.
- 177. d** Croatian authorities declared a natural disaster in the country’s northernmost province after tens of millions of bees died from a suspected case of pesticide poisoning.
- 178. b** NASA’s next Mars rover is honoring all the medical workers on the front lines of the coronavirus battle around the world.
- 179. a** The Asian Paralympic Committee (APC) announced that the fourth Asian Youth Para Games will take place in Bahrain from December 1-10, 2021.
- 180. d** Desertification and Drought Day, a United Nations observance day held on 17 June each year, will in 2020 focus on changing public attitudes to the leading driver of desertification and land degradation: humanity’s relentless production and consumption.
- 181. c**
- 182. b** Andhra Pradesh finance minister Buggana Rajendranath Reddy presented the budget for 2020-21 in the state assembly with an outlay of Rs 2.24 lakh crore and a revenue deficit of Rs 18,434 crore.
- 183. b** Jammu & Kashmir has been conferred with three prestigious Deen Dayal Upadhyay Sashaktikaran Puraskar awards for its outstanding contribution to the socio-economic development of the Gram Panchayats across the Union Territory.
- 184. a** India sent a 75-member Tri-Service contingent to participate in the military parade in Moscow on the occasion of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the victory in the Second World War.
- 185. b** Infosys has joined the Climate Pledge, a commitment co-founded by Internet giant Amazon and environment firm Global Optimism to meet the Paris Agreement 10 years early.
- 186. c** Beijing-based Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has approved a \$750-million loan to India to help strengthen its response to the adverse impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on millions of poor and vulnerable households.
- 187. b** Engineers from Peter the Great St. Petersburg Polytechnic University (SPbPU) in Russia are developing a self-drifting boat powered by solar panels.
- 188. b** India’s first solar-powered ferry, Aditya, which became an icon on the Vaikom-Thavanakadavu route in Kerala, is among 12 such ferries that have been shortlisted for the Gustave Trouvé Award.
- 189. d** According to the report, India’s average temperature has risen by around 0.7°C during 1901–2018 and projects that the frequency of summer (April–June) heat waves over India
- 190. d** The International Day of Family Remittances (IDFR) is a universally-recognized observance adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and celebrated every year on 16 June.
- 191. c** India, which has been elected as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, will serve as the president of the powerful 15-nation UN body for the month of August, 2021.
- 192. c** The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) has constituted a project development cell to attract investment in the clean energy sector, particularly solar.
- 193. d** The Minister for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences and Health & Family Welfare Dr Harsh Vardhan inaugurated and flagged off India’s first I-Lab (Infectious disease diagnostic lab) for Covid testing in rural and inaccessible areas of India.
- 194. b** Jio Platforms, owned by Reliance Industries announced that Saudi Arabia-based Public Investment Fund (PIF) will invest Rs 11,367 crore for 2.32 per cent stake in the company.
- 195. c** Hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Indian economy is expected to contract by 4% during the current financial year, the ADB said in a supplement to its Asian Development Outlook (ADO).

- 196. a** India was second biggest growth driver of primary energy consumption in the world, behind China, in 2019 even though it witnessed fall in demand in oil and coal, according to BP Statistical Review released.
- 197. a** Researchers at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Mandi have developed a herbal infusion technology as a sustainable means of income for local marginal farmers in the mid-Himalayan region.
- 198. b** Astronomers discover ‘cosmic baby’, youngest-known magnetar that is 240-yrs-old.
- 199. c** The 19<sup>th</sup> Great June Uprising Day was observed in Imphal and other places.
- 200. d** June 19<sup>th</sup> was officially designated as World Sickle Cell Awareness Day.
- 201. b** Former Reserve Bank governor Urjit Patel will take charge as chairman of the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP) from June 22, the economic think tank.
- 202. c** The mines ministry announced the launch of a portal “SATYABHAMA” with an aim to promote research and development in the mining and minerals sector.
- 203. a** A virtual event took place on 19 June 2020 to mark the sixth annual International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict
- 204. c** The net worth of Mukesh Ambani, chairman of Reliance Industries Ltd., has jumped to \$64.5 billion, making him the only Asian tycoon in the exclusive club of the world’s top 10 richest people, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index.
- 205. c** The world’s first 3D-printed commercial building, according to the Guinness World Records, was unveiled recently. The 2,600 sq ft building now houses the office of the Dubai Future Academy. It is 20 ft high, 120 ft long, and 40 ft wide.
- 206. b** Fitch Ratings revised India’s outlook to ‘negative’ from ‘stable’, stating that the coronavirus pandemic has significantly weakened the country’s growth prospects for the year and exposed the challenges associated with a high public-debt burden.
- 207. a** “*Niti Aayog* under the leadership of its CEO, Amitabh Kant *has formed* a high-powered committee to drive public and private partnership in order to engage and *develop technologies* that *can* solve this looming crisis and provide better *job* opportunities to the *migrant* workers,”.
- 208. c** Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry signs MoU to engage SIDBI as implementation agency for PM SVANidhi.
- 209. d** The presence of Grandmaster P. Harikrishna is sure to see a major spike in Indian interest in the million-dollar Magnus Carlsen Chess Tour that continues with the \$150,000 Chessable Masters.
- 210. d** World Refugee Day, international observance observed June 20 each year, is dedicated to raising awareness of the situation of refugees throughout the world.
- 211. d** The International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), with its headquarters in West Bengal, organized the world’s first digital Rath Yatra that was covered six continents during the Covid-19 pandemic on June 23.
- 212. a** The solar eclipse took place on the summer solstice, which is the longest day in the Northern Hemisphere.
- 213. a** Located in Hanoi, the hotel is covered with 5,000 square meters of gilded ceramic – from the sinks to the rooftop pool.
- 214. a** Britain’s budget deficit swelled further in May, taking debt as a percentage of GDP above 100% for the first time since the financial year ending 1963.
- 215. a** Half of the world’s children — one billion every year — are affected by physical, sexual or psychological violence
- 216. b** An extreme helium star or EHe is a low-mass supergiant that is almost devoid of hydrogen, the most common chemical element of the universe.
- 217. b** A two-story building on the campus of Technical University in Dresden, Germany is the world’s first building made from carbon fiber reinforced concrete.



- 218. b** Supporting the call of boycotting goods from China, veteran Indian off-spinner Harbhajan Singh has decided not to endorse any Chinese brand in the wake of the ongoing tension between the two countries.
- 219. d** June 21 is celebrated as World Music Day or Fête de la Musique as an annual celebration that was founded by Jack Lang and Maurice Fleuret in 1981.
- 220. c** There has been a flurry of book announcements of late, and the latest one is by Amish. The author of The Immortals of Meluha has announced the launch of his new book, Legend of Suheldev: The King Who Saved India. Published by Westland Publications Pvt Ltd, his latest fiction is set in 11<sup>th</sup>-century, India.
- 221. a** Reliance Foundation Chairperson Nita Ambani became the only Indian to feature in Town & Country magazine's top global philanthropists of 2020 list.
- 222. d** Minister of Food Processing Industries Harsimrat Kaur Badal said that new opportunities are opening up in Food processing sector.
- 223. c** Reliance Industries became the first Indian firm to hit a market valuation of \$150 billion helped by a continuous rally in its share price.
- 224. b** Yes Bank has partnered with fintech startup Affordplan to launch a co-branded health card to address healthcare needs.
- 225. c** Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen has been awarded the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade for his decades-long work around issues of global justice.
- 226. d** Celebrated every year on 21 June, it highlights the importance of hydrography and why it is still relevant.
- 227. b** Union State Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers Mansukh Mandaviya inaugurated one of India's largest and first Virtual Healthcare and Hygiene EXPO 2020.
- 228. c** IIT-Bombay has developed a homegrown receiver chip - Dhruva – that can be used in smartphones and navigation devices to find locations and routes within the country.
- 229. a** Drug firm Glenmark Pharmaceuticals, under the brand name FabiFlu, has launched an antiviral drug Favipiravir, to cure patients with mild to moderate coronavirus at a price tag of about Rs 103 per tablet.
- 230. d** Hoshiarpur-based Pratistha Deveshwar can be spotted on a wheelchair on Delhi roads with shopping bags hanging on either sides.
- 231. a** Indian Institute of Management- IIM Ahmedabad has launched the 'IIM Ahmedabad Endowment Fund'.
- 232. a** In a first-of-its-kind initiative by a metro rail system in northern India, the Noida-Greater Noida Metro has decided to convert the Sector 50 station into a "She-Man" station that will have special facilities and employment for the transgender community.
- 233. c** India's first COVID-19 care ashram has been set up in Mumbai by the Mumbai Port Trust
- 234. b** Union Minister of Human Resource Development, Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank', launched an initiative 'YUKTI 2.0' to help systematically assimilate technologies having commercial potential and information related to incubated startups in our higher education institutions.
- 235. a** Karnataka Bank has launched a new product KBL Micro Mitra, wherein financial assistance up to Rs.10 lakhs can be provided to the Micro manufacturing and service enterprises either for working capital or for investment purposes.
- 236. a** The Central government has re-nominated Natarajan Chandrasekaran as a part-time non-official director on the Reserve Bank of India's central board, for a further period of two years beyond March 3, 2020, or until further orders, whichever is earlier.
- 237. b** NITI Aayog in collaboration with International Transport Forum launched the 'Decarbonising Transport in India' project with the intention to develop a pathway towards a low-carbon transport system for India.

- 238. a** The world's first yoga university outside India has been launched in Los Angeles, offering programmes that combine scientific principles and modern research approaches to the ancient Indian practice of yoga.
- 239. d** China successfully launched the last satellite of its BeiDou Navigation Satellite System (BDS), touted to be a competitor to the Global Positioning System (GPS) of the US, taking another step to becoming a major space power.
- 240. c** United Nations Public Service Day is observed globally on 23<sup>rd</sup> June every year.
- 241. a** Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, MSME, Minister Nitin Gadkari launched the Credit Guarantee Scheme for Sub-ordinate Debt, CGSSD.
- 242. b** The Maharashtra government announced the Vithabai Narayangaokar lifetime achievement award to folk artist Gulabbai Sangamnerkar.
- 243. b** India has retained its position as the third-largest economy in the world in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP), behind the US and China, the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI) said.
- 244. b** Union Cabinet approved a scheme for interest subvention of 2 per cent for a period of 12 months, to all Shishu loan accounts under Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) to eligible borrowers.
- 245. c** Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan released the annual TB Report 2020 through a virtual event. According to the report, over 24 lakh TB patients have been notified in 2019.
- 246. d** IBMC Financial Professionals Group, an internationally recognized financial services institution and business consultants, has joined hands with US Gold Currency Inc and Blockfills to bring the world's first monetary gold-backed digital gold currency to India.
- 247. c** The Burundian parliament has approved the nominations of the country's vice president and prime minister made by the newly elected President Evariste Ndayishimiye.
- 248. c** ICC, the institutional representative of 45 million companies, has elected MasterCard CEO Ajay Banga as Chair.
- 249. a** The Justice Rohini Commission- set up in October 2017 to recommend sub categorization of the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and ensure that marginalized sub castes get due benefits- is set to get its ninth extension.
- 250. b** The UK Atomic Energy Authority's Chitra Srinivasan is among five Indian-origin engineers to be named among the UK's Top 50 Women in Engineering for 2020.
- 251. a** Cleared of the dope taint, two-time Commonwealth Games gold-winning weightlifter Sanjita Chanu will finally get the coveted Arjuna award which has been on hold since 2018.
- 252. d** Former England women's captain Clare Connor is to become the first female president of Marylebone Cricket Club in its 233-year history.
- 253. b** The first use of the technology in the world of renewable energy happened in Australia.
- 254. c** The Vivekananda Yoga University (VaYU) was jointly launched by Minister of State for External Affairs V. Muraleedharan and Chairperson of the Standing Committee on External Affairs P P Chaudhary during a virtual event held at the Consulate General of India in New York.
- 255. b** Pakistan has started the construction process of a Rs 10 crore Hindu temple – the first in Islamabad. The Krishna temple will come up in a 20,000 sq ft plot at the capital's H-9 area.
- 256. b** In a setback for Pakistan, the global terror financing watchdog Financial Action Task Force (FATF) has decided to keep Pakistan in the Grey List' for terror financing.
- 257. a** Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan launched the 'eBloodServices' mobile App developed by the Indian Red Cross Society through a video conference.

- 258. c** The Tripura government, in a bid to engage students in the learning process even as educational institutes across the country continue to remain closed amid the COVID-19 pandemic, is starting an initiative.
- 259. b** While the US and China were fighting to take the lead in supercomputing, Japan seems to have emerged as the winner with its world's fastest supercomputer.
- 260. a** Nobel Prize-winning author Kazuo Ishiguro will come out with his new novel Klara and the Sun next March which asks: what does it mean to love.
- 261. d** India has become a founding member of an Alliance for Poverty Eradication at the UN, launched by the President of the General Assembly, aimed at focussing on efforts to boost global economy in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 262. c** As part of its efforts to fight malnutrition and maternal mortality, the Tripura government has launched a scheme – Mukhyamantri Matru Pushti Uphaar – under which it would provide nutrition kits, containing ghee, jaggery among other items, to pregnant and lactating women.
- 263. c** The Samruddhi Mahamarg (expressway) connecting Nagpur and Mumbai will include 10 overpasses, a first in the country, among other wildlife mitigation structures taken up by the project, as per recommendations by the state Wildlife Board committee set up by the government.
- 264. a** Launching the YSR Kapu Nestham scheme intended to provide financial assistance of Rs 15,000 per annum each to members of the Kapu community, Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy said that about Rs 354 crore was transferred to over 2.36 lakh women aged between 45 and 60 having rice cards and belonging to Kapu, Balija, Telaga and Ontari communities as part of the scheme.
- 265. d** This year, the annual Day of the Seafarer (DotS) will be celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary on 25 June.
- 266. b** Anti-Submarine Warfare capability of the Indian Navy received a major boost with the induction of Advanced Torpedo Decoy System Maareech capable of being fired from all frontline warships.
- 267. b** For the first time in India, an Aviation Weather Monitoring System has been installed at the Bangalore airport at both ends of the runway.
- 268. b** To showcase the benefits about our country's ancient form of health science, Tourism Ministry conducted a webinar on 'Vedic Food and Spices of India' under Dekho Apna Desh webinar series.
- 269. a** Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the unique and path-breaking initiative scheme of Atma Nirbhar Uttar Pradesh Rojgar Yojana through video conferencing
- 270. b** Rahul Dravid is the greatest Indian Test batsman, according to a poll conducted on social media by Wisden India. Dravid beat Tendulkar by a narrow margin of votes in the final round of voting.
- 271. b** After the coronavirus outbreak in India, Bihar will be the first state to have assembly polls. And voters of Bihar will be the first to benefit from the amended rules.
- 272. c** The Karnataka government amended the long pending industrial reform "The Karnataka Industries (Facilitation) Act, 2002" to facilitate and attract investment in the state. Currently, only Gujarat and Rajasthan are the two states in the country that have amended this Act for small scale industries only. In our state the amended act includes small, medium and large scale industries.
- 273. a** The Road Transport and Highways Ministry has said that Citizens with mild to medium colour blindness can also obtain the Driving License.
- 274. b** In a bid to attract fresh industrial investments in Maharashtra, the state government announced a new plan called 'Maha Parwana', which will offer several incentives and offer a single-window clearance system for project execution.
- 275. d** India has moved down three places to 77<sup>th</sup> rank in terms of money parked by its citizens and enterprises with Swiss banks at the end of 2019, while the United Kingdom (UK) has retained its top position, as per the latest data from Switzerland's central bank. India was ranked 74<sup>th</sup> in the previous year.

- 276. c** Yes Bank launched its digital wallet solution ‘Yuva Pay’ in partnership with UDMA Technologies to enable contactless payments for its customers.
- 277. c** Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay will go completely online next semester in view of the COVID-19 pandemic so there is no compromise on the safety and well-being of students.
- 278. b** Australia and New Zealand were handed the right to host the 2023 Women’s World Cup football tournament by a comfortable margin after a vote by the FIFA Council.
- 279. a** Popstar Beyonce will be honoured with the Humanitarian Award at the 20<sup>th</sup> edition of the ‘BET Awards’.
- 280. c** In 1987, the United Nations General Assembly decided to observe 26<sup>th</sup> June as the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking as an expression of its determination to strengthen action and cooperation to achieve the goal of an international society free of drug abuse.



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