

SSC BANKING MANTHAN

Current Affairs Supplement

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Preface

Dear Readers,

The “Current Affairs” section is an integral part of any examination. This edition of Manthan has been developed by our team to help you cover all the important events of the month for the upcoming exams like **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

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POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

National



Defence Ministry formulates draft Defence Production & Export Promotion Policy 2020

- **Defence Ministry has formulated a draft Defence Production and Export Promotion Policy 2020 (DPEPP-2020). The policy aims to provide impetus to self-reliance in defence manufacturing** under the Atmanirbhar Bharat Scheme. The DPEPP-2020 is envisaged as overarching guiding document of Defence Ministry to provide a focused, structured and significant thrust to defence production capabilities of the country for self-reliance and exports.
- Defence Production and Export Promotion Policy 2020 has marked out clear goals and objectives to be undertaken by the Defence Ministry. **First and foremost amongst all is to achieve a turnover of Rs. 1 lakh 75 thousand Crore including an export of Rs. 35 thousand Crore in the Aerospace and Defence goods and services by the year 2025.**
- To develop a dynamic, robust and competitive Defence industry, including Aerospace and Naval Shipbuilding industry to cater to the needs of Armed forces with quality products. **To reduce dependence on imports and take forward “Make in India” initiatives through domestic design and development.**
- To promote export of defence products and become part of the global defence value chains. **To create an environment that encourages R&D, rewards innovation, creates Indian IP ownership and promotes a robust and self-reliant defence industry.**

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

First Kisan Special Parcel Train to start

- Fulfilling its budget announcement, **the railways began the Kisan Rail service to transport perishables at affordable cost. Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Tomar flagged off the First Kisan Rail train from Maharashtra’s Devlali station to Danapur in Bihar.** As per this initiative, the Kisan Rail will run through public-private-partnership mode to provide a seamless supply chain of perishable goods.
- **The train will cover a distance of 1,519 kilometers** in almost 32 hours on a single trip and **will halt at 14 stations**, including Nashik Road, Manmad, Itarsi, Satna, Prayagraj and Buxar.
- **The Kisan Rail will carry fruits and vegetables** and will make stoppages at several stations and pickup and deliver them. The train will halt at Nasik Road, Manmad, Jalgaon, Bhusaval, Burhanpur, Khandwa, Itarsi, Jabalpur, Satna, Katni, Manikpur, Prayagraj Chheoki, Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Nagar and Buxar.

Indian Railways (IR) is the fourth-largest railway network in the world by size. There are a total of 18 Railway zones. South Coast Railway Zone is the newest and 18th railway zone, headquartered at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. Piyush Vedprakash Goyal is currently serving as the Minister of Railways and Commerce in the Government of India. He was elected as the BJP candidate from Maharashtra for the Rajya Sabha on 3 June 2016. The practice of a separate Railway Budget was started by the British in 1924 under the recommendation of a 10-member Acworth Committee headed by British economist William Mitchell Acworth in 1920-21. On 21 September 2016, Government of India approved the merger of the Railway Budget with the Union budget of India, and thus came to end — a 92-year-old practice of separate rail and general budgets.

Central Government to fund 112 start-ups to promote Agri Firms

- **Agriculture Minister, Narendra Singh Tomar** on July 31 announced that the **central government will fund 112 agricultural startups** in the 1st phase with an amount of Rs. 11.85 crores in 2020-2021. **The funds will be given to the start-ups to promote agricultural firms.**
- The startups for the funding will be selected by the different knowledge partners and agribusiness incubators in the area of food technology, agro-processing, and value-addition. **The funds to the agricultural startups will be provided under the Innovation and Agri-entrepreneurship Development Programme** which was launched under the revamped Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY).
- **The startups will lead to employment opportunities for the youth.** Apart from this, they will be, directly and indirectly, contributing to enhancing the income of the farmers by providing opportunities to them.

RKVY scheme was initiated in 2007 as an umbrella scheme for ensuring holistic development of agriculture and allied sectors. It seeks to achieve 4% annual growth in agriculture through development of Agriculture and its allied sectors. **The scheme incentivizes States to increase public investment in Agriculture & allied sectors.** The Cabinet has approved (as on 1st November 2017) for continuation of the ongoing Centrally Sponsored Scheme (State Plans) - **Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY)** as **Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana- Remunerative Approaches for Agriculture and Allied Sector Rejuvenation (RKVY-RAFTAAR)** for three years i.e. 2017-18 to 2019-20 with a financial allocation of Rs. 15,722 crores with broad objectives of making farming a remunerative economic activity through strengthening the farmer's effort, risk mitigation and promoting agri-business entrepreneurship.

In a first in India, traffic lights to feature female pedestrians

- **In a first in the country, 120 traffic signals across 13 junctions between Dadar and Mahim** will feature female pedestrians in traffic lights. **The initiative is taken under the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation's (BMC) 'Culture Spine' project,** which includes footpath improvement and upkeep of gardens, from Siddhivinayak Temple to Mahim.
- **Culture Spine is Shiv Sena Cabinet Minister Aaditya Thackeray's pet project.** The project involves improving and pedestrianising Caddell Road, which has a church, the Siddhivinayak temple, Chaityabhoomi, and the Mahim dargah.

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.

Government launches programme for artisans involved in manufacturing of agarbatti

- The government has **approved a programme for the benefit of artisans involved in manufacturing of agarbatti and to develop village industry under the 'Gramodyog Vikas Yojana'.** Initially four pilot projects will be started as part of the programme, including one in the North East.
- The MSME Ministry said "this decision will help to **boost the indigenous production of agarbatti and will pave way to generate rural employment**". Each targeted cluster of artisans will be supported with about 50

automatic agarbatti making machines and 10 mixing machines. Accordingly, a total of 200 automatic agarbatti making machines and 40 mixing machines will be provided to the artisans.

- **The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), a statutory organisation under the Ministry of Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), will provide training, and assist artisans working in this area, with Agarbatti manufacturing machines.** KVIC will tie up with khadi institutions and agarbatti manufacturers in the country, having good track record, **to provide work and raw material to agarbatti making artisans.**

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.

Northern Railway runs first-ever Vyapar Mala Express train

- **Northern Railway ran first-ever Vyapar Mala Express train. This train destined for Jirania in Tripura has 46 wagons. The train departed from Delhi Kishanganj for Jirania and it will cover a distance of 2673 Kilometres from Punjab to Tripura.**
- **It will help small traders in moving their cargo through Railways, in a short time, cost effective, convenient and environment-friendly mode of transportation.** The movement of the train will be constantly monitored with no delays enroute to ensure its timely arrival at Jirania. **This initiative is first of its kind in Northern Railways.**

Union Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’ launches India Report- Digital Education 2020

- **Union Minister for HRD Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’ virtually launched India Report on Digital Education, 2020.** Shri Pokhriyal said that the report elaborates on the innovative methods adopted by Ministry of HRD, Education Departments of States and Union Territories for ensuring accessible and inclusive education to children at home and reducing learning gaps. School Education is envisaged as a comprehensive and convergent programme **committed to universalize digital education across the wide spectrum of schools from pre-nursery to higher secondary classes.**
- **The quality digital education has acquired a new urgency in the present context of globalization. Ministry of Human Resource Development has initiated many projects to assist teachers, scholars and students in their pursuit of learning like DIKSHA platform, Swayam Prabha TV Channel, Online MOOC courses, On Air – Shiksha Vani, DAISY by NIOS for differently-abled, e-PathShala, National Repository of Open Educational Resources (NROER) to develop e-content and energized books, telecast through TV channels, E-learning portals, webinars, chat groups, distribution of books and other digital initiatives along with State/ UT Governments.**

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

For first time, entire track laying of Dedicated Freight Corridor to be done using NTC machine

- **In a boost to the railways’ efforts to use technology to ease infrastructure work, for the first time in India, the entire track laying of the Dedicated Freight Corridor is being done through the New Track Construction (NTC) machine, the implementing agency of the project Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India Limited (DFCCIL).**

- The Khurja-Dadri Section is the connecting link between the Eastern and Western Dedicated Freight Corridors having the capacity to run heavy haul and long haul freight trains at 100 kmph. Currently, there are seven NTC machines being deployed along the DFC alignment with four in EDFC and three in WDFC.

Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India Limited (DFCCIL) is a **Public Sector Undertaking (PSU)** corporation run by government of India's Ministry of Railways to undertake planning, development, and mobilisation of financial resources and construction, maintenance and operation of the "Dedicated Freight Corridors" (DFC). The DFCCIL was registered as a company under the Companies Act 1956 in 2006. **First 2 DFC, Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (WDFC), from Uttar Pradesh to Mumbai and Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor (EDFC), Ludhiana in Punjab to Dankuni in West Bengal**, which will decongest railway network by moving 70% of India's goods train to these two corridors, are both on track for completion in December 2021.

Union Agriculture Minister launches Sahakar Cooptube NCDC Channel

- Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar launched the Sahakar Cooptube NCDC Channel, a new initiative by National Cooperative Development Corporation. His Ministry is in the forefront of operationalizing different aspects of Atma Nirbhar Bharat call given by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- The Minister also launched guidance videos produced by NCDC on 'Formation and Registration of A Cooperative' for eighteen different states in Hindi and regional languages. The initiatives are steps towards One Nation One Market with the objective for India to become food factory of the world.

Narendra Singh Tomar is the Minister of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare and Minister of Rural Development in the Second Modi ministry. He is a member of the 17th Lok Sabha from Morena, Madhya Pradesh.

President appoints Manoj Sinha as new Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir

- The President Ram Nath Kovind has appointed Manoj Sinha as the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir. The President accepted the resignation of Girish Chandra Murmu as Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir.
- After Satyapal Malik, who was governor of erstwhile J&K state, Sinha is the new political touch to the Valley - both Malik and Sinha are grassroot politicians with the latter an alma mater of IIT-BHU, Varanasi. He lost the last Lok Sabha election to strongman and Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) candidate Afzal Ansari. Manoj Sinha served as the Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Communications and Minister of State for Railways in the Government of India.

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

PM Modi inaugurates Rashtriya Swachhata Kendra in Delhi; Launches Week-long campaign to free India of garbage

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated Rashtriya Swachhata Kendra in New Delhi, Mr Modi said, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan has brought about a permanent change in our social consciousness and behavior. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that Swachh Bharat Abhiyan has boosted the self-confidence and will-power of every countrymen and its impact is visible on the life of the poor.
- Rashtriya Swachhata Kendra, an interactive experience centre on the Swachh Bharat Mission was first announced by the Prime Minister on 10th April 2017, on the occasion of the Centenary Celebrations of Gandhiji's Champaran Satyagraha.
- In the first hall of Rashtriya Swachhata Kendra, visitors will experience a unique 360 degree audio visual immersive show, which will narrate India's Swachhata Story - a journey into the largest behaviour change campaign in the history of the world.

- He said, Rashtriya Swachhata Kendra is a tribute to Mahatma Gandhi's efforts towards cleanliness. Mr Modi said, on this day, in 1942, a huge mass movement for independence started under the leadership of Gandhiji. He said, on such a historic day, the inauguration of National Sanitation Centre near Rajghat is very relevant in itself.

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

Gujarat announces Industrial Policy 2020, targets relocation of firms from China

- Announcing Gujarat Industrial Policy 2020 that aims to provide an estimated Rs 40,000 crore as subsidies to industries in the next five years, the state government said that the new policy will help lease out government land to industrialists, provide incentives to private industrial parks and also provide "relocation incentives" to units looking to relocate in wake of Covid-19 pandemic, especially from China.
- "Gujarat welcomes all those industrial units who are planning to shift from China and other countries due to the pandemic. We will decide on a case-to-case basis. The chief minister said that his government is yet to take a decision of hosting the biannual Vibrant Gujarat summit in January 2021 due to the Covid situation.
- However, the new policy provides for appointment of dedicated "relationship managers" by the Industrial Extension Bureau (iNDEXTb) that hosts the summit. These managers are meant to be the single point of contacts for investors.

Two Odisha villages became first in India to get Tsunami-Ready certificate

- India has become the first country to implement 'Tsunami Ready' in the Indian Ocean Region and Odisha is the first State with two of its villages - Venkatraipur in Ganjam district and Noliasahi in Jagatsingpur district getting the UNESCO-Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC)'s Certificate of Recognition and Certificate of Appreciation awards in a virtual event organised by the Indian National Centre for Oceanic Information Services (INCOIS) and the Indian Ocean Tsunami Information Center (IOTIC).
- The recognition for both the villages adhering to the 11 point indicators to claim to be tsunami ready like: Community tsunami risk reduction plan, designated and mapped tsunami hazard zones, public display of tsunami information, easily understood tsunami evacuation maps, outreach and public education materials, three outreach or educational activities annually, conduct an annual tsunami community exercise, address tsunami hazards in the community's emergency operations plan, supporting the emergency operations centre during a tsunami, reliable means for a 24-hour warning point to receive official tsunami threats and issue round the clock tsunami alerts to the public.

Former J&K Lt Governor Girish Chandra Murmu appointed as new CAG of India

- Former Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, Girish Chandra Murmu was the new Comptroller and Auditor General of the country. Mr Murmu succeeded Rajiv Mehrishi. An IAS officer of Gujarat cadre, Mr Murmu resigned as Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir.
- Murmu, a 1985 batch IAS officer, had abruptly submitted his resignation on 5 August on the day the Union Territory marked the first anniversary of the abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution thereby scrapping Jammu and Kashmir's special status.

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India is an authority, established by Article 148 of the Constitution of India, which audits all receipts and expenditure of the Government of India and the state governments, including those of bodies and authorities substantially financed by the government. The CAG is also the external auditor of Government-owned corporations and conducts supplementary audit of government companies, i.e., any non-banking company in which Union Government has an equity share of at least 51 per cent or subsidiary

companies of existing government companies. The CAG is mentioned in the Constitution of India under Article 148 – 151. The former Lt. Governor of UT of Jammu Kashmir G. C. Murmu is the current CAG of India.

India's first undersea optical fibre cable project for Andaman and Nicobar Islands inaugurated

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the first ever undersea optical fibre project for Andaman and Nicobar Islands which will provide high speed broadband connections in the Union Territory at par with services in the mainland.
- In 2018, the Prime Minister had laid the foundation for the 2,312-Kilometers long submarine optical fibre cable project connecting Chennai - Andaman and Nicobar Islands (CANI). "From Chennai to Port Blair, Port Blair to Little Andaman and Port Blair to Swaraj Dweep, this service has started in large part of Andaman Nicobar. He referred to the construction of the deep draft inner harbor and the **proposal to construct trans-shipment port in Great Nicobar at an estimated cost of about Rs 10,000 crore.**

Andaman and Nicobar Islands, a Union territory of India comprising 572 islands of which 37 are inhabited, are a group of islands at the juncture of the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea. The territory's capital is the city of Port Blair. The Andaman Islands are home to the Sentinelese people, an uncontacted people. Admiral Devendra Kumar Joshi is the Lieutenant Governor of Andaman and Nicobar Islands and the Vice Chairman of Islands Development Agency (IDA).

PM Modi launched financing facility of Rs 1 lakh cr under Agriculture Infrastructure Fund

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the financing facility of 1 lakh crore rupees under the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund through video conferencing. The Agriculture Infrastructure Fund is a medium - long term debt financing facility for investment in viable projects for post-harvest management infrastructure and community farming assets through interest subvention and credit guarantee. The duration of the scheme shall be from FY2020 to FY2029 (10 years).
- Under the scheme, Rs. 1 Lakh Crore will be provided by banks and financial institutions as loans with interest subvention of 3% per annum and credit guarantee coverage under CGTMSE scheme for loans up to Rs. 2 Crore to the beneficiaries to increase the viability of these projects. The beneficiaries will include farmers, PACS, Marketing Cooperative Societies, FPOs, SHGs, Joint Liability Groups (JLG), Multipurpose Cooperative Societies, Agri-entrepreneurs, Startups, and Central/State agency or Local Body sponsored Public-Private Partnership Projects.
- 11 of the 12 Public Sector Banks have already signed MOUs with the Department of Agriculture, Co-operation and Farmers Welfare. The Fund will catalyze the creation of post-harvest management infrastructure and community farming assets such as cold storage, collection centres and processing units.
- These assets will enable farmers to get greater value for their produce, as they will be able to store and sell at higher prices, reduce wastage, and increase processing and value addition. One lakh crore rupees will be sanctioned under the financing facility in partnership with multiple lending institutions. Prime Minister also released the sixth instalment of funds of 17 thousand crore rupees to 8.5 crore farmers under the PM-KISAN scheme. The event will be witnessed by lakhs of farmers, cooperatives, and citizens across the country.

The Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme was launched in December 2018 to provide income support by way of a cash benefit to all landholding farmers (subject to certain exclusion criteria) to enable them to fulfill their agricultural requirements and support their families. Under the scheme, the financial benefit of Rs.6000/- per year is provided to eligible beneficiary farmers in three equal installments.

India to participate in Kavkaz 2020 exercise in Russia

- In a resumption of bilateral and multilateral military exercises which were deferred due to coronavirus (COVID-19), India will take part in the Russian Kavkaz 2020 strategic command-post exercise next month.
- The invitees for the exercise also include China and Pakistan apart from other member-states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). The invitation for the exercise comes amid the ongoing standoff with China along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh for over three months now.

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- A small tri-service contingent will take part in the exercise to be held in Astrakhan in southern Russia, a defence source said. “The Indian contingent includes 150 Army personnel and smaller number of personnel from the Navy and Air Force.

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

In a first, Maharashtra ties up with Google to facilitate remote learning

- Maharashtra became the first State in the country to announce a partnership with Google to promote remote learning for students. The initiative will enable 2.3 crore students and teachers to access free of cost the technology giant’s digital tools such as G Suite for Education, Google Classroom and Google Meet.
- Launching the Google for Education initiative, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray said, “The State government’s stance has always been how and when to restart education rather than schools following the pause caused by the pandemic. Google’s tools will help students learn from their homes, empower teachers to provide excellent educational experiences, nurture individual needs, and enable them to learn better together.”

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.

Ministry of Jal Shakti launches new version of India Water Resources Information System

- The Ministry of Jal Shakti has launched a new version of the India Water Resources Information System (India-WRIS) with new functionalities and features.
- Open to the public, and accessible through the web portal www.indiawris.gov.in, this portal contains information related to Water Resources through dashboards for rainfall, water levels & discharge of rivers, water bodies, ground water levels, reservoir storages, evapotranspiration and soil moisture, as well as modules on water resources projects, water bodies, hydro-met data availability and tools for GIS layer editing.
- Good planning of any resource requires a strong data base and a reliable information system. To address this need, the Ministry of Jal Shakti (MoJS), under the National Hydrology Project, launched the first version of India Water Resources Information System (India-WRIS) in July, 2019.
- India WRIS is, at present, receiving data from many central and state agencies like CWC, CGWB, IMD, NRSC, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat etc. on regular basis. Data from other agencies is also being integrated into the system, so that it becomes a comprehensive platform for any data related to water and land resources. The MoJS has established a dedicated organization, National Water Informatics Centre (NWIC) to maintain and update India WRIS.

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

Justice N.V. Ramana presides over DSLSA’s first online Lok Adalat in Delhi

- The first-ever online Lok Adalat in the National Capital, the Delhi State Legal Services Authority (DSLSA) organized the e-lok Adalat to facilitate mediation between the parties, who are willing to get their matters settled amicably, in all the District Courts Complexes of Delhi.

- In this e-Lok Adalat, cases pertaining to Motor Accident and Claims Tribunal (MACT) disputes, Civil recovery matters, cases of Electricity Act were taken up and settled, by providing technical support from SAMA – an Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) platform recognized by Department of Justice for resolving disputes through video conferencing.
- Supreme Court judge, Justice N.V. Ramana, the Executive Chairman of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA), said the ‘e-Lok Adalat’, jointly organised with the Delhi State Legal Services Authority (DSLSA) was a step towards meeting new challenges thrown at justice delivery system by COVID-19. Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh and Karnataka have successfully held e-Lok Adalats.
- In July 11, Chhattisgarh High Court and the State Legal Services Authority organized India’s first ever E-Lok Adalat, amid the restricted judicial functioning owing to Covid-19 outbreak.

Lok Adalat (People's Court) is one of the Alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in India; it is a forum where cases pending on panchayat or at pre litigation stage in a court of law are settled. They have been given statutory status under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987. Under this Act, the award (decision) made by the Lok Adalats is deemed to be a case of a civil court and is final and binding on all parties and no appeal against such an award lies before any court of law. If the parties are not satisfied with the award of the Lok Adalat (though there is no provision for an appeal against such an award), they are free to initiate litigation by approaching the court of appropriate jurisdiction. The First Lok Adalat was held in Una city in Junagarh district of Gujarat in 1982.

Piyush Goyal and Pralhad Joshi dedicated Railway Museum at Hubballi to the Nation

- Minister of Railways and Commerce & Industry, **Shri Piyush Goyal** and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Coal & Mines, **Shri Pralhad Joshi** dedicated Railway Museum at Hubballi dedicated the Railway Museum at Hubballi, Karnataka to the Nation in the event over a video conference presided by Suresh Angadi Channabasappa, Minister of State for Railways.
- This Rail Museum is first of its kind in North Karnataka and second in South Western Railway after historic Mysuru Rail Museum at Mysuru.

Indian Railways (IR) is the fourth-largest railway network in the world by size. There are a total of 18 Railway zones. South Coast Railway Zone is the newest and 18th railway zone, headquartered at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. Piyush Vedprakash Goyal is currently serving as the Minister of Railways and Commerce in the Government of India. He was elected as the BJP candidate from Maharashtra for the Rajya Sabha on 3 June 2016. The practice of a separate Railway Budget was started by the British in 1924 under the recommendation of a 10-member Acworth Committee headed by British economist William Mitchell Acworth in 1920-21. On 21 September 2016, Government of India approved the merger of the Railway Budget with the Union budget of India, and thus came to end — a 92-year-old practice of separate rail and general budgets.

EPFO ensures hassle free service delivery through UMANG app during COVID-19 pandemic

- **Employees' Provident Fund Organisation, EPFO** has ensured hassle free service delivery through **UMANG app during COVID-19 pandemic**. Labour and Employment Ministry said, presently a PF member can access 16 different services of EPFO on their mobile phone using the Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance, UMANG App. The Ministry said, on UMANG app a member can raise claim, track claim and know the status of claim raised.

UMANG (Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance) is developed by Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and National e-Governance Division (NeGD) to drive Mobile Governance in India. On 26 November 2017, this app service was launched by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the fifth edition of the Global Conference on Cyberspace in New Delhi. It is a Government of India all-in-one single unified secure multi-channel multi-platform multi-lingual multi-service freeware mobile app for accessing over 841 services through 127 department central and state government services in multiple Indian languages.

Tribal Affairs Ministry develops nine 'Tribal Freedom Fighters' Museums

- Tribal Affairs Ministry is developing nine "Tribal Freedom Fighters Museums" dedicated to the contributions of the tribal people in India to the freedom struggle. Out of nine sanctioned museums, two museums are near completion and remaining seven are at different stages of progress.
- The Ministry said that by the end of 2022 all the museums will come into existence. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced setting up of these tribal freedom fighters' museums during his Independence Day Speech on 15th August 2016. All the museums will have strong usage of technologies like Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality and 3D/7D holographic projections.

Ministry of Tribal Affairs was set up in 1999 after the bifurcation of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (India) to have a more focused approach on the integrated socio-economic development of the Scheduled Tribes (STs), the most underprivileged of the Indian Society. Arjun Munda is a member of the 17th Lok Sabha of India. He represents the Khunti constituency of Jharkhand. He is the current minister for Tribal Affairs. The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) came into existence in 1987. TRIFED has its registered and Head Office located in New Delhi.

Narendra Singh Tomar launches ICAR's data recovery centre 'Krishi Megh'

- Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar has launched ICAR's data recovery centre - Krishi Megh. The move is aimed at protecting the precious data of the government's premier research body Indian Council of Agricultural Research.
- It has been set up at National Academy of Agricultural Research Management (NAARM) in Hyderabad. Currently, the main data centre of the ICAR is at the Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute (IASRI) in the national capital. Krishi Megh has been set up under the National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP), funded by both the government and World Bank.

Narendra Singh Tomar is the Minister of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare and Minister of Rural Development in the Second Modi ministry. He is a member of the 17th Lok Sabha from Morena, Madhya Pradesh.

SC gives equal inheritance right to daughters from 1956

- In a significant judgment, the Supreme Court ruled that daughters will have equal right in the parental property as son even if their father died before the Hindu Succession (amendment) Act 2005 came into force.
- A bench of Justices Arun Mishra, S Abdul Nazeer and MR Shah cleared the confusion arising from the apex court's conflicting interpretations of the amended Section 6 of Hindu Succession Act, which came into force from September 9, 2005.
- Coparcener is a term used for a person who assumes a legal right in parental property by birth only. The bench said, "the rights can be claimed by the daughter born earlier with effect from September 9, 2005 with savings as provided in Section 6(1) as to the disposition or alienation, partition or testamentary disposition which had taken place before December 20, 2004. Since the right in coparcenary is by birth, it is not necessary that father coparcener should be living as on September 9, 2005."
- Supreme Court had earlier given two contradictory judgments in two cases — Prakash V. Phulavati (2015) and Danamma @ Suman Surpur vs. Amar (2018). In Prakash V. Phulavati (2015), a bench comprising Justices Anil R. Dave and A.K. Goel had held that the rights under the amendment are applicable to living daughters of living coparceners as on 9-9-2005, irrespective of when such daughters are born.

The 44th Constitutional Amendment Act of 1978 removed the right to property from the list of fundamental rights. A new provision, Article 300-A, was added to the constitution, which provided that "no person shall be deprived of his property save by authority of law". Article 14 of the Constitution of India provides for equality before the law or equal protection of the laws within the territory of India. It states: "The State shall not deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws within the territory of India."

Rajnath Singh launches Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched the Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (NIIO) through an online webinar. The NIIO puts in place dedicated structures for the end users to interact with academia and industry towards fostering innovation and indigenisation for self-reliance in defence.
- The Draft Defence Acquisition Policy 2020 (DAP 20) rolled out by the Defence Ministry envisaged establishment of Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation by the Service Headquarters. Indian Navy already has a functional Directorate of Indigenisation and the new structures created will build upon the ongoing indigenisation initiatives, as well as focus on innovation.

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

Katra-Delhi express road corridor by 2023

- Union Minister Jitendra Singh informed that work has started on the first-of-its-kind Katra (Jammu and Kashmir)-Delhi Express Road Corridor which will be ready by 2023.
- When it becomes functional, the Minister said, the travel time from Katra to Delhi will get reduced to around six and half hours, and from Jammu to Delhi to just about six hours.

‘Khaje’, ‘Harmal Chilli’ and ‘Moira banana’ get GI tag

- Goa’s traditional festive sweet dish ‘Khaje’, spicy Harmal Chilli and Myndoli Banana (Moira Banana) has obtained Geographical Indication (GI) tag in last three months, thus giving the local producers exclusive brand protection rights. Earlier, the State’s popular ‘Cashew Feni’ and ‘Khola Red Chilli’, had obtained GI tag.
- Khaje, the State’s traditional festive sweet treat at temple zattras and church feasts, received the GI notification, under food stuff falling in Class-30. The notification states that one of the common and popular snacks piled high on top of each other during the feast and zatra is Goan khaje and that it is found in almost all the religious functions in temples and churches.
- It also said that Goan ginger, salt and potable well water gives a unique taste to the dish. “Eaten as a snack or dessert, this sweet is nostalgic and enjoyed by all,” the notification mentioned. The Myndoli Banana, also known as Moira Banana, an important fruit crop, grown in the villages of Pernem, Bicholim and Bardez taluka, obtained GI tag on June 30 under Class-31. On May 29, the Harmal Chilli, the most important spice crop of Goa, obtained GI tag.

A geographical indication (GI) is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin. In order to function as a GI, a sign must identify a product as originating in a given place. In addition, the qualities, characteristics or reputation of the product should be essentially due to the place of origin. Geographical Indications protection is granted through the TRIPS Agreement of WTO. India, as a member of the WTO, enacted the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 has come into force with effect from 15 September 2003. GIs have been defined under Article 22 (1) of the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement. Darjeeling tea became the first GI tagged product in India, in 2004–2005.

India will fund Greater Male Connectivity

- External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar has announced that India will fund the implementation of Greater Male Connectivity Project through a 400 million dollar Line of Credit and 100 million dollar grant.

- The 6.7 km Greater Male Connectivity Project (GMCP) will be the largest civilian infrastructure project in Maldives, connecting Male with three neighbouring islands - Villingili, Gulhifahu and Thilafushi, officials said.
- India is also extending financial support for construction of a port in Gulhifahu. Referring to creation of an air bubble, it said Maldives is the first neighboring country with which an air bubble is being operationalized. India is also starting an air travel bubble with Maldives to sustain and promote the dynamic people-to-people ties between the two countries.

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

All villages to be connected with optical fibre in 1,000 days

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on August 15 announced that the task to connect India’s over six-lakh villages with optical fibre network will be completed in the next 1,000 days. Besides, high speed internet connectivity via submarine optical fibre cable will be extended to Lakshadweep in this period.
- Only five dozen panchayats in the country were connected with optical fibre cable before 2014. In the last five years, 1.5 lakh village panchayats have been connected with optical fibre cable.

Gujarat High Court launches e-filing of cases

- Gujarat high court has launched e-filing of cases and an online facility to check the status of cases. Chief Justice of Gujarat High Court Justice Vikram Nath launched these two new services on the occasion of 74th Independence Day.
- He also directed five exclusive counters for physical case filing amid the Covid-19 pandemic. The e-filing software developed by the eCommittee of the Supreme Court has been implemented for the Gujarat high court. This service will be available on the portal, <http://efiling.ecourts.gov.in/>.
- Initially, the service will be available for Criminal Miscellaneous application and special Criminal application for criminal cases and PILs, admiralty suits, first appeals, letters patent appeals and tax appeals for civil cases. Advocates registered with the IT cell of the High Court will require registering themselves on the e-filing portal. The court also launched the ‘EmailMyCaseStatus’ service, which is activated after online registration.

Prime Minister announces health IDs for all under National Digital Health Mission

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s announcement of a national health ID for every Indian while addressing the nation on the occasion of 74th Independence Day is envisioned as India’s first step towards Universal Health Coverage. The ambitious National Digital Health Mission unveiled on 15 August, finds its roots in a 2018 Niti Aayog proposal to create a centralised mechanism to uniquely identify every participating user in the National Health Stack.
- The National Digital Health Mission is a digital health ecosystem under which every Indian citizen will now have unique health IDs, digitised health records with identifiers for doctors and health facilities. As per the National Health Authority (NHA), every patient who wishes to have their health records available digitally must start by creating a unique Health ID. This ID is to be created by using a person’s basic details and mobile number or Aadhaar number.

The National Health Policy, 2017 (NHP, 2017) seeks to reach everyone in a comprehensive integrated way to move towards wellness. It aims at achieving universal health coverage and delivering quality health care services to all at affordable cost.

Ladakh, Leh, Kargil to be India’s first carbon neutral region

- A 7500 MW solar park is being built in Ladakh for electricity and infrastructure development in the region. The Ladakh, Leh and Kargil region will be developed and declared to be a carbon neutral region, PM Modi said in his Independence Day speech.

- While the concept of carbon neutral villages have been considered in India in the past and some villages in Kerala and Manipur have adopted it, this will be the first large region to be carbon neutral. Carbon neutrality means annual zero net anthropogenic (human caused or influenced) CO₂ emissions by a certain date.
- “By definition, carbon neutrality means every ton of anthropogenic CO₂ emitted is compensated with an equivalent amount of CO₂ removed,” according to World Resources Institute. Many countries have announced to be carbon neutral by 2050 as part of the Paris Agreement. “Just like Sikkim has positioned itself as an organic state, the Ladakh, Kargil and Leh region is moving in the direction of becoming carbon neutral.

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. 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. Ladakh is the largest and the second least populous union territory of India. Leh is the joint capital and largest town of the union territory of Ladakh in India. Kargil is the second largest town in Ladakh after Leh. At present, Eight union territories are there in India.

Indian Railways constructing world's tallest pier bridge across river Ijai in Manipur

- Indian Railways' North East Frontier Railway zone has constructed the world's tallest pier bridge in the North-Eastern state of Manipur. Indian Railways is constructing the world's tallest pier bridge in Manipur. The bridge which is being constructed across river Ijai near Noney is an engineering marvel because the tallest pier height will be 141 meter. It will surpass the existing record of 139 meter of Mala - Rijeka viaduct, Montenegro in Europe.
- The Manipur Bridge is located at the hilly terrain of Marangching village in Noney district, about 65 km west of Imphal. The total estimated cost of the bridge is 280 crore rupees, and it will be completed by March 2022.

Indian Railways (IR) is the fourth-largest railway network in the world by size. There are a total of 18 Railway zones. South Coast Railway Zone is the newest and 18th railway zone, headquartered at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. Piyush Vedprakash Goyal is currently serving as the Minister of Railways and Commerce in the Government of India. He was elected as the BJP candidate from Maharashtra for the Rajya Sabha on 3 June 2016. The practice of a separate Railway Budget was started by the British in 1924 under the recommendation of a 10-member Acworth Committee headed by British economist William Mitchell Acworth in 1920-21. On 21 September 2016, Government of India approved the merger of the Railway Budget with the Union budget of India, and thus came to end — a 92-year-old practice of separate rail and general budgets.

Odisha tops in implementation of AMRUT scheme

- Odisha has retained its top position in implementation of the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) scheme. The scheme was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in June 2015 to establish an infrastructure that would ensure robust sewage networks and water supply for urban transformation.
- According to the ranking of the states released by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Odisha has retained its first position by securing a score of 85.67 per cent. Chandigarh and Telangana have secured the second and third positions followed by Gujarat and Karnataka.

The purpose of Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) is to (i) ensure that every household has access to a tap with assured supply of water and a sewerage connection; (ii) increase the amenity value of cities by developing greenery and well maintained open spaces (e.g. parks); and (iii) reduce pollution by switching to public transport or constructing facilities for non-motorized transport (e.g. walking and cycling). About Rs.1 lakh crore (US\$14 billion) investment on urban development under Smart Cities Mission and the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation of 500 cities has already been approved by the government.

First time in Parliament: chambers and galleries of both Houses to be used for Monsoon session

- As per the arrangements, the Rajya Sabha chamber and galleries and Lok Sabha chamber will be used for seating the members of the House during the monsoon session. This includes 60 members in the chamber, 51 in

the galleries of Rajya Sabha (leaving out the first row), and the remaining 132 (including by-polls for two seats) in the chamber of Lok Sabha.

- According to Rajya Sabha Secretariat, **various parties will be allotted seats in the chamber and galleries of Rajya Sabha based on respective strength** and the remaining will be seated in the chamber of Lok Sabha in two blocks meant for ruling parties and the others.
- In the Rajya Sabha chamber, seats will be **earmarked for the Prime Minister, Leader of the House, Leader of the Opposition (LoP) and leaders of other parties. Former Prime Ministers and former Leaders of the House Dr Manmohan Singh and HD Deve Gowda**, besides Ramvilas Paswan and Ramdas Atshawale, being Ministers and members of the House will also have earmarked seats in the chamber of the House. Other ministers will be seated in the seats meant for the ruling party.

Parliament of India is the supreme legislative body of the Republic of India. It is a bicameral legislature composed of the President of India and the two houses: the Rajya Sabha (Council of States) and the Lok Sabha (House of the People). The period during which the House meets to conduct its business is called a session. The Constitution empowers the President to summon each House at such intervals that there should not be more than a six-month gap between the two sessions. Hence the Parliament must meet at least twice a year. In India, the Parliament conducts three sessions each year: (1). Budget session: January/February to May (2). Monsoon session: July to August/September (3). Winter session: November to December

Jharkhand unveils new logo

- The Hemant Soren in Jharkhand unveiled the new State logo at Ranchi on the eve of 74th Independence Day. The State logo is circular in size with the Emblem of India placed at the centre. The National Emblem is enclosed in concentric circles depicting Jharkhand's culture and its abundant natural resources.
- “While the Ashoka pillar at the centre is the state emblem of the country, it also represents Jharkhand's sovereignty. It signifies that Jharkhand is a partner in country's development”. The logo accommodates ‘Palash flower’ (*Butea monosperma*), which is the State flower of Jharkhand. Its bright red colour represents Jharkhand's beauty and the struggle of people.

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’.

Kerala's first-ever Dragonfly Festival to be held soon

- WWF-India Kerala State Office is joining hands with the Society for Odonate Studies (SOS) and Thumbipuranam for the first-ever state Dragonfly Festival in Kerala, christened ‘Thumbi Maholsavam 2020’.
- This is part of the National Dragonfly Festival organised by WWF India, Bombay Natural History Society and Indian Dragonfly Society in association with National Biodiversity Board, UN Environmental Programme, UN Development Programme and IUCN-CEC.
- As part of the Dragonfly Festival, a series of events will be rolled out in the coming months to reach out to various sections of the society. Initially, a training session will be organised to get more people trained on dragonflies. This will be followed by a series of webinars commencing from September onwards targeting the public, especially children and youth.

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.

SC Collegium approves proposal for elevation of judicial officers & advocates as judges for Allahabad, Gujarat, and Kerala HCs

- Supreme Court Collegium has approved the proposal for elevation of judicial officers and advocates as judges for three High Courts- Allahabad, Kerala and Gujarat. Chief Justice Bobde, and Justices NV Ramana, Arun Mishra, RF Nariman and UU Lalit make up the Collegium.
- The Collegium headed by Chief Justice S A Bobde recommended elevation of four judicial officers Sanjay Kumar Pachori, Subhash Chandra Sharma, Subhash Chand, and Saroj Yadav as judges of the Allahabad High Court.
- It also approved the proposal for elevation of advocates Murali Purushothaman and Ziyad Rahman and judicial officers Karunakaran Babu, Dr. Kauser Edappagath as judges of the Kerala High Court. The Collegium also approved the proposal for elevation of advocates Vaibhavi Devang Nanavati, Nirzarkumar Sushilkumar Desai, and Nikhil Shreedharan Kariel as judges of the Gujarat High Court.

The Collegium system is one where the Chief Justice of India and a forum of four senior-most judges of the Supreme Court recommend appointments and transfers of judges. However, it has no place in the Indian Constitution. The system was evolved through Supreme Court judgments in the Three Judges Cases.

Government launches e-portal on tribal health & nutrition

- Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda inaugurated the e-portal on tribal health and nutrition named 'Swasthya'. The portal provides all health and nutrition related information of the tribal population of India on a single platform.
- Swasthya will also curate innovative practices, case studies, and best practices collected from different parts of India to facilitate the exchange of evidence, expertise and experiences. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has recognized Piramal Swasthya as the Centre of Excellence for Knowledge Management (CoE for KM) for Health and Nutrition. The portal <http://swasthya.tribal.gov.in> is hosted on NIC cloud.
- Smt Renuka Singh Saruta released 'ALEKH', a quarterly e-newsletter. Emphasizing on the commitment of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs to improve the health and wellbeing of the tribal communities.

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

Satya Pal Malik appointed as Meghalaya Governor

- The Governor of Goa, Satya Pal Malik has been transferred and appointed as Governor of Meghalaya. Mr. Malik, who was Governor of Jammu and Kashmir when its special status under Article 370 was abrogated last August, will be replacing Tathagata Roy in Meghalaya.
- Rashtrapati Bhavan in a communique said that Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari will discharge the functions of the Governor of Goa in addition to his own duties. These appointments will take effect from the dates they assume charge of their offices.

In the Republic of India, a governor is the constitutional head of each of the twenty-eight states. Governors exist in the states while lieutenant governors or administrators exist in union territories including National Capital Territory of Delhi. The governor is appointed by the President of India for a term of five years, and holds office at the President's pleasure. The governor is *de jure* head of the state government; all its executive actions are taken in the governor's name. However, the governor must act on the advice of the popularly elected council of ministers, headed by the chief minister, which thus holds *de facto* executive authority at the state-level. The Constitution of India also empowers the governor to act upon his or her own discretion, such as the ability to appoint or dismiss a ministry, recommend President's rule, or reserve bills for the President's assent. Although in Union Territories real power lies in lieutenant governor or administrator, except in NCT of Delhi, Puducherry and Jammu and Kashmir where he/she shares power with a council of ministers headed by a Chief Minister. According to 7th Constitutional Amendment Act 1956, the same person can be the Governor of two or more states.

Ashok Lavasa resigns as Election Commissioner; to join ADB as Vice President

- Election Commissioner Ashok Lavasa resigned from his post to join the Philippines-based Asian Development Bank (ADB) as vice-president next month.
- Mr. Lavasa has submitted his resignation to President Ram Nath Kovind and has requested to be relieved by the end of this month. The ADB had announced his appointment to the post.
- Lavasa, who would have retired as the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) in October 2022, would be the second election commissioner to step down from the poll panel before the completion of his term.
- His resignation came when the election commission is preparing to conduct upcoming polls amid ongoing coronavirus pandemic which might begin with the Bihar Assembly poll. Last month, he was named as the new vice-president of the Philippines-based Asian Development Bank (ADB). He will succeed Diwakar Gupta, whose term will end on August 31. Lavasa, a career bureaucrat, joined as Election Commissioner on January 23, 2018.
- Sushil Chandra, presently posted as Election Commissioner will be in the line of succession after Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora which otherwise would have been donned by Lavasa had he not resigned.

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

Rajiv Kumar appointed new Election Commissioner following resignation of Ashok Lavasa

- Former finance secretary Rajiv Kumar has been appointed new election commissioner. He will replace Ashok Lavasa, who resigned. Mr Kumar will take charge the day Mr Lavasa leaves his office on August 31.
- A 1984-batch IAS officer of Jharkhand cadre, Rajiv Kumar has over three decades of experience in public policy and administration across various sectors. He played a major role in merging 10 public sector banks into four. During his two-and-half year stint as financial services secretary, he took several policy decisions to promote responsive and responsible banking.

Government of India launches Swadeshi Microprocessor Challenge - Innovate Solutions for Aatmanirbhar Bharat

- Electronics and IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad launched Swadeshi Microprocessor Challenge - Innovate Solutions for Aatmanirbhar Bharat. IIT Madras and Center for Development of Advance Computing have developed two microprocessors named SHAKTI (32 bit) and VEGA (64 bit) respectively using Open Source Architecture.
- The Swadeshi Microprocessor Challenge seeks to invite innovators, startups and students to use these microprocessors to develop various technology products.
- The Swadeshi Microprocessor Challenge is part of the series of proactive, pre-emptive and graded measures taken by Ministry of Electronics and IT to spur the technology led innovation ecosystem in the country. The Challenge spread over 10 months, started with the registration process at MyGov portal. It will culminate in June 2021.

Ravi Shankar Prasad is the current Union Minister holding Law and Justice and Electronics and Information Technology and he represents the state of Bihar as a Member of Parliament in the Rajya Sabha.

PM Modi to inaugurate First World Solar Technology Summit to be held on Sept 8

- The First World Solar Technology Summit will be organized by International Solar Alliance, ISA on a virtual platform on 8th of September.

- Sharing details of the summit, **President of the ISA Assembly and New and Renewable Energy Minister R. K. Singh said Prime Minister Narendra Modi will deliver the inaugural address of the First World Solar Technology Summit** and it will be graced by Ministers from member countries from across all ISA regions. ISA would also be launching the ISA Journal on Solar Energy that would help authors from across the globe to publish their articles on solar energy, during the event.

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

Chhattisgarh CM announces scheme for school students

- Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel announced to launch a special scheme under which school students will be able to learn in their respective localities in view of the suspension of classes due to the coronavirus outbreak.
- “The online education platform ‘Padhai Tunhar Duar’ scheme launched by the state government earlier during the lockdown yielded better results and around 22 lakh children are getting its benefit.”
- “Taking the initiative further, we are now starting the ‘Padhai Tuhar Para’ scheme to teach children with the help of community in their localities and villages,” the chief minister said.
- Besides, a Bluetooth-based programme ‘Bultu Ke Bol’ will be introduced for providing study materials to students in remote areas who do not have access to internet facility.

MoU signed for first unit of Defence Category Industry in Chhattisgarh

- Chhattisgarh government has signed an MoU for establishing the first manufacturing unit of a Defense Category Industry in the state. The industrial unit will manufacture bulletproof jackets and helmets for Government of India’s armed forces, infantry, BSF, CRPF and state government’s armed forces.
- “The MoU was signed between Chhattisgarh Government’s Industry Department and M/s ATMASTCO Ltd., Durg for establishing the industrial unit for defence equipment. This industrial unit for defence equipments at Birebhant village of Durg district in Chhattisgarh”.

Chhattisgarh was formed on 1 November 2000 by partitioning 10 Chhattisgarhi and 6 Gondi speaking southeastern districts of Madhya Pradesh. Naya Raipur, officially known as Nava Raipur, (also known as Atal Nagar) is an upcoming planned and fully developed city in Indian state of Chhattisgarh. It is planned to replace Raipur as the capital city of Chhattisgarh. Anusuiya Uikey is present Governor of Chhattisgarh. Bhupesh Baghel is serving as the third and current Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh. In India, there are five landlocked states which do not have an international boundary are Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand and Telangana.

Delhi-Meerut ‘Rapid Transit System’, India’s First, Gets \$1 Billion Nod

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a USD 1 billion (about Rupees 7,485 crore) loan to support the construction of the modern, high-speed Delhi-Meerut regional rapid transit system, a first of its kind in India.
- The transit system project aims to help decongest the city and improve regional connectivity by establishing transit options through densely populated sections of the NCR connecting Delhi to Meerut in Uttar Pradesh.
- Delhi accounts for 37 per cent of the population of the national capital region (NCR). The 82-km Delhi-Meerut regional rapid transit system network is the first of three priority rail corridors in the country’s integrated transport network under the NCR regional plan 2021.

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

Indore wins cleanest city in country award in Swachh Survekshan 2020

- Indore of Madhya Pradesh has become the cleanest city in the country for the fourth consecutive time, leaving behind 4,242 cities of the country.
- Bhopal has been selected as Best Self Sustainable Capital with inclusion in the top-10. Maximum six cities of Madhya Pradesh have been included in the category of population of more than one lakh. 14 municipal corporations of Madhya Pradesh have been included in the list of top-100 cities of the country. Of these, 10 municipal corporations have managed to make it to the top 25.
- Gujarat's Surat on second spot and Maharashtra's Navi Mumbai on third. In the category of population of less than 1 lakh, Maharashtra's Karad bagged the first position, followed by state's Saswad and Lonavala.
- Best performing states in terms of overall performance were divided in two categories- states with over 100 Urban Local Bodies (ULB) and states with less than 100 ULBs. In the first category, Chhattisgarh bagged the award for the second time and Jharkhand won the award in the second category.
- India's Cleanest Cantonment Board award was bagged by Jalandhar cantonment from Punjab and Best Ganga Town award was given to Varanasi.
- Best city in terms of maximum citizen's participation award in the category of population of over 1 lakh has been given to Uttar Pradesh's Shahjahanpur. In the same category for cities with population less than 1 lakh, the award was bagged by Uttarakhand's Nandaprayag.
- Cleanest city with over 40 lakh population award was won by Ahmedabad and Vijayawada won in the category of city with population between 10 lakh to 40 lakh. Fastest mover big city award was won by Rajasthan's Jodhpur. Gujarat's Rajkot won the best self-sustainable city award. In the category of 3 to 10 lakh population, cleanest city award went to Karnataka's Mysuru.
- Cleanest capital city award was won by New Delhi's New Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC).

Swachh Survekshan (Cleanliness survey) is an annual survey of cleanliness, hygiene and sanitation in cities and towns across India. It was launched as part of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, which aimed to make India clean and free of open defecation by 2 October 2019. The surveys are carried out by Quality Council of India.

HRD Ministry is now officially Ministry of Education as it gets President's nod

- President Ram Nath Kovind gave assent to the change in name of the ministry of human resource development (MHRD) as ministry of education. The name change was among the key recommendations of the draft new National Education Policy (NEP), which was also cleared by the Union Cabinet.
- The ministry of education was renamed as the HRD ministry in 1985 during the tenure of then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. The NEP was introduced the next year and it was later amended in 1992. P V Narasimha Rao became the first HRD minister in the Rajiv Gandhi cabinet.
- A panel headed by former ISRO chairman K Kasturirangan, tasked with working on the new NEP, and had first proposed that the name of the ministry should be changed again.
- In 2018, the idea was also mooted by Ram Bahadur Rai, chairman of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts and also chairman of the joint organising committee of the Conference on Academic Leadership on Education for Resurgence.

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

Cabinet approves to set up National Recruitment Agency to conduct CET

- Union Cabinet approved **setting up of National Recruitment Agency to conduct Common Eligibility Test**. Union Minister Prakash Javadekar termed it as historic decision which will benefit job seeking youth of the country.
- He said, this fulfils long standing demand of the youth of the country. **The National Recruitment Agency will conduct a Common Eligibility Test to screen and shortlist candidates for the Group B and C (non-technical) posts. NRA will have representatives of Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Finance, SSC, RRB and IBPS.**
- Special focus on **creating examination infrastructure in the 117 Aspirational Districts** would go a long way in affording access to candidates at a place nearer to where they reside.
- **The CET score of the candidate shall be valid for a period of three years from the date of declaration of the result.** The best of the valid scores shall be deemed to be the current score of the candidate.
- **There shall be no restriction on the number of attempts to be taken by a candidate to appear in the CET subject to the upper age limit. Relaxation in the upper age limit shall be given to candidates of SC/ST/OBC and other categories** as per the extant policy of the Government.
- Candidates would have the facility of registering on a common portal and give a choice of Centres. Government has **sanctioned a sum of 1517.57 crore rupees for the National Recruitment Agency**. The expenditure will be undertaken over a period of three years. National Recruitment Agency will ensure transparency and ease in recruitment process, both for the candidate and the recruiting organisation.
- CET scores can be shared with Central and State Governments, PSUs, private sector thus reducing recruitment costs of these organisations. **Initially the NRA will conduct CET twice a year.**

First indigenous rail tracks for India's metro trains produced in Chhattisgarh

- **The metro trains in the country will now run on the indigenously manufactured rails built in Raigarh district of Chhattisgarh.**
- **The Joka-Esplanade Metro in Kolkata is the first to use such rails made by Jindal Steel and Power Limited (JSPL) from its Raigarh-based plant, some 220 km east of Raipur.** “The head hardened (HH) rail produced at the company’s Raigarh plant is intended for high-speed rails.
- **Now 20 percent of the requirement of head hard rails in India will be sourced indigenously**, which is seen as a major step towards the Atmanirbhar Bharat (Make-in-India) initiative.

Gujarat: Quality control lab for Sea food export set up at Porbandar

- **The state of art quality control laboratory for Sea food export set up at Porbandar in Gujarat.** Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) has opened a **Quality Control Laboratory in the coastal city of Porbandar** facilitating tests for seafood processors and exporters.
- **The state of art laboratory inaugurated by MPEDA Chairman K.S. Srinivas** will help to confirm product safety as per international regulatory requirements. **MPEDA is a coordinating agency under the Union Ministry of Commerce** for central and state-level establishments engaged in fishery production and allied activities.
- According to official release, the set-up, with all support systems for accurate results, has begun efforts **to secure accreditation by National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) and the Export Inspection Council (EIC).**

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

India's population is expected to be more feminine in 2036

- India's population is expected to be more feminine and hold better future for women after 15 years from now, indicated the population projections made by the National Commission on Population under Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- The report of the technical group on population projections titled population projections for India and States 2011 – 2036 has observed that the population in 2036 is expected to be more feminine compared to the population as of 2011 when it came to sex ratio.
- The country's sex ratio of the total population (females per 1000 males) is expected to increase from 943 in 2011 to 957 during 2036. "It is observed that in 2036 sex ratio in eighteen states, except Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Gujarat will increase as compared to 2011," the report said adding that the lowest sex ratio of 899 is expected to be in NCT of Delhi in 2036, followed by 900 and 908 in Gujarat and Haryana respectively.
- The report said that the infant mortality rate (IMR) of the country, which is reported to be 46 in 2010 is expected to go down to 30 by the end of the period 2031-35. The IMR is expected to decline in all the states during 2011-35. The IMR, which was highest in Madhya Pradesh at 58 followed by 57 in Uttar Pradesh in 2011-15 is expected to come down to 37 in Madhya Pradesh, followed by Uttar Pradesh (38) in 2031-35, the report said.
- Also, according to the report, the population of India is expected to increase from 121.1 crores to 151.8 crores during the period 2011-2036 - an increase of 25% in 25 years at the rate of 1.0% annually. The report also said that the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) is expected to decline from 2.34 during 2011-2015 to 1.72 during 2031- 35. The assumption is that the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) would follow the recent pace of decline.
- The report has also highlighted that the youth population in the age- group 15-24 years is expected to increase from 23.3 crores in 2011 to 25.2 crores in 2021 and then continue to decrease to 22.7 crores in 2036. Its proportion to total population is expected to fall from 19.3 percent in 2011 to 14.9 percent in 2036.

India is a country in South Asia. It is the second-most populous country, the seventh-largest country by land area, and the most populous democracy in the world. It is bounded by the Indian Ocean on the south, the Arabian Sea on the southwest, and the Bay of Bengal on the southeast. It shares boundary with 7 countries (Afghanistan, Pakistan, China, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Myanmar. India shares its longest international boundary with Bangladesh (4,096 KM) followed by China.

NITI Aayog releases first ever Export Preparedness Index 2020

- Gujarat has topped the Niti Aayog's Export Preparedness Index 2020 followed by Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu in the second and third place respectively, according to the government think tank's report released. According to the report, six of eight coastal states feature in the top ten rankings, indicating the presence of strong enabling and facilitating factors to promote exports.
- Among the landlocked states, Rajasthan has performed the best, followed by Telangana and Haryana. Among the Himalayan states, Uttarakhand topped the chart, followed by Tripura and Himachal Pradesh; the report said adding that across Union Territories, Delhi has performed the best, followed by Goa and Chandigarh.
- The Niti Aayog Vice Chairman pointed out that India's per capita exports are USD 241, compared to South Korea's USD 11,900 and China's USD 18,000, so there is a huge potential for growth of India's exports, he said adding "states must look at creating a separate department for exports promotion".

- Niti Aayog in partnership with the Institute of Competitiveness released the first Export Preparedness Index (EPI) 2020. The index ranked states on four key parameter - Policy; Business Ecosystem; Export Ecosystem; Export Performance. The index also took into consideration 11 sub-pillars – Export Promotion Policy; Institutional Framework; Business Environment; Infrastructure; Transport Connectivity; Access to Finance; Export Infrastructure; Trade Support; R&D Infrastru.

NITI Aayog launched behaviour change campaign ‘Navigating the New Normal’ and its website to help people follow norms to contain the spread of COVID-19. Focusing on COVID-safe behaviour, especially wearing masks, during the ‘Unlock’ phase of the of COVID-19 pandemic, the campaign has been **developed under the guidance of Empowered Group 6, chaired by NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant.**

Centre sets up council for Transgender Persons

- The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has constituted the National Council for Transgender Persons, a requirement under the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019.
- The Union Minister of Social Justice & Empowerment will be Chairperson (ex-officio) and Union Minister of State for Social Justice & Empowerment will be Vice-Chairperson (ex-officio) and members would include officials of the Ministries of Health and Family Welfare, Home Affairs, Housing and Urban Affairs, Minority Affairs, Human Resources Development, Rural Development and NITI Aayog.
- The council also includes five nominated members from the transgender community — Laxmi Narayan Tripathi, Gopi Shankar Madurai, Meera Parida, Zainab Javid Patel and Kak Chingtabam Shyamchand Sharma. **A Member of National Council, other than ex officio member, shall hold office for a term of three years from the date of his nomination.** The other members of the Council include representatives of various Ministries/Departments, five representatives of transgender community, representatives of NHRC and NCW, representatives of State Governments and UTs and experts representing NGOs.

The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 is an act of the **Parliament of India with the objective to provide for protection of rights of transgender people, their welfare, and other related matters.** The act has been in effect since 10 January 2020. **National Legal Services Authority v. Union of India** is a landmark decision by the Supreme Court of India, which declared transgender people to be a ‘third gender’, affirmed that the **fundamental rights granted under the Constitution of India will be equally applicable to transgender people**, and gave them the right to self-identification of their gender as male, female or third-gender.

PM Modi greets nation on ‘Nuakhai’ harvest festival

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has greeted the nation on the occasion of Nuakhai a harvest festival celebrated in parts of the country, especially Odisha.
- Nuakhai or Navakhai is an agricultural festival mainly observed by people of Western Odisha and Southern Chhattisgarh in India. Nuakhai is observed to welcome the new rice of the season. The word nua means new and khai means food, so the name means the farmers are in possession of the newly harvested rice.

With schools unable to start new academic sessions due to the lockdown, the **Odisha State Government has started online education for Class X students through ‘Diksha’ application** after April 14, 2020.

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

NHAI develops mobile App 'Harit Path' to facilitate creation of Green Highways across country

- The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), a PSU under the Ministry of Road and Transport, has developed a mobile App, 'Harit Path' to facilitate creation of Green Highways across the country.
- The App will also be used to monitor location, growth, species details, maintenance activities, targets and achievements of each of the PSU's field units for every plant under the Highway plantation projects. Harit Path was inaugurated by the Union Minister for Road and Transport, Nitin Gadkari. NHAI had also recently undertaken a nation-wide plantation drive, Harit Bharat Sankalp, under which it planted over 25 lakh plants in 25 days along the stretches of the National Highways across the country.

National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) is an autonomous agency of the Government of India, responsible for management of a network of over 50,000 km of National Highways out of 1,15,000 km in India. The NHAI was created through the promulgation of the National Highways Authority of India Act, 1988.

India's longest river ropeway connecting Guwahati and North Guwahati over Brahmaputra River inaugurated

- In Assam, the longest river ropeway of the country is inaugurated connecting Guwahati and North Guwahati. Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma inaugurated the 1.8- kilometre long ropeway service. The ropeway has been operated from Kachari Ghat in Guwahati to Dol Govinda temple in North Guwahati.
- The ropeway has been built as per state-of -the-art technology following relevant norms. The opening of ropeway service would reduce the travel time between Guwahati and North Guwahati as well as boost the tourism sector.

Brahmaputra called Yarlung Tsangpo in Tibet, Siang/Dihang River in Arunachal Pradesh and Luit, Dilao in Assam, is a trans-boundary river which flows through Tibet, India and Bangladesh. It is the ninth largest river in the world by discharge, and the 15th longest. With its origin in the Manasarovar Lake region, near the Mount Kailash, located on the northern side of the Himalayas in Burang County of Tibet as the Yarlung Tsangpo River. Major tributaries are Dihang, Lohit, Subansiri, Teesta, Meghna (Barack in Assam), Manas.

APEDA signs MoUs with AFC India Ltd and NCUI, Delhi to utilise their expertise in agri sector

- Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) is engaged with State governments for the implementation of agri export policy. Several States, including Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and Kerala have also finalised the action plan for the implementation of policy.
- APEDA signed MoUs with AFC India Ltd, and National Cooperative Union of India (NCUI), Delhi to utilise their expertise in the agri sector. The agriculture export policy was framed with a focus on agriculture export oriented production, promotion of outbound shipments, better price realisation to farmers and synchronisation within policies and programmes of the central government.
- AFC, wholly-owned by commercial banks, NABARD and EXIM Bank, provides consulting and policy advisory and implementation support for agriculture, rural development and other strategic socio-economic sectors. NCUI objective is to educate, guide and assist people in their efforts to build up and expand the cooperative sector.

Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) is an apex body under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, responsible for the export promotion of agricultural products. The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) was established by the Government of India under the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority Act in December, 1985. The Act (2 of 1986) came into effect from 13th February, 1986.

Government of India extends validity of Motor Vehicle documents till Dec 31

- The Road Transport and Highways Ministry has decided to extend the validity of fitness, permits, licenses, registration or other documents under Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 and Central Motor Vehicle Rules, 1989 till of Dec. 31, 2020.

- **The Ministry** had earlier issued advisories on 30th March and 9th June this year regarding **extension of validity of the documents related to Motor Vehicles Act and Central Motor Vehicle Rules**. It was advised that the validity of Fitness, Permit, License, Registration or any other concerned documents may be valid till 30th of September.

Uttar Pradesh's first Medical Device Park to be built in Noida

- **Uttar Pradesh's first 'Medical Device Park' is set to be built in Noida's YEDA City** by the Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority. **For the first Medical Device Park of the UP**, about 250 acres of land has been identified in Sector 28 near Yamuna Expressway in Noida.
- For this, the responsibility of making a Detailed Project Report (DPR) has been given to **Kalam Institute of Health and Technology (KIHT)**, an institution **established in July 2017 in Visakhapatnam, named after Dr APJ Abdul Kalam**.

The basic education department of Uttar Pradesh, UP in collaboration with Tata Trust, has launched an e-magazine for children in primary and upper primary classes of the state called **Library Khidki**. **UP is the second state after Rajasthan to opt for such alternative solution** ensuring all-round development of students from classes 1-8. The first edition of the e-magazine was released on June 30, 2020.

Social Justice Ministry launched mental health rehabilitation helpline

- Citing the prevalence of mental health issues and the unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 crisis, **the Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry has launched a toll-free helpline to enable access to mental health resources**.
- **The "Kiran" mental health rehabilitation helpline number, 1800-599-0019**, will provide callers "support for early screening, first-aid, psychological support, distress management, mental well-being, preventing deviant behaviours, psychological crisis management etc."

The **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is responsible for welfare, social justice and empowerment of disadvantaged and marginalised sections of society**, including scheduled castes (SC), Other Backward Classes (OBC), the disabled, the elderly, and the victims of drug abuse. **The current cabinet minister is Thawar Chand Gehlot**, who is assisted by a Minister of State, Rattan Lal Kataria, Krishan Pal Gujjar and Ramdas Athavale.

Manipur Health Minister launches Teleconsultation using eSanjeevaniOPD platform in Imphal

- **Manipur State Health and Family Welfare Minister L. Jayantakumar Singh launched Teleconsultation using eSanjeevani OPD platform in Imphal**.
- **This is the first kind of such platform in the state**. The State government has **engaged 30 doctors to perform the newly launched service at initial stage**. The government has also been working to target 220 health centres at different locations of the State to cover under the service in near future.
- Moreover, the government is also planning to **extend the facility of teleconsultation to doctors staying outside the state and abroad as well**. People of Manipur can **register their names to esanjeevaniopd.in** and get the benefit of TeleconsultationOPD.

Manipur launched a dedicated e-learning website for students studying in classes 1 to 12 of Manipur board and council of higher secondary. The Minister also announced that an android app called '**Lairik**' (**books in Manipuri dialect**). Initially, as many as 85 bi-lingual audiovisual classes have been uploaded on the website namely <http://www.lairik.net> and <http://www.laireek.net>.

Seven-judge SC bench to decide on sub-classification of SC/STs

- **The Supreme Court will re-examine its 2004 judgment that held that Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (SC/STs) cannot be further sub-classified for the purpose of reservation**.
- **A five-judge Constitution Bench headed by Justice Arun Mishra ruled that states are empowered to make such sub-classifications** in view of India's federal structure, which allows them to enable reservation for backward classes.

- However, since another five-judge bench of the top court in 2004 ruled that such sub-classification is not permissible, the bench said that the matter will have to be heard by a bench of seven judges or more.
- “Once states have the power to make reservations, it can make sub-classification. The judgment of this court in **E V Chinnaiah** has been wrongly decided.
- Since **E V Chinnaiah v. State of Andhra Pradesh** has also been decided by a bench of five judges, let the matter be placed before the Chief Justice of India for the constitution of a bench of seven judges or more for hearing the matter,” said Justice Mishra-led bench which also included Indira Banerjee, MR Shah, Vineet Saran and Aniruddha Bose.

In the original Constitution, Article 338 provided for a special officer (the Commissioner for SCs and STs) responsible for monitoring the implementation of constitutional and legislative safeguards for SCs and STs and reporting to the President. The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes comprise about 16.6% and 8.6%, respectively, of India's population (according to the 2011 census). Constitution does not define as to who are the persons who belong to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. However, Articles 341 and 342, empower the President of India to draw up a list of these castes and tribes. Article 15(4) says that government can make special provisions for SC and ST's in the name of “positive discrimination”. Article 46 says that educational and economic interests of SCs and STs shall be protected and promoted. Provisions for relaxation in qualifying marks in any examination or lowering the standards of evaluation, for reservation in matters or promotion for SCs and STs. Article 335 says that claims of the members of SCs and STs shall be taken into consideration consistent with the maintenance of the efficiency in administration in appointments under the union and the states. Article 338 says that there shall be a national commission for SCs. On the 89th Amendment of the Constitution coming into force on 19 February 2003, the National Commission for scheduled Tribes has been set up under Article 338A on bifurcation of erstwhile National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to oversee the implementation of various safeguards provided to Scheduled Tribes under the Constitution.

Ministry of Culture announces seven new circles of ASI

- The Ministry of Culture has announced 7 new circles of Archaeological Survey of India, ASI. Culture and Tourism Minister Prahlaad Singh Patel said, Ministry of Culture has taken the step in accordance with the Prime Minister's call to facilitate and strengthen the process of preservation and registration of archaeological monuments along with registration of artefacts with self-declaration.
- He informed that new circles have been created in Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, West Bengal and Gujarat. Trichy, Raiganj, Rajkot, Jabalpur, Jhansi and Meerut have been announced as new circles.
- In a large state like Tamil Nadu which has thousands of temples and glorious memories of the Chola kings, Trichy has been made a new circle along with the circle of Chennai.
- Hampi city in Karnataka is a place of international importance from the point of view of archaeological heritage therefore the Hampi Sub-Circle now has been made a new full-fledged circle.
- In West Bengal, Raiganj has been made a new circle along with Kolkata, which will eliminate geographical inconvenience in a big state like West Bengal.
- In Gujarat, Rajkot has been announced a new circle along with Vadodara. Mr Patel said, Jabalpur has been announced a new circle along with Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh. This will include the monuments from Jabalpur, Rewa, Shahdol and Sagar divisions.
- The Minister also informed that Jhansi in Bundelkhand and Meerut in western Uttar Pradesh have been announced two new circles along with Lucknow and Agra in Uttar Pradesh. The Minister said, earlier there were 29 ASI circles across the country.

The Ministry of Culture is the Indian government ministry charged with preservation and promotion of art and culture of India. Prahlaad Singh Patel is the current Minister of Culture. Recently the government has established the National Mission on Libraries India under this ministry. He is an MP representing 17th Lok Sabha in 2019 from Damoh.

Centre launches National GIS-enabled land bank system for 6 states to boost investments

- Piyush Goyal e-launched the National GIS-enabled Land Bank system (<https://iis.ncog.gov.in/parks>) for 6 states. The system is being developed by the integration of the Industrial Information System (IIS) with state GIS systems.
- Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal held a virtual meeting with the industry ministers of states, UT administrators and senior officers of the central and state governments, and discussed the issues of pushing industrial manufacturing in the country, attracting investments, pushing the approach of 'One District One Product' (ODOP), and promote a National Movement Towards 'AatmaNirbhar Bharat'.

NHA releases Draft Health Data Management Policy of National Digital Health Mission

- The National Health Authority has released the Draft Health Data Management Policy of the National Digital Health Mission in the public domain. The draft of the policy has been released on the official website of National Digital Health Mission and will be available for public comments and feedback till 3rd of next month. The policy is in the draft stage and will be finalized after receiving suggestions from members of the general public.
- Dr. Indu Bhushan, Chief Executive Officer, National Health Authority said, the Draft Health Data Management Policy is the maiden step in realizing NDHM's guiding principle of "Security and Privacy by Design" for the protection of individuals' data privacy.
- It encompasses various aspects pertaining to health data like data privacy, consent management, data sharing and protection. One of the main objectives of this draft policy is to provide adequate guidance and to set out a framework for the secure processing of personal and sensitive personal data of individuals who are a part of the national digital health ecosystem. The ambitious NDHM programme was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi earlier this month during his Independence Day speech.

Kerala CM inaugurated first marine ambulance

- Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurated Pratheeksha, the first marine ambulance acquired by the state fisheries department, through videoconference. The floating out ceremony of two other ambulances — Prathyasa and Karunya — will be held on the occasion.
- The boats have facility to provide medical assistance to 10 people at a time. This will help provide first aid to rescued fishermen and shift them to shore as soon as possible.

The Kerala Infrastructure and Technology for Education (KITE), an SPV launched by the state government in 2017, had rolled out ICT-enabled education from Class VIII to XII in 2018; last academic year, this was rolled out for primary schools as well. Armed with that experience, the state has now piloted online and on-air learning (via the KITE Victors channel).

J&K Lt Governor approves establishment of SCERT as apex academic authority of UT

- In the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the Administrative Council, which met under the chairmanship of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, gave approval to establishment of State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) by merging the State Institutes of Education.
- SCERT, being the apex academic authority of the Union Territory, is mandated to assist and advice the Administration in implementation of policies and programmes for human resource development in the field of Education, Human and Child Development and National Integration, on the analogy of NCERT- the national apex academic authority. The State Council of Educational Research and Training will also look after various aspects of curriculum development, health and physical education, guidance, counselling and inclusive as well as special education.

Police, Central cadre under Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor

- The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) notified new rules for administration in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir that specify the functions of the Lieutenant Governor (LG) and the Council of Ministers.

- According to the transaction of business rules, “police, public order, All India Services and anti-corruption,” will fall under the executive functions of the LG, implying that the **Chief Minister or the Council of Ministers** will have no say in their functioning.
- The **Council of Ministers**, led by the **Chief Minister** will decide service matters of non-All India Services officers, proposal to impose new tax, land revenue, sale grant or lease of government property, reconstituting departments or offices and draft legislations.
- However, in case of difference of opinion between the LG and a Minister when no agreement could be reached even after a month, the “decision of the Lieutenant Governor shall be deemed to have been accepted by the Council of Ministers,” the rules note.

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. The current and second governor of Jammu and Kashmir is **Manoj Sinha**. **Ladakh** is a region administered by India as a union territory; **Radha Krishna Mathur** is the first Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh.

Rajnath to attend SCO Defence Ministers’ meet in Russia

- Amid continuing tensions with China on the border in Ladakh since May, **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh** is scheduled to visit **Russia** next week for the **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Defence Ministers meeting**.
- The meeting will be also be attended by his Chinese counterpart. **Later in September, from 15 to 26, an Indian military tri-service contingent will not participate in the Russian Kavkaz 2020 strategic command-post exercise for which SCO member states, including China and Pakistan, have been invited.**

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

International



UAE's police dogs first in the world to successfully sniff out Covid-19

- The UAE has successfully trained police dogs to detect Covid-19 cases in passengers arriving at its airports, making the country the first in the world to successfully do so. Police dogs were trained and stationed across its airports as an additional line of defence to detect Covid-19.
- While other countries, such as Lebanon, have begun to train dogs to sniff out the virus, the UAE is the only one to implement it so far. **The dogs have been trained to detect the virus through a person's sweat and do not have to come into direct contact with individuals.** Within seconds of an infected person passing by a dog, the animal will be able to determine whether that individual is carrying the coronavirus.

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

TikTok to open first European data centre in Ireland

- Popular short-video app TikTok, owned by China's ByteDance, said it plans to open its first European data centre in Ireland with an investment of about 420 million euros (\$499 million). **Under fire from U.S. President Donald Trump over national security risks, TikTok is in talks with Microsoft about selling its U.S. operations.** Trump said he will ban the service in the United States on Sept. 15 if there was no sale.

TikTok / Douyin is a Chinese video-sharing social networking service owned by ByteDance, a Beijing-based Internet technology company founded in 2012 by Zhang Yiming. It is used to create short music, lip-sync, dance, comedy and talent videos of 3 to 15 seconds, and short looping videos of 3 to 60 seconds. ByteDance first launched Douyin for the Chinese market in September 2016.

Ruling party led by PM Mahinda Rajapaksa won a landslide victory at general elections

- Sri Lanka's Mahinda Rajapaksa staged a political comeback as his party registered a landslide victory in the twice-postponed general elections, according to the final results released by the elections commission.
- The official results declared showed that the Sri Lanka People's Party (SLPP) alone had won 145 seats and with its allies have 150 seats, a two thirds majority in the 225-member parliament. The party led by the prime minister won all but four of the 22 electoral districts on offer. **The victory margins in the South, dominated by the majority Sinhala community, were in the high 60 percent mark in most areas.** The party polled 6.8 million votes at 59.9 percent.

Sri Lanka is an island country in South Asia, located in the Indian Ocean to the southwest of the Bay of Bengal. Sri Lanka is separated from the India by the Gulf of Mannar and the Palk Strait. Sri Jayewardenepura Kotte is the official, administrative capital of Sri Lanka. Colombo is the commercial capital and largest city of Sri Lanka. Gotabaya Rajapaksa is the current President of Sri Lanka. Mahinda Rajapaksa is the current Prime Minister of Sri Lanka. Sri Lankan rupee is the currency of Sri Lanka.

US Conducts Test Flight of Unarmed Minuteman 3 Missile

- An unarmed Minuteman 3 intercontinental ballistic missile was launched from California on a test flight to a target in the Pacific Ocean, the Air Force Global Strike Command.
- The missile blasted off from Vandenberg Air Force Base and its three reentry vehicles traveled 4,200 miles (6,759 kilometres) to the Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands as part of a developmental test, the command said from Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana.

United States of America (USA) is a federal republic composed of 50 states and capital is Washington, D.C., Donald John Trump is the 45th 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.

24 million may drop out of school due to COVID-19 impact: U.N.

- Almost 24 million children are at risk of not returning to school next year due to the economic fallout of COVID-19, according to the United Nation's policy brief on the pandemic's impact on education. The educational financing gap is also likely to increase by one third, it said.
- More than 1.6 billion learners across the world have been affected by the disruption of the education system, but the pandemic has also served to exacerbate existing disparities, with vulnerable populations in low-income countries taking a harder and longer hit. For example, during the second quarter of 2020, 86% of children at the primary level have been effectively out of school in poor countries, compared to just 20% in highly developed countries.
- Global Education Monitoring Report 2020 has been released by UNESCO to monitor progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) on education as well as other education-related points in the SDG Agenda.

Mauritius declares emergency as stranded ship spills fuel

- The Indian Ocean island of Mauritius declared a "state of environmental emergency" after a Japanese-owned ship that ran aground offshore days ago began spilling tons of fuel.
- Prime Minister Pravind Jugnauth announced the development as satellite images showed a dark slick spreading in the turquoise waters near environmental areas that the government called "very sensitive." Mauritius has said the ship was carrying nearly 4,000 tons of fuel and cracks have appeared in its hull.
- Jugnauth earlier in the day said his government was appealing to France for help, saying the spill "represents a danger" for the country of some 1.3 million people that relies heavily on tourism and has been hit hard by the effects.

Mauritius is an island nation in the Indian Ocean about 2,000 kilometres (1,200 mi) off the southeast coast of the African continent. Ameenah Gurib was the first woman to ever hold the title of President of Mauritius. Prithvirajsing Roopun is serving as President of Mauritius as of 2 December 2019. Port Louis is the capital city of Mauritius. The rupee is the currency of Mauritius.

Scotland to become first country in the world to teach LGBT+ inclusive curriculum in schools

- In a world first, all Scottish state schools will teach LGBT+ history as part of the curriculum by 2021. Schools will be expected to teach the fight for LGBT+ rights in lessons as well as actively tackle homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia by teaching pupils about LGBT+ identities.
- The plans were approved by the Scottish government in November 2018 after a campaign by Time for Inclusive Education (TIE). Schools will need to implement it into their curriculum by May 2021.
- Scotland is already known for its progressive attitude regarding the rights of LGBTI -- lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex. Same-sex couples can adopt and foster kids legally from 2009. Discrimination on the basis of gender and sexuality has been banned as per law since 2010.

Scotland is a country that is part of the United Kingdom. Edinburgh is the capital city of Scotland. Nicola Sturgeon is the current First Minister of Scotland. She is the first woman to hold the position. Pound sterling known in some contexts simply as the pound or sterling is the official currency of it.

Kisawa Sanctuary on Benguerra Island in Mozambique will be the world's first 3D-printed, ultra-luxury eco resort

- **Kisawa Sanctuary in Mozambique** is redefining responsible travel quite literally from the ground up. In a purported world first, elements of this luxury retreat on Benguerra Island have been 3D printed in a sand and seawater mortar that fuses sustainability and tradition with technology.
- **Patented 3D sand-printing technology** has been commissioned specifically for the project and used across various aspects of the build. The sand and seawater amalgamate provides a tactile, natural finish to the building façades and has also been used to generate 3D-printed components for flooring, tiling, and masonry.

Mozambique is a country located in Southern Africa. The capital and largest city of Mozambique is Maputo. Filipe Nyusi is serving as the current President of Mozambique. The metical is the currency of Mozambique.

Lebanon's PM Hassan Diab resigns following public outrage over major blast in Beirut

- **Lebanon's Prime Minister Hassan Diab** has resigned from his post in the wake of major blast in Beirut that has triggered public outrage. Mr Diab said he is taking a step back so he can stand with the people and fight the battle for change alongside them.
- **The Prime Minister's resignation follows a weekend of anti-government protests after the August 4 explosion in Beirut's port** that decimated the facility and caused widespread destruction, killing more than 160 people and injured about six thousands. **Diab's government was formed in January this year after his predecessor, Saad Hariri, stepped down** in October last year in response to the demonstrations.
- **The explosion was reportedly caused by 2,750 tonnes of ammonium nitrate**, which was stored at the warehouse. The highly explosive material was stored unsafely at the port for years.

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

India, Maldives ink contract for development of five eco-tourism zones in Addu atoll of island

- **India and Maldives signed a contract for development of five eco-tourism zones in Addu atoll** of the island nation. Currently, there are 9 such high-impact projects being implemented in the Maldives.
- **These eco-tourism zones are part of grant projects being implemented under the High-Impact Community Development project (HICDP) scheme** which involves a total grant assistance of 5.5 million US dollars to the Maldives. Currently, there are 9 such high-impact projects being implemented in the Maldives.

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

Mahinda Rajapaksa to take oath as Sri Lanka's PM for fourth time

- **Mahinda Rajapaksa was sworn in as the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka for the fourth time**, three days after his party declared a victory in the country's 2020 General Elections. **Mahinda Rajapaksa took oath before Sri Lankan President and his younger brother Gotabaya Rajapaksa at the Kelaniya Raja Maha Buddhist temple** outside Colombo.
- **The 74-year-old Sri Lanka People's Party (SLPP) leader, who polled over 5, 00,000 individual preference votes — the highest ever recorded by a candidate in the history of elections.** The SLPP, led by Mr. Rajapaksa, registered a landslide victory in the general election, securing two-thirds majority in Parliament needed to amend the Constitution to further consolidate the powerful Rajapaksa family's grip on power.

Lukashenko wins Belarus election marred by protests

- **The Opposition in Belarus rejected official election results handing President Alexander Lukashenko a landslide re-election victory** saying the poll was rigged and that talks needed to begin on a peaceful transfer of power.
- Earlier, the central election commission said **Mr. Lukashenko, in power for more than a quarter of a century, won 80% of the vote election**, while Svetlana Tikhanouskaya, who emerged from obscurity to become his main rival, took just 9.9%.

Belarus is a landlocked country in Eastern Europe. Minsk is the capital and largest city of Belarus. Roman Golovchenko is a served as Prime Minister of Belarus between 4 June 2020 and 17 August 2020. Alexander Lukashenko has been serving as President of Belarus since the establishment of the office 26 years ago, on 20 July 1994. The Belarusian ruble or rouble is the official currency of Belarus.

Russia launches first vaccine against coronavirus

- **Russia has developed the first vaccine against the coronavirus.** The announcement was **made by President Vladimir Putin** during a televised video conference call with government ministers. He said one of his daughters has already been inoculated.
- As the number of coronavirus cases continues to rise at an alarming rate across the globe, scientists and medical experts are making accelerated efforts to develop a vaccine fit for human use. **Currently, there are more than 160 vaccine candidates in different stages of production and 27 of these have reached the human trials.**
- **While the vaccine created by Oxford University and drugmaker AstraZeneca is considered one of the frontrunners in the race to develop a coronavirus vaccine, Russia became the first country in the world to launch its very own coronavirus vaccine.**
- **Russia currently has two COVID-19 vaccine candidates in the race.** Russia will reportedly begin producing the vaccine soon and already has plans for a massive, country-wide vaccine drive.

Currently there are about 165 different vaccines for COVID-19 being developed around the world. The main types of vaccines include: viral vector-based vaccines, virus-based, nucleic acid-based and protein-based vaccines. Russian adenovirus vector-based vaccine was registered by the Russian Ministry of Health on August 11 and became the first registered COVID-19 vaccine on the market. The announcement created a so-called “Sputnik moment” for the global community. In 1957 the successful launch of the first space satellite by the Soviet Union reinvigorated space research around the world. The new Russian COVID-19 vaccine is therefore called Sputnik V.

Sri Lanka appoints ex-military man as new Foreign Secretary

- **The Sri Lankan government appointed ex-commander of the Navy Admiral Jayanath Colombage as the new Foreign Secretary;** days after the new Cabinet took the oath with President Gotabaya Rajapaksa retaining the key defence ministry.
- **Mr. Colombage, replaces Ravinatha Aryasinha,** a career foreign service officer. He headed the Sri Lanka Navy between 2012 and 2014; he has been the **foreign affairs advisor to President Rajapaksa. This is the first time that a non-foreign service person has been appointed as the Secretary to the Foreign Ministry.**

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In a first, Indian tricolour hoisted at iconic Times Square in New York

- **A leading diaspora group in the US hoisted India’s National Flag at the Times Square this week, the first time the Indian tricolour will be unfurled at the iconic New York City destination.**

- The Federation of Indian Associations (FIA) of the tri-state area of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut said in a statement that it **created history** on August 15, 2020 by “hosting the first ever flag hoisting ceremony at Times Square” to commemorate India’s Independence Day.

Russia, Brazil agree to cooperate in production & marketing of world’s first registered coronavirus vaccine Sputnik V

- Russia and Brazil have agreed to cooperate in the production and marketing of the world’s first registered coronavirus vaccine **Sputnik V**. In a Statement Russian Direct Investment Fund said that the agreement was reached with Brazilian State of Parana.
- As part of the signed strategic cooperation agreement, **RDIF, together with pharmaceutical companies** in the state of Parana, is **organizing the production of Sputnik V vaccine and its distribution in Brazil and other Latin American countries**. The Russian Health Ministry registered the world’s first Sputnik V vaccine for the prevention of COVID-19.

Indian-origin senator Kamala Harris named US Vice-Presidential candidate for Democratic Party

- In the United States, Democratic Presidential nominee Joe Biden has named Indian-origin senator Kamala Harris as his Vice-Presidential running mate. Joe Biden made history by selecting the first black woman to compete on a major party’s presidential ticket.
- Kamala Harris is currently the US Senator from California. Former US President Barack Obama has often described her as a trailblazer. If elected, Kamala Harris would be the first ever woman to be the Vice President of the United States and the first ever Indian-American and African Vice President of the country.

Kamala Devi Harris has served as the junior United States senator from California since 2017. She is the Democratic vice presidential nominee for the 2020 election. Born in Oakland, California, Harris is a graduate of Howard University and the University of California, Hastings College of the Law. She began her career in the Alameda County District Attorney’s Office, before being recruited to the San Francisco District Attorney’s Office and later the City Attorney of San Francisco’s office. In 2003, she was elected district attorney of San Francisco. She was elected attorney general of California in 2010, and re-elected in 2014. She defeated Loretta Sanchez in the 2016 Senate election to become the second African-American woman and the first South Asian American to serve in the United States Senate.

Ivory Coast Defence Minister Bakayoko named Prime Minister

- Ivory Coast’s defence minister, Hamed Bakayoko, has been named Prime minister, after acting as interim Prime Minister since the sudden death of Amadou Gon Coulibaly.
- Considered a close associate of President Alassane Ouattara and a pillar of the regime, Bakayoko, has had the defence portfolio since 2017, after serving as interior minister from 2011. He has also been mayor of Abobo, one of the West African country’s most populous districts, since 2018.

Ivory Coast is a country located on the south coast of West Africa. Ivory Coast’s political capital is Yamoussoukro in the centre of the country, while its economic capital and largest city is the port city of Abidjan. Alassane Dramane Ouattara has been President of Ivory Coast since 2010. West African CFA franc is the currency of eight independent states in West Africa: Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo.

India announces \$500 mn package for Maldives

- India announced a slew of new connectivity measures for the Maldives, including air, sea, intra-island and telecommunications in an effort to help the Indian Ocean Islands deal with the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Among the initiatives announced at a meeting between External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and Maldives Foreign Minister Abdullah Shahid via videoconference are an **air connectivity “bubble” for travel, a direct ferry**

service, a submarine cable for telecom connectivity; and assistance for the Greater Male Connectivity project (GMCP) to connect Male to three neighbouring islands, the biggest such project thus far.

- The project, which will consist of a number of bridges and causeways to connect Male to Villingili, Thilafushi and Gulhifahu islands that span 6.7 km, taking much of the pressure of the main capital island of Male for commercial and residential purposes. The US \$400 million Line of Credit comes in addition to a previous LoC of \$800 million that was announced by New Delhi in December 2018.

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

United Kingdom launches 3-million pound innovation challenge fund in India

- The UK government has launched a 3-million pound innovation challenge fund in India to support scientists in academia and industry to tackle the most acute global challenges like Covid-19 and the threat to the environment.

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.

Abraham Accord

- On August 13, 2020, the Israel-United Arab Emirates Peace Agreement or the Abraham Accord was agreed to by UAE and Israel.
- If the agreement is signed then UAE will be the third Arab country to sign a peace agreement with Israel after Egypt (1979) and Jordan (1994). It will also be the first Persian Gulf country to sign an accord with Israel.
- The agreement is expected to be signed by this September in the White House. The name Abraham is to honour the patriarch of three major Abrahamic religions of the world – Judaism, Islam and Christianity.

Israel is a country in the Middle East, Jerusalem is one of the oldest cities in the world, and is considered holy to the three major Abrahamic religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Both Israel and the Palestinian Authority claim Jerusalem as their capital, however, neither claim is widely recognized internationally. Knesset is the unicameral national legislature of Israel. Israeli new shekel is the currency of Israel. Benjamin Netanyahu is serving as the 9th and current Prime Minister of Israel since 2009. Reuven Rivlin is serving as the 10th and current President of Israel since 2014.

US elections: Democratic Party formally nominates Joe Biden as presidential candidate

- In the United States, Democratic Party has formally nominated Joe Biden as its presidential nominee for the 2020 elections. He will take on President Donald Trump in the November polls for the White House.
- Biden received the nomination in a “roll call across America”, which saw Democratic delegates and normal people from all 50 states and seven territories of the US cast the majority of votes for the former vice president.

Joseph Robinette Biden is an American politician who served as the 47th vice president of the United States from 2009 to 2017. In January 2017, Barack Obama awarded Biden the Presidential Medal of Freedom with distinction. On August 11, 2020, Biden announced U.S. Senator Kamala Harris as his running mate in the 2020 presidential election.

Chrystia Freeland named Canada’s first female finance minister

- Canada’s deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland has been named finance minister following a Cabinet shuffle. Her appointment comes after Bill Morneau suddenly quit the job amid pressure from opposition parties.

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- One of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's most trusted ministers, **Ms Freeland**, will become the first woman to hold the position in Canada.

Canada is a country located in the northern part of North America. Canada is the world's second-largest country by total area. Elizabeth II is the Head of the Commonwealth and queen regnant of seven independent Commonwealth countries: the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Pakistan, and Ceylon. Its capital is Ottawa, and its three largest metropolitan areas are Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver. Canadian dollar is the currency of Canada. Justin Pierre James Trudeau is serving as the 23rd and current Prime Minister of Canada since 2015.

Mali President Ibrahim Boubacar Kita resigns amid military coup

- **Malian President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita** has announced his resignation amid a military coup. He announced his resignation on state television hours after mutinous soldiers fired shots into the air outside his home before detaining him. The dramatic development comes after more than two months of regular demonstrations calling for him to step down three years before his final term was due to end.

Mali is a landlocked country in West Africa, a region geologically identified with the West African Craton. Mali is the eighth-largest country in Africa. Bamako is the capital and largest city of Mali. Assimi Goita is a Malian military officer seized power from former President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita in the 2020 Malian coup. West African CFA franc is the currency of eight independent states in West Africa: Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo.

Polish Foreign Minister Jacek Czaputowicz resigns in pre-announced move

- **Poland's Foreign Minister announced his resignation** on August 20 in the fourth high-level departure this week from the country's right-wing government.
- **Jacek Czaputowicz** had said last that he was expecting to leave the government as part of a reshuffle following the recent re-election of President Andrzej Duda, who is closely allied with Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki's government.

Poland is a country located in Central Europe. With a population of nearly 38.5 million people, Poland is the fifth most populous member state of the European Union. Poland's capital and largest metropolis is Warsaw. Mateusz Jakub Morawiecki has been the Prime Minister of Poland since December 2017. The zloty is the official currency and legal tender of Poland.

Pakistan terms Sharif an 'absconder', approaches U.K. for extradition

- The Pakistan government has declared former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, currently in London for treatment, an absconder and approached the U.K. government for his extradition. The government is treating him (Sharif) as an absconder and has already sent a request to the British government to extradite him.

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

Turkey discovers large natural gas reserve off Black Sea

- **Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan** announced the discovery of a large natural gas reserve off the Black Sea coast that will help ease the country's dependence on imports.
- **Erdogan said the amount of gas discovered is 320 billion cubic meters**, a sum industry analysts said was notable but not a "game-changer" that might turn the country into a regional energy hub or materially alter its financial fortunes. Turkey hopes to start extracting and using the gas by 2023, when Turkey marks the centenary of the founding of the republic.

Turkey is a transcontinental country located mainly in Western Asia, with a smaller portion on the Balkan Peninsula in Southeast Europe. Ankara is the capital of the Republic of Turkey. The Turkish lira is the currency of Turkey. Recep Tayyip Erdogan is the both the head of state and head of government of the Turkey.

Indonesia: Sinabung volcano unleashes new burst of hot ash

- **A rumbling volcano in western Indonesia unleashed an avalanche of scorching clouds down its slopes.** The volcano in North Sumatra province was shooting smoke and ash more than 1,000 meters into the air and hot ash clouds travelled 1 kilometer southeast.

Indonesia is a transcontinental unitary sovereign state located mainly in Southeast Asia, with some territories in Oceania. It is the world's largest island country, with more than thirteen thousand islands. Jakarta is the capital and largest city of Indonesia. Joko Widodo also known as Jokowi is the seventh and current President of Indonesia. The rupiah (Rp) is the official currency of Indonesia.

MEA in partnership with Foreign Ministry of Thailand organize 6th Round Table of AINTT

- **The Ministry of External Affairs in partnership with the Foreign Ministry of Thailand has organized the 6th Round Table of ASEAN-India Network of Think Tanks (AINTT).**
- **The theme of the two day Round Table which was conducted through video conferencing was 'ASEAN-India: Strengthening Partnership in the Post COVID Era'. It was jointly inaugurated by External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar and the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Thailand Mr. Don Pramudwinai.**

Saudi Arabia's state oil company Aramco suspends 10 bn dollar China oil refinery project

- **Saudi Arabia's state oil company Aramco has suspended a deal to build a 10 billion dollar refining and petrochemicals complex in China.** Aramco decided to stop investing in the facility in China's Northeastern province of Liaoning due to uncertain market outlook.
- **The oil-price crash and Corona's impact on energy demand have changed the calculations for energy companies' projects around the world.** Aramco plans deep cuts to its capital spending as it tries to maintain a 75 billion dollar dividend amid low crude prices and rising debt. The kingdom – Aramco's main recipient of those dividends – is suffering a major squeeze on its public finances. **The joint venture was signed when Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman was in Beijing in February last year.**
- **Saudi Aramco is a Saudi Arabian multinational petroleum and natural gas company based in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. It is one of the largest companies in the world by revenue.**

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

Sri Lankan government grants approval to abolish 19th amendment to the constitution

- **Sri Lankan government has granted approval to abolish the 19th amendment to the constitution and replace it with the 20th amendment.** Minister of Mass Media Keheliya Rambukwella said the decision was taken at the first cabinet meeting of new government held.
- **President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa had made the abolition of 19th amendment as the main election plank during the presidential and parliamentary elections.**
- **The amendment brought by previous government had put a two-term limit on Presidency and curtailed the executive powers of President and transferred it to parliament and independent commissions. The 19A adopted in 2015 by the then reformist government was subject to much criticism by the Rajapaksa clan as it prevented dual citizens from contesting elections. At the time, two of the Rajapaksa family members including the current president were dual citizens of the US and Sri Lanka.**

- The 13th Amendment to Sri Lanka's constitution is the amendment which created provincial councils in Sri Lanka, called for the merging of the Northern and Eastern Province and made Tamil as well as Sinhala an official language. It was enacted after the signing of the Indo-Lanka Accord between then Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Sri Lankan President J.R. Jayewardene.

Sri Lanka is an island country in South Asia, located in the Indian Ocean to the southwest of the Bay of Bengal. Sri Lanka is separated from the India by the Gulf of Mannar and the Palk Strait. Sri Jayewardenepura Kotte is the official, administrative capital of Sri Lanka. Colombo is the commercial capital and largest city of Sri Lanka. Gotabaya Rajapaksa is the current President of Sri Lanka. Mahinda Rajapaksa is the current Prime Minister of Sri Lanka. Sri Lankan rupee is the currency of Sri Lanka.

Pakistan says Dawood name on list is as per UN

- In a turn of events that had been expected by New Delhi, Pakistan stepped back from its acknowledgment — which became public — of the presence of terrorist Dawood Ibrahim on its soil.
- Dawood, one of the most wanted men in India, figured in a list of 88 individuals published as a Statutory Regulatory Order (SRO) by Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to escape blacklisting by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).
- Dawood, who is accused of the 1993 serial blasts in Mumbai among other terrorist attacks, has long been on India's most wanted list, but governments in Pakistan have repeatedly denied his presence in that country.
- Moving to avoid the FATF blacklist, Pakistan, via the SRO dated August 18, reproduced the terror listing of Dawood by the United Nations Security Council. The FATF is an inter-governmental body that works 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".
- Pakistan has been on the "grey list" of the FATF since 2018 – a step away from being blacklisted (along with Iran and North Korea) – and under intense scrutiny to deliver on its political commitment to take effective action in line with the global anti-money laundering (AML) and combating the financing of terrorism (CFT) regime.

Dawood Ibrahim Kaskar is a mobster and drug dealer most wanted by India with a reward of \$25 million. He is originally from Dongri, Mumbai. He was named by the Indian government as one of the masterminds in the 1993 Mumbai Attacks. Following the attacks he fled Dubai for Karachi, where he is said to be living to this day.

India co-sponsors UN Security Council resolution on women peacekeepers

- India has co-sponsored a Security Council resolution that calls for full, effective and meaningful participation of women personnel in peacekeeping operations. India's Permanent Mission to the UN said that India is proud to co-sponsor the resolution which was put forth by Indonesia.
- India is one of the largest troop contributors to UN peacekeeping operations. The mission said India has set for itself during its tenure in the Security Council beginning 2021 that India will continue to push for greater involvement of women in all areas.
- In June, India was elected non-permanent member of the Security Council for a two-year term beginning January 1, 2021.
- India has a long tradition of being associated with UN Peacekeeping since its inception. The country made history in 2007 when she deployed the first all-women Police Unit in the UN Mission in Liberia. India is the fifth largest contributor of uniformed personnel to the UN Peacekeeping Forces.

University of Hong Kong documents world's first case of covid-19 re-infection

- Putting the belief to rest that recovered covid-19 patients have immunity against re-infection because most developed a serum neutralizing antibody response, The University of Hong Kong (HKU) documented the world's first case of covid-19 re-infection.

- Researchers from Department of Microbiology, Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine, The University of Hong Kong (HKU), said that they have **proven the first instance of human re-infection by SARS-CoV-2 by using the next generation sequencing.**
- The team showed that the genome sequence of the virus strain in the **first episode of covid-19 infection is clearly different from the genome sequence of the virus strain** found during second episode of infection. **The scientists have cautioned that patients with previous covid-19 infection** should also comply with epidemiological control measures such as universal masking and social distancing.

India-ASEAN can resolve differences; take trade to \$300 billion

- Commerce and industry minister **Piyush Goyal** **India-ASEAN trade can reach \$300 billion** and the two can resolve their differences by addressing concerns of all nations and businesses, said **at the ASEAN-India Business Council virtual meet.**
- **India's merchandise trade with the 10-member ASEAN or Association of Southeast Asian Nations in FY20 was \$86.86 billion. The two sides inked a free trade agreement (FTA) and have now agreed to review the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement that was signed in 2009** after New Delhi complained of a burgeoning trade deficit with the grouping. **India had a trade deficit of \$23.88 billion with ASEAN in FY20.** ASEAN is also part of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership trade bloc that India exited last year.

Association of Southeast Asian Nations is a **regional intergovernmental organization** comprising ten countries in Southeast Asia, which promotes intergovernmental cooperation and facilitates **economic, political, security, military, educational, and sociocultural** integration among its members and other countries in Asia. **ASEAN was established on 8 August 1967 in Bangkok** by the five original member countries: Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. **The current member countries are Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. Its headquarter is in Jakarta (Indonesia).**

World Health Organization declares Africa free of polio

- **World Health Organization has declared Africa free of polio**, a landmark in a decades-long campaign to eradicate the notorious disease around the world.
- This is a historic day for Africa, said Prof. Rose Gana Fomban Leke, whose commission certified that no cases had occurred on the continent for the past four years, the threshold for eradication of poliovirus. The WHO said, **poliovirus now joins smallpox in the list of viruses that have been wiped out in Africa.**

World Health Organization (WHO) is a **specialized agency of the United Nations** that is **concerned with international public health.** It was established on **7 April 1948**, and is **headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.** The **current Director-General of WHO is Tedros Adhanom**, who started his five-year term on **1 July 2017.**

Kenya becomes first country in world awarded 'Safer Tourism Resilience Seal'

- **Kenya has become the first country in the world** to be awarded the recommended status of the **Safer Tourism Resilience Seal** by global body **Rebuilding Travels.**
- **The tourism agency singled out Kenya's commitment to creating a step by step process of a careful and safe reopening and resumption of business in the tourism sector.**

Kenya is a country in Eastern Africa. Kenya's capital and largest city is Nairobi, while its oldest city and first capital is the coastal city of **Mombasa. The shilling is the currency of Kenya. Uhuru Muigai Kenyatta is current President of the Republic of Kenya.**

Parachutist makes world's first jump from solar-powered plane in Switzerland

- **A parachutist completed the world's first jump from a solar-powered aircraft** after the plane soared to a **height of 1,520 metres (nearly 5,000 ft) over western Switzerland.** The two-seater prototype plane made the test flight in good weather and to promote renewable energy.

- Parachutist Raphael Domjan reached a speed of 150 kilometres per hour during his jump, landing near the project base in Payerne.

Maldives launches India backed infrastructure projects

- A ground-breaking ceremony for development of the Hulhumalé Central Park and renovation of the Arrival Jetty in Maldives financed by India was held marking yet another milestone in Delhi's growing partnership with Male.
- Foreign Minister Abdulla Shahid, Hulhumalé MP Ali Niyaz, High Commissioner Sunjay Sudhir, MD of Housing Development Corporation Limited (HDC) Suhail Ahmed and officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Maldives participated in the event.
- The project is being executed by the HDC through an **approximate 10 million Maldivian Rupee grant assistance from India**. It is included **under the 18 grant projects being funded by India in the Maldives under a total grant assistance of USD 6.9 million (MVR 106 million)** extended in 2019.

UK remains 'world's biggest offshore wind market' in first half of 2020

- The UK has retained its dominant place in the global offshore wind market in the first half of 2020.
- That's according to the recent report by the World Forum Offshore Wind (WFO), **which suggests the country kept the top spot, with more than 10GW of cumulative installed capacity – 714MW** were added during the first six months of the year.
- **Germany is in second place on the list of total global offshore wind capacity in operation**, with a total of 7.7GW – however, only 203MW of new capacity added during the first half of 2020.
- According to the figures, **China's offshore wind market is growing rapidly, with 1.4GW of newly-installed capacity during the first half of 2020**, increasing the total installed capacity to 6.4GW.

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.

Shinzo Abe resigns on health grounds

- **Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, resigned citing health concerns.** This announcement comes days after he made at least two hospital visits in a week.
- **Abe recently became Japan's longest-serving leader**, breaking the record of spending the maximum number of days in office that was previously set by **his great-uncle, Eisaku Sato, who served as Prime Minister of Japan from 1964 to 1972.**
- According to local news reports, **Abe suffers from ulcerative colitis, a chronic medical condition that he has lived with since he was a teenager**, but one that has exacerbated more recently. During his first term as the country's prime minister, **Abe resigned in 2007, only a year after assuming the top job.** At that time, political observers had said that Abe's sudden resignation was a combination of foreign and domestic factors, including a political stalemate in Japan over the country's logistical support for the US invasion of Afghanistan.

Ulcerative colitis (UL-sur-uh-tiv koe-LIE-tis) is an **inflammatory bowel disease (IBD)** that causes **long-lasting inflammation and ulcers (sores)** in your digestive tract. **Ulcerative colitis affects the innermost lining of your large intestine (colon) and rectum.** Symptoms usually develop over time, rather than suddenly. **Ulcerative colitis can be debilitating and can sometimes lead to life-threatening complications.** While it **has no known cure**, treatment can greatly reduce signs and symptoms of the disease and even bring about long-term remission.

ECONOMY AND FINANCE



Economy News

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched Transparent Taxation ‘Honoring the Honest’

- Prime Minister of India launched the ‘Transparent Taxation - Honoring the Honest’ platform to honour the honest taxpayers of the country. This platform will further carry forward the journey of direct tax reforms.
- It is aimed at bringing transparency in income tax systems and empowering taxpayers. The main features of the platform are faceless assessment, faceless appeal and taxpayer charter. The faceless assessment and taxpayer charter will come into place immediately from the launch, while the faceless appeal is going to be applicable from 25th September 2020.
- **Faceless Assessment:** It aims to eliminate human interface between the taxpayer and the income tax department. There will be no need for the taxpayer to visit the income tax office or the officer. The selection of a taxpayer is possible through systems using analytics and Artificial Intelligence.
- **Faceless Appeal:** Under the system, appeals will be randomly allotted to any officer in the country. The identity of the officer deciding the appeal will remain unknown. **Taxpayer Charter:** This outlines the rights and responsibilities of both tax officers and taxpayers.

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has carried out several major tax reforms in direct taxes in recent years. The focus of the tax reforms has been on reduction in tax rates and on simplification of direct tax laws. Corporate Tax rates were reduced from 30% to 22% in 2019. For new manufacturing units the corporate tax rates were reduced to 15%. Dividend Distribution Tax was also abolished in 2019. With a view to provide for resolution of pending tax disputes the IT Department also brought out the Direct Tax ‘Vivad se Vishwas Act, 2020’ under which declarations for settling disputes are being filed currently.

Housing minister Hardeep Puri launches digital platforms to market residential properties

- Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri launched digital platforms of real estate bodies CREDAI and NAREDCO to market residential properties, besides releasing a guide book for affordable rental housing scheme for migrants.
- The minister launched ‘CREDAI Awaas App’ and NAREDCO’s online portal ‘HousingforAll.com’. Puri released the knowledge pack of the government’s ‘Affordable Rental Housing Complexes’ (ARHCs) programme, which has been recently launched to provide rental accommodations to migrant and urban poor.
- The ARHCs scheme, which has been launched under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Urban (PMAY-U) as part of Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, will help in providing dignified and affordable living spaces for urban migrants/ poor in need.

Hardeep Singh Puri is the current Civil Aviation Minister of India and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs in India. He is a 1974 batch Indian Foreign Service officer who served as the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations from 2009 to 2013. He formerly served as President of the United Nations Security Council and he represents Rajya Sabha from Uttar Pradesh.

SEBI to set up virtual museum of securities market

- **Regulator SEBI is planning to set up a virtual museum of securities market** to highlight achievements and milestones in the Indian capital market. **Sebi has invited Expression of Interest (EoI) from agencies** to develop the virtual museum.
- **The museum is intended to be a visual online organised collection of history of evolution, achievements and milestones in the Indian securities market over the decades** in terms of market infrastructure, regulation and enforcement, among others, Sebi said.
- **The achievements will be told through photos, videos, articles, media clippings, interactive display like quiz, paintings, drawings, diagrams, graphs, newspaper articles, transcripts of interviews and numerical databases,** among others.

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.

India contributes over \$15 mn to India-UN Development Partnership Fund

- **India has contributed USD 15.46 million to the India-UN Development Partnership Fund**, underscoring the country's commitment to supporting developing nations in its developmental priorities across all the Sustainable Development Goals.
- **India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador T S Tirumurti handed over a cheque of USD 15.46 million to the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) Director Jorge Chediek** at a low-key ceremony held within social distancing guidelines at the Permanent Mission of India to the UN.

Government forms panel to fix ceiling rates under duty reimbursement scheme for exporters

- **The government has constituted a three-member committee for determination of ceiling rates** under a scheme for reimbursement of taxes and duties to exporters. **The reimbursement of taxes under the Remission of Duties and Taxes on Export Products (RoDTEP)** such as duty on power charges, VAT on fuel in transportation, farm sector, captive power generation, mandi tax, stamp duty and central excise duty on fuel used in transportation would make Indian products competitive in global markets.
- According to an order of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), **the committee would be chaired by Secretary (retd) G K Pillai**. The other two members are Y G Parande (retd CBIC member) and Gautam Ray (retd chief commissioner of custom and central excise).

IBBI amends Insolvency & Bankruptcy Board of India

- **The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India notified the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India, Liquidation Process, Third Amendment, Regulations, 2020**. The Regulations require the committee of creditors to fix the fee payable to the liquidator. **Where the fee has not been fixed by the committee of creditors**, the Regulations provide for a fee as a percentage of the amount realised and of the amount distributed by the liquidator.
- There have been instances where a liquidator realises the amount while another liquidator distributes the same to stakeholders. **The amendment made to the Regulations clarifies that where a liquidator realises any amount, but does not distribute the same, he shall be entitled to a fee corresponding to the amount realised by him.**

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

FM Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurates NIP Online Dashboard

- Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated the National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP), Online Dashboard in New Delhi through video conferencing.
- The online dashboard is envisaged as a one stop solution for all stakeholders looking for information on infrastructure projects in New India. The dashboard is being hosted on the India Investment Grid, IIG www.indiainvestmentgrid.gov.in. IIG is an interactive and dynamic online platform that showcases and real-time investment opportunities in the country.

WomenConnect Challenge to come to India

- Reliance Foundation has partnered US Agency for International Development (USAID) to launch the W-GDP WomenConnect Challenge across India this year with an aim to bridge the gender digital divide in India.
- The Women's Global Development and Prosperity (W-GDP) challenge supports private sector-led approaches that close the gender digital divide, expand business opportunities, and empower women. "The W-GDP Fund was created to source and scale the most innovative programs to advance women's economic empowerment."

Cambodian central bank implements first retail payments system in the world using blockchain technology

- In the Kingdom of Cambodia in Southeast Asia, three-quarters (78%) of its citizens do not have a bank account, yet more than half own a smartphone.
- The Khmer riel (KHR), which is the native currency, has been stable for 20 years but however, most people in the country use the American dollar. Ever since a major UN mission in the mid-1990s, the price of everything from a cup of coffee to a car has been given in U.S. dollars.
- To address these challenges and more, the central bank of the country – National Bank of Cambodia (NBC), partnered with Tokyo-based Soramitsu, a blockchain developer expert, to modernize the country's legacy retail payments with the help of the Hyperledger Iroha blockchain framework.

Cambodia is a country located in the southern portion of the Indochina peninsula in Southeast Asia. Phnom Penh is the capital in Cambodia. Hun Sen has served as the Prime Minister of Cambodia since 1985.

A first in India as IEX gets the go-ahead for green energy trading

- Indian Energy Exchange (IEX) will commence trading of green energy on its power trading platform, the first such for the country. IEX has received the approval of Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) to set up a 'green term-ahead market'.
- IEX said it will offer trade in four types of green term-ahead contracts - Green Intra-day contracts, Day-ahead Contingency contracts, Daily Contracts and Weekly contracts. "There will be separate contracts for solar and non-solar energy," said the company.
- IEX already has a platform for trading of 'Renewable Energy Certificates' (REC). With the green term ahead market, it would be the first physical trading of renewable energy.

Indian Energy Exchange (IEX) is an electronic system based power trading exchange regulated by the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC). IEX started its operations on June 27, 2008. Indian Energy Exchange pioneered the development of power trading in India and it is headquartered in New Delhi.

India has cheap internet & good e-governance, but lacks good digital life quality, finds study

- In a global index on digital quality of life in 85 countries, India ranked 9th on the internet affordability indicator, and 15th on e-government.
- The index, prepared by Surfshark, a virtual private network (VPN) provider based in the British Virgin Islands, sought to rank countries on internet affordability and quality, and electronic infrastructure, security and government. All parameters have equal weightage.

- Overall, India ranked 57th on the Digital Quality of Life Index 2020. Scandinavian countries Denmark and Sweden topped the index, with Canada rounding up the top three.
- According to the survey, Israel offered the cheapest internet — calculated by considering how much time one must work to be able to afford the cheapest mobile internet and broadband. It was followed by Canada and Azerbaijan. India scored the best on this parameter, leading countries like the UK, US and China. Of the total countries, 75 per cent of them have to work more than the global average to afford the internet.
- Singapore, the UK and the US performed the best on the e-government indicator — arrived at by checking the state of government's online presence and readiness to employ artificial intelligence technology and help “minimise bureaucracy, reduce corruption and increase transparency of the public sector”.

Hallmarking of precious metals will be mandatory from June 1 next year

- Consumer Affairs Minister Ram Vilas Paswan has said that **hallmarking of precious metals will be mandatory from 1st June next year**. Mr Paswan said this while **launching the online system of Registration and Renewal of Jewellers in New Delhi**.
- The best thing about the online system is that **there will be no human interface in processing the applications**. **Now, Jewellers can apply online and submit required necessary documents** and fees for obtaining a licence through this portal.
- The Minister said that with **hallmarking of gold jewellery and artifacts becoming mandatory**, the number of jewellers coming forward for registration is **expected to go up to five lakh from the present 31 thousand**. He said, **at present, there are 921 Hallmarking Centers, located in 234 districts of the country**. Mr Paswan informed that **BIS is working on operationalizing the Assaying and Hallmarking centers in remaining 480 districts by June, 2021**.

Ram Vilas Paswan is an Indian politician from Bihar and the current Cabinet Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution. Paswan is also the president of the Lok Janshakti Party, eight-time Lok Sabha member and current Rajya Sabha MP.

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.

Government activates Aadhaar authentication for new GST registration

- Government has activated Aadhaar authentication for new goods and services tax (GST) registration to enhance ease of doing business. **For those opting for Aadhaar authentication, new GST registration will be issued within three working days and will not need to wait for physical verification**.
- However, **those not opting for Aadhaar authentication will be granted it only after physical verification of the place of business or documentary verification which may take up to 21 working days or more**.
- Government said Aadhaar authentication for new registration will substantially enhance ease of doing businesses for genuine businesses. **The facility of quick approval of GST registration through Aadhaar authentication can be availed by all Indian citizens**.

The GST tax came into effect from July 1, 2017 through the implementation of One Hundred and First Amendment of the Constitution of India by the Indian government. The tax replaced existing multiple cascading taxes levied by the central and state governments. The GST has a four-tier structure for taxation of services, 5, 12, 18 and 28 per cent, in line with what has been done for goods. As per Article 279A (1) of the amended Constitution, the GST Council has to be constituted by the President within 60 days of the commencement of Article 279A. GST Council is headed by Union Finance Minister.

BRICS Industry Ministers attend video meeting to discuss ways to boost cooperation in 5G, AI

- **Industry Ministers of BRICS countries attended a video meeting to discuss ways to boost cooperation in areas including 5G and Artificial Intelligence.** As per Chinese state media, the meeting adopted a joint statement on cooperation in new industries such as 5G, AI and the industrial Internet, **among BRICS countries - five members bloc which includes Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.**
- **China urged the BRICS countries to strengthen their cooperation on digital transformation, especially in 5G, AI and the digital economy, to promote the digital transformation of enterprises and their innovation capabilities, and to promote sustainable economic and social development.**

TN women top the list of MUDRA loan scheme beneficiaries

- **Over 15 crore loans amounting to Rs. 4.78-lakh-crore have been disbursed to women borrowers since the inception of the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) with Tamil Nadu topping the list in availing the loan followed by women in West Bengal and Karnataka.**
- **Together women from these five States have got 52 per cent of the total MUDRA loan for women.** Loans under this scheme are extended to eligible borrowers for manufacturing, processing, trading, services, and activities allied to agriculture, which help in creating income-generating activities and employment.

Micro Units Development & Refinance Agency Ltd. (MUDRA) is a new institution set up by Government of India launched in 2015 to provide funding to the non-corporate; non-farm sector income generating activities of micro and small enterprises whose credit needs are below Rs.10 Lakh. Under the aegis of Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY), MUDRA has created three products i.e. ‘Shishu’, ‘Kishore’ and ‘Tarun’ as per the stage of growth and funding needs of the beneficiary micro unit. These schemes cover loan amounts as below: **Shishu: covering loans up to Rs.50, 000, 2. Kishore: covering loans above Rs. 50,000 and up to Rs.5, 00,000, 3.Tarun: covering loans above Rs. 5, 00,000 and up to Rs.10, 00,000.**

India placed 72nd on global list with average monthly wage of Rs 32,800

- **India has been ranked a lowly 72nd among 106 countries in terms of the average wage per month, while Switzerland topped the chart, according to a global ranking of average wages prepared by Picodi.com.**
- **With an average monthly wage of Rs 32,800 (USD 437), India has been ranked a lowly 72nd among 106 countries surveyed by Picodi.com, an international e-commerce platform which provides discount coupons.**
- **Switzerland, where the average wage converted into rupees amounts to Rs 4, 49,000 topped the ranking, while in Cuba the average wage is the lowest at Rs 2,700 (USD 36), it said. Switzerland was followed by Luxembourg and the United States, whose citizens on an average earn Rs 3,00,900 (USD 4,014) and Rs 2,64,900 (USD 3,534), respectively.**
- **Others in the top ten list include Denmark (USD 3,515), Singapore (USD 3,414), Australia (USD 3,333), Qatar (USD 3,232), Norway (USD 3,174), Hong Kong (USD 3,024) and Iceland (USD 2,844). India, with the average wage of Rs 32,800, outranked countries such as Kazakhstan (Rs 32,700), Brazil (Rs 26,000), or Egypt (Rs 16,400).**

India's first international women's trade centre to come up in Kerala

- **Kerala will set up India's first international women's trade centre (WTC), in consonance with the United Nations sustainable development goals (SDGs), at Angamaly.**
- **“This initiative aims to accelerate women entrepreneurship and secure gender parity while providing women with a safe place away from home to start new businesses, set up or expand, and get their products marketed globally.”**

Sustainable Finance Collaborative for promotion of sustainable finance launched in India

- **The Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Government of India and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) India launched the Sustainable Finance Collaborative (SFC). The three-day Consultation**

was held with the **objective of bringing together leading experts and organizations to work together to boost the country's efforts on mobilizing sustainable and green finance.**

- Before COVID, it was **estimated that India needs over USD 2.6 trillion to meet the SDG targets by 2030.** But public spending cannot bridge this gap alone. Mobilizing such a huge capital will require the collective efforts of both the public and private sectors.

The **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, also known as the **Global Goals**, were adopted by all **United Nations Member States in 2015** as a **universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030.** The **17 SDGs are integrated**—that is, they recognize that action in one area will affect outcomes in others, and that development must balance social, economic and environmental sustainability. That is why the SDGs are designed to bring the world to **several life-changing 'zeros', including zero poverty, hunger, AIDS and discrimination against women and girls.**



Banks in News

RBI okays surplus transfer of Rs 57,128 crore to government

- The Central Board of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) approved the transfer of Rs 57,128 crore as surplus — or dividend — to the central government for accounting year 2019-20, sharply lower by 67.5 per cent from Rs 1.76 lakh last year. The government, which is finding ways to put the Covid-hit economy back on the rails, could use the amount to contain the fiscal deficit and recapitalise public sector banks.
- As per Section 47 of the RBI Act, profits of the RBI are to be transferred to the government, after making various contingency provisions, public policy mandate of the RBI, including financial stability considerations.

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.

Sashidhar Jagdishan to replace Aditya Puri as HDFC Bank’s new MD & CEO

- HDFC Bank Ltd, India’s biggest private lender, has announced that Sashidhar Jagdishan will be its Managing Director & CEO for a period of three years from his date of taking charge.
- He will take over the new role on October 27, 2020, under Section 35B of the Banking Regulation Act 1949.

HDFC Bank Limited is an Indian banking and financial services company headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra. HDFC Bank is India’s largest private sector lender by assets. In 1994 HDFC Bank was incorporated, with its registered office in Mumbai, India. Aditya Puri is the Managing Director of HDFC Bank.

Airtel Payments Bank ties up with Bharti AXA General Insurance to offer Shop Insurance for its retailers and merchants

- Airtel Payments Bank announced that it will offer Shop Insurance exclusively for its Retailers and Merchants. Offered in partnership with Bharti AXA General Insurance, the Smart Plan Shop Package policy provides financial protection in case of damage to assets inside the shop due to fire and allied perils, burglary, etc. as covered in the product.
- A large number of Bank’s Retailers and Merchants are small and medium-size shop owners who are totally dependent on their shops for the livelihood. Any major accident due to fire, or burglary can lead to a big financial loss. The shop insurance policy would provide financial protection against these losses.

Payments banks are a new model of banks conceptualised by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). These banks can accept a restricted deposit, which is currently limited to Rs.1 lakh per customer and may be increased further. These banks cannot issue loans and credit cards. Both current account and savings accounts can be operated by such banks. Payments banks can issue services like ATM cards, debit cards, net-banking and mobile-banking. Bharti Airtel set up India’s first live payments bank. The minimum capital requirement is 100 crore. For the first five years, the stake of the promoter should remain at least 40%. Foreign shareholding will be allowed in these banks as per the rules for FDI in private banks in India.

Global remittances may lose \$108.6 bn in 2020; South Asia to suffer most

- As the world goes through an unprecedented recession amid the pandemic, global remittances may fall by \$108.6 billion in 2020 if the economic impact of Covid-19 persists throughout the year, says a report by the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

- The report published noted that the **pandemic continues to weigh heavily on economic systems and employment around the world. Migrant workers are among the hardest hit groups**, with many facing scant job security and limited access to social assistance. Large-scale unemployment and wage reduction among migrant workers also threaten the wellbeing of many households in Asia and the Pacific who depend on remittances to meet their daily needs, said the ADB report.

Asian Development Bank (ADB) is a regional development bank established on 19 December 1966, which is headquartered in the Ortigas Center located in the city of Mandaluyong, Metro Manila, Philippines. Masatsugu Asakawa, by career a Japanese civil servant, is the president of the Asian Development Bank. Asakawa, who took office on 17 January 2020, is the 10th president of ADB.

RBI bars banks from opening current accounts for customers having availed cash credit

- The Reserve Bank of India has barred banks from opening current accounts for customers who have availed cash credit or overdraft facilities, with a view to improve credit discipline.
- The Central Bank said, rather than opening a new current account, **all transactions should be routed through a Cash Credit or OverDraft account**. The RBI stated that there is a need for discipline by the banks in opening current accounts.

RBI announces loan restructuring window for corporates

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced a loan restructuring window for corporates following demands from bankers and industry. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had said that the government is working with RBI on the need for restructuring of loans to help the industry tide over the impact of Covid 19.
- In February, the RBI had decided to extend the benefit of onetime restructuring without an asset classification downgrade to standard accounts of GST registered micro, small and medium enterprises that were in default on January 1 this year in line with the budget announcement.

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RBI sets up panel for stressed loans resolution norms

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) constituted the proposed expert committee under the chairmanship of veteran banker K.V. Kamath to make recommendations on norms for the resolution of COVID-19 related stressed loans.
- The other members of the committee include Diwakar Gupta (effective September 1, 2020, after completion of his term as vice-president, ADB), T.N. Manoharan (effective August 14, 2020, after the completion of his term as chairman, Canara Bank), Ashvin Parekh, strategy advisor, and Sunil Mehta, CEO of Indian Banks’ Association, as the member-secretary. The committee will submit its recommendations on the financial parameters to the RBI. The Indian Banks’ Association (IBA) will function as the secretariat to the committee and the committee will be fully empowered to consult or invite any person it deems fit.

HDFC Bank launches Shaurya, special card for armed forces

- Private lender HDFC Bank Ltd. has launched a 1st-of-its-kind product for the armed forces. Titled as “Shaurya KGC Card”, this unique product comes with never-seen-before features and eligibility criteria specially crafted for more 45 lakh Indian armed forces personnel, claimed the bank in its official communique. The product is based on the guidelines of Kisan Credit Card guidelines.

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

Punjab National Bank launches campaign to promote digital banking

- State-owned Punjab National Bank launched a campaign to encourage customers to use digital banking channels. Under the campaign 'DIGITAL APNAYEN', the bank will contribute Rs 5 towards the PM CARES Fund on behalf of each customer conducting the first financial transaction to activate their RuPay Debit card either on point of sale (PoS) or e-commerce platform.

Punjab National Bank (PNB) is an Indian multinational banking and financial services company. It is a state-owned corporation based in New Delhi, India. Punjab National Bank was registered on 19 May 1894 under the Indian Companies Act, with its office in Anarkali Bazaar, Lahore, in present-day Pakistan. Sunil Mehta is the current MD & CEO of PNB. In February 2018, PNB was part of India's biggest ever fraud in which two junior officers at a single branch had illegally steered \$1.77 billion in fraudulent loans to companies, most of them controlled by billionaire jeweller Nirav Modi. It is second largest public sector bank (PSB) in India.

RBI releases framework for pan-India entity for retail payments

- Reserve Bank of India has unveiled the framework for setting up of pan-India Umbrella Entity for Retail Payments.
- As per the framework, the companies with a net worth of over 500 crore rupees will be eligible to set up an umbrella entity which among other things will be permitted to set up, manage and operate new payment systems in the retail space comprising ATMs, White Label PoS, Aadhaar-based payments and remittance services. The entity will be expected to monitor national as well as international developments so as to avoid shocks and frauds that may adversely affect the system and the economy in general.

Ashwani Bhatia appointed as SBI Managing Director

- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Ashwani Bhatia as the new Managing Director of State Bank of India.
- He currently is the Deputy Managing Director of the state-run lender. Bhatia will succeed PK Gupta who superannuated on March 31. He will remain in office till the date of his superannuation, May 31, 2022, or further orders, whichever is earlier.

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.

Andhra Pradesh CM launched UPI-based payment system to boost digital payments

- Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has launched India's biggest United Payments Interface (UPI) based payment system. The initiative is in collaboration with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).
- The UPI-based payment system will be a landmark initiative to boost digital payments in 15,004+ in Gram and Ward Secretariats (GSWS) of Andhra Pradesh in association with NPCI and Canara Bank.
- This would provide impetus to digital payments among last-mile customers and redefine financial inclusion in the state. This first-of-its-kind initiative ensures secure, instant, and contactless payments, especially amid the coronavirus pandemic.
- The introduction of UPI QR code in 15,004 village & ward secretariats will provide an all-new level of convenient transaction experience to thousands of rural customers of Andhra Pradesh.

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- **Canara Bank**, being a premier Bank in the state and the fourth largest bank in India, has come forward to collaborate in this initiative of the Andhra Pradesh government and to provide UPI QR code-based payment system to the gram and ward secretariats in the state.

Canara Bank is one of the largest public sector banks owned by the Government of India. It is headquartered in Bengaluru. It was established at Mangalore in 1906 by Ammembal Subba Rao Pai. As per the announcement made by the Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on 30 August 2019, Manipal based Syndicate Bank merged from 1 April 2020, making it the fourth largest bank in the country.

ICICI Bank to use satellite data to assess credit profile of farmers

- **ICICI Bank** has announced the introduction of usage of satellite data—imagery from earth observation satellites—to assess credit worthiness of its customers belonging to the farm sector.
- The bank, the first in India and among few globally, will use satellite data to measure an array of parameters related to land, irrigation and crop patterns and use it in combination with demographic and financial parameters to make faster lending decisions for farmers. “This use of technology helps farmers with existing credit to enhance their eligibility, while new-to-credit farmers can now get better access to credit”.

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.

SBI General Insurance Launches ‘Shagun - Gift an insurance’ policy

- **SBI General Insurance**, one of the leading general insurance companies in India, announced the launch of first-of-its-kind offering, “Shagun - Gift an Insurance”, a unique gift of Personal Accident policy.
- This product was filed by SBI General under Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority’s (IRDAI) Sandbox regulations. The key differentiating feature of the policy is that it can be gifted to anyone you want, which means it is not necessary for the policy buyer to be related to the insured.
- Shagun covers personal accident insurance which provides complete financial protection to the insured person against uncertainties such as accidental death and partial or total disabilities, and permanent as well as temporary disabilities resulting from an accident.

State Bank of India gets global recognition for HR initiative ‘Nayi Disha’

- The country’s largest lender **State Bank of India** has got global recognition for its HR initiative ‘Nayi Disha’ which over the course of 1.5 years has touched more than 2.40 lakh employees. The bank has won three Brandon Hall Excellence Awards, also known as the Academy Awards of Learning & Development.

Banks Board Bureau recommends Dinesh Khara as next SBI chairman

- The Banks Board Bureau (BBB) recommended SBI’s senior-most managing director **Dinesh Kumar Khara** as the next chairman of the country’s largest lender.
- Khara will replace **SBI Chairman Rajnish Kumar**, whose three-year term comes to an end on October 7. Members of BBB, the headhunter for state-owned banks and financial institutions, interviewed four managing directors of State Bank of India (SBI) for the upcoming vacancy.

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. 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.

RBI projects country's growth rate at (-) 4.5 per cent for 2020-21

- The Reserve Bank has projected India's growth rate at (-) 4.5 percent for 2020-21. In its annual report released RBI projected global growth rate between (-) 6.0 per cent and (-) 7.6 per cent. The report says that expected headline inflation will remain elevated in the current quarter, but likely to ease in the second half of the fiscal.
- Stating that it is difficult to accurately assess the economic impact of COVID-19 pandemic as the dynamics are still evolving, RBI said it looks like the **decline in economic activity reaches its trough in April-June quarter of 2020-21** and recovers thereafter, albeit at a gradual pace. **It adds that the growth is likely to turn positive from January-March quarter 2020-21.**

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.

Firms in News

Apple tops Saudi Aramco as most valuable publicly listed company

- **Apple Inc's** surged over 10% to a record high after reporting blockbuster quarterly results, helping the iPhone maker eclipse Saudi Aramco to become the world's most valuable publicly listed company.
- **Apple's stock ended the session at \$425.04, putting its market capitalization at \$1.82 trillion**, according to the share count provided by Apple in a regulatory filing. **It was Apple's largest one-day percentage gain since March 13**, and it added \$172 billion in market capitalization during the session, greater than the entire stock market value of Oracle Corp.
- **Saudi Aramco, which had been the most valuable publicly listed company** since going public last year, had a market capitalization of \$1.760 trillion as of its last close, according to Refinitiv data.

Apple Inc. is an American multinational technology company headquartered in California that designs, develops, and sells consumer electronics, computer software, and online services. It was founded by Steve Jobs, Steve Wozniak, and Ronald Wayne in April 1976 to develop and sell Wozniak's Apple I personal computer. It was incorporated as Apple Computer, Inc. in January 1977. Tim Cook is the Chief Executive Officer.

NTPC achieves over 100 billion units of cumulative generation in current financial year

- **National Thermal Power Corporation, NTPC, Group has achieved over 100 billion units of cumulative generation in the current financial year.** As per the data published by Central Electricity Authority, **2600 Mega Watt NTPC Korba in Chattisgarh has emerged as the top performing thermal power plant in the country** with 97.42 percent plant load factor, PLF, between April to July this year.
- Exemplary performances were registered by five other flagship power plants of NTPC as well. **NTPC's plants at Sipat in Chattisgarh, Rihand and Vindhyachal in Uttar Pradesh, Talcher Kaniha and Talcher Thermal in Odisha are among the top ten performing thermal power plants based on PLF performance.**
- **Further, two 200 Mega Watt units of NTPC at Singrauli in Uttar Pradesh achieved highest PLF in the country** with 99.90 percent and 99.87 percent from April to July this year.

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

Singapore-based Indian launches first blockchain-based bond exchange

- **Singapore-based fintech Bond Evalue, founded by an Indian launched the world's first block chain-based exchange christened as BondbloX Bond Exchange (BBX), which makes possible fractional ownership of bonds by allowing them to be traded in smaller denominations of US\$1,000.**
- Blockchain is a technology that ensures transparency. The move should pave way for many more investors buying or selling bonds at a faster pace with transparency, said **Rahul Banerjee, founder and CEO at BondEvalue.**
- **BondEvalue is aiming the so-called "HENRYS" or 'high-earners not rich yet'.** The exchange will for a start, list 100 most liquid bonds out of the eight million or so bonds issued around the world.

Mark Zuckerberg's fortune surpasses \$100 billion

- **Mark Zuckerberg's net worth passed \$100 billion for the first time after Facebook Inc. hit a record high** on optimism about the release of its TikTok competitor Reels.
- **The joins fellow tech titans Jeff Bezos and Bill Gates as the only people in the world who currently have centibillionaire status**, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index. Zuckerberg's fortune is largely derived from his 13% stake in Facebook.

- **The founders of America's largest technology companies** have enjoyed a mind-boggling accumulation of wealth this year as the coronavirus pandemic drives more people online, despite the US economy contracting at its fastest pace on record. **Zuckerberg has gained about \$22 billion this year, while Bezos is up more than \$75 billion.**

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.

NPCI launches omni-channel loyalty platform 'nth Rewards'

- **National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI)** said that it has **launched its own business intelligence and analytics enabled omni-channel multi-branded loyalty platform – 'nth Rewards'.**
- This unique loyalty rewards platform **allows users to earn 'nth' (denoting infinite possibilities) points** through various bank transactions and **redeem them faster on various exciting products, E-Vouchers, donations, hotel and flight bookings.** With an objective to engage and retain bank customers, **'nth Rewards' offers easy earning and instant redemption of reward points on maximum purchasing options.**
- **'nth Rewards' platform has a simple and smart dashboard for users where they can see their points accumulation, redemptions and also have access to all the offers and rewards.** Customers can earn loyalty points on almost every transaction made digitally, especially while using the credit and debitcards.
- **Rewarding customers for their loyalty helps organizations make long term engagement with their valued customers. 'nth Rewards' by NPCI is a step ahead to further induce the habit of digital payments among customers and at the same time provide a sense of personalization to them by rewarding them in the right way.**

National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) is an umbrella organisation for operating retail payments and settlement systems in India. Founded in 2008, the NPCI is a not-for-profit organisation registered under section 8 of the Companies Act 2013, established by Reserve Bank of India & IBA. It is headquartered in Mumbai.

Flipkart signs pact with IIT-Patna for joint research in artificial intelligence, machine learning

- **Walmart-owned Flipkart** has inked an agreement with IIT-Patna to help create industry-focused applied research in the areas of artificial intelligence (AI), natural language processing (NLP) and machine learning (ML).
- **As part of the MoU, IIT-Patna will undertake a number of programmes** such as joint research activities, writing research papers, organising seminars and internship/mentorship opportunities. The academic collaboration is expected to bring real-world industry exposure to students and scholars of IIT-Patna, and to provide an opportunity to the faculty members to work closely with Flipkart on research projects, it added.

Flipkart Pvt Ltd. is an Indian electronic commerce company based in Bengaluru, India. Founded by Sachin Bansal and Binny Bansal in 2007, the company initially focused on book sales, before expanding into other product categories such as consumer electronics, fashion, and lifestyle products. Kalyan Krishnamurthy is the current chief executive officer of Flipkart. In August 2018, U.S.-based retail chain Walmart acquired a 81% controlling stake in Flipkart for US\$16 billion, valuing it at \$20 billion.

National Fertilizers Limited to set up an Organic Waste Converter Plant

- **National Fertilizers Limited, NFL, a PSU under the Department of Fertilizers in Vijaipur, Madhya Pradesh** is going to **set up an Organic Waste Converter, OWC Plant.** The biodegradable waste collected in the unit will be **transported to OWC** where it will be segregated from non-degradable parts.
- It will take around 10 days to convert it into ready to use compost. Ministry of Chemical and Fertilizers said, an initiative towards Swachh Bharat, **the project aims to recycle around 2000 Kg per day of the biodegradable waste generated in township including the horticulture waste and convert it into ready to use compost.**

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- The unit plans to utilize this compost as manure thus substituting consumption of fertilisers or manure used for developments of parks or public places. The compost can also be used by the residents in their lawns and kitchen gardens.

National Fertilizers Limited (NFL) – Miniratna (Cat-1) company is an India state owned producer of chemical fertilizers, organic fertilizers and industrial chemicals. As of 2018, it was the second largest producer of fertilizers in India. NFL, incorporated in 1979 is India's largest Central Public Sector Enterprise (Government of India Undertaking) in Fertilizer Sector with a turnover of over Rs. 75 billion. Coming under the administrative control of Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, it is the second largest producer of the key fertiliser urea in India.

Paytm launches first pocket Android POS device for contactless payments in India

- In the wake of COVID-19 crisis, Paytm has launched the first pocket Android POS device for contactless ordering and payments in India, a move that will make this technology more affordable for SMEs.
- The company has introduced 'Paytm All-in-One Portable Android Smart POS' at an introductory price of Rs 499 per month rental. Styled like a mobile phone for accepting orders and payments on the go, this is the first such Android-based device to be introduced in India and is much more powerful than the portable Linux based POS devices presently available in the country.

Paytm is an Indian e-payments and e-commerce brand based in Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India. It was launched in August 2010. Vijay Shekhar Sharma is the founder of mobile payments company, Paytm. Sharma is India's youngest billionaire.

NHAI develops mobile App 'Harit Path' to facilitate creation of Green Highways across country

- The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), a PSU under the Ministry of Road and Transport, has developed a mobile App, 'Harit Path' to facilitate creation of Green Highways across the country.
- The App will also be used to monitor location, growth, species details, maintenance activities, targets and achievements of each of the PSU's field units for every plant under the Highway plantation projects. Harit Path was inaugurated by the Union Minister for Road and Transport, Nitin Gadkari.

National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) is an autonomous agency of the Government of India, responsible for management of a network of over 50,000 km of National Highways out of 1,15,000 km in India. The NHAI was created through the promulgation of the National Highways Authority of India Act, 1988.

MCX launched India's first bullion index, Bulldex

- Multi Commodity Exchange of India (MCX) has launched India's first bullion index, Bulldex, on August 24. The bullion index, Bulldex, being launched by MCX is the sixth product in bullion complex with 1-kg gold, 100-gm goldmini, 8-gm gold guinea and 1-gm gold peta, while the Options on Futures on 1-kg gold is already in place.
- The bourse recently launched options on goods in 100-gm goldmini contract. Having gold and silver as underlying, the Bulldex will have market lot size of 50 and, unlike gold and silver contracts, it will be a cash-settled futures contract, thus making it attractive for hedgers and institutional participants, who are hesitant in taking delivery of gold and silver.

Multi Commodity Exchange of India Ltd (MCX) is an independent commodity exchange based in India. It was established in 2003 and is based in Mumbai. It is India's largest commodity derivatives exchange. MCX offers options trading in gold and futures trading in non-ferrous metals, bullion, energy, and a number of agricultural commodities (mentha oil, cardamom, crude palm oil, cotton, and others). Mr Padala Subbi Reddy (Mr P S Reddy) was appointed as MD & CEO of the Company for a period of five years w.e.f. May 10, 2019.

Reliance buys majority stake in online pharmacy Netmeds for \$83 million

- Reliance Industries Ltd has acquired a majority stake in online pharmacy Netmeds for about 6.2 billion rupees (\$83.08 million) in cash, days after e-commerce giant Amazon.com Inc launched an online drug sales

service in India. The oil-to-telecoms conglomerate said its **investment represents about 60% holding in Vitalic Health Pvt. Ltd. and 100% direct ownership of its subsidiaries.**

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.**

Apple becomes first US Company valued at \$2 trillion in market value

- **Apple Inc became the first publicly listed US Company with a \$2 trillion stock market value,** as Wall Street investors put aside challenges to its iPhone ecosystem in favour of bets it will only prosper more in the post-coronavirus world.
- **With Amazon, Microsoft and Google-owner Alphabet, all now worth around \$1 trillion or more,** the big US tech companies are together worth more than \$6 trillion.

ICICI Lombard and Bharti AXA sign definitive agreements to combine their Non-Life Insurance Businesses

- **The Board of Directors of ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company Ltd. ("ICICI Lombard") and Bharti AXA General Insurance Company Ltd. ("Bharti AXA") at their respective meetings approved entering into definitive agreements for demerger of Bharti AXA's non-life insurance business into ICICI Lombard through a Scheme of Arrangement.**
- **Based on the share exchange ratio recommended by independent valuers and accepted by the respective boards of ICICI Lombard and Bharti AXA, the shareholders of Bharti AXA shall receive 2 shares of ICICI Lombard for every 115 shares of Bharti AXA held by them as on the date on which the Scheme of Arrangement is approved by the Board of Directors of ICICI Lombard and Bharti AXA.**
- **While both the companies have signed definitive agreements, the deal is subject to regulatory approvals from the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai), Competition Commission of India (CCI), Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi), Reserve Bank of India (RBI), and National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), besides shareholders of both ICICI Lombard and Bharti AXA.**

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

MCX launches Bulldex, India's first bullion index

- **India's largest commodity exchange the Multi-Commodity Exchange of India Ltd (MCX) launched the country's first bullion index, MCX iCOMDEX Bullion, or Bulldex.**
- **The index will track the real-time performance of the gold (1 kg) and silver (30 kg) futures contracts.** The weightage of gold is 70.52 percent and the remaining 29.48 percent is silver. The weights will be rebalanced every January.

Multi Commodity Exchange of India Ltd (MCX) is an **independent commodity exchange based in India.** It was established in 2003 and is based in Mumbai. It is **India's largest commodity derivatives exchange.** **Mr Padala Subbi Reddy (Mr P S Reddy) was appointed as MD & CEO of the Company for a period of five w.e.f. May 10, 2019.** Prior to this Mr Reddy worked as managing director and CEO of Central Depository Services (CDSL).

World's first floating Apple store to open in Singapore

- Apple is set to open its third outlet in Singapore and this time, it will be the world's first floating retail store at Marina Bay Sands. **Apple opened its first store in Singapore at the Knightsbridge building along Orchard Road in 2017. Its second store, located at Jewel Changi Airport, opened in July last year.**

IT minister launches 'Chunauti' a programme to further boost startups, software product

- Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Ravi Shankar Prasad launched "Chunauti"- Next Generation Startup Challenge Contest to further boost startups and software products with special focus on Tier-II towns of the country.
- The government has **earmarked a budget of over 95 crore rupees over a period of three years for this programme.** It aims at identifying around three hundred startups working in identified areas and provide them seed fund of upto 25 lakh rupees and other facilities.
- Under this challenge the Ministry of Electronics and IT will invite **startups in the areas of work including Edu Tech, Agri Tech and Fin Tech solutions for masses, Supply Chain and Logistic management, Infrastructure, Medical Healthcare as well as jobs and skilling.**

World's First: After "Haldi Doodh" Amul launches "Haldi Ice Cream"

- **The Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF), that markets milk and dairy products under the brand Amul, launched "Haldi ice cream" and claimed it contains turmeric known for its antibacterial and anti-inflammatory properties.**
- Expanding the portfolio of Immunity Booster range, dairy cooperative titan AMUL has ventured into Cream Category too and has for the **first time launched Haldi Ice Cream with the goodness of Haldi, Pepper and Honey and richness of dry fruits like dates, almonds and cashews.** Haldi ice cream, which is being sold in tamper-proof 125 ml cups for Rs 40 each, also has pepper, honey and dry fruits such as dates, almond and cashews, stated an official release in Ahmedabad.

Amul is an Indian dairy cooperative society, based at Anand in the state of Gujarat. Formed in 1946, it is a cooperative brand managed by a cooperative body, the Gujarat Co-operative Milk Marketing Federation Ltd. (GCMMF), which today is jointly owned by 3.6 million milk producers in Gujarat. Amul spurred India's White Revolution, which made the country the world's largest producer of milk and milk products.

Swraj Paul's US subsidiary wins global steel excellence award

- **Bull Moose Tube, a subsidiary of the Caparo Bull Moose Company in the United States owned by London-based industrialist Swraj Paul, has won the Fastmarkets Global Awards for Steel Excellence in the category of Best Innovation – Product.**
- The award was announced virtually during the 11th annual Fastmarkets Global Awards for Steel Excellence, which is one of the prestigious awards in the global steel industry. The award is for the company's hydrologic sprinkler pipe. **Paul's office said in a statement that Bull Moose Tube utilised advanced metallurgy that imparts a stainless steel alloy layer onto the interior and exterior diameters of a low carbon steel core creating an ultra-smooth surface that reduces resistance and pressure loss of water carried by the pipe.**

India's first onion storage and marketing infrastructure launched by Nafed-Maharashtra FPC

- **The joint venture between the National Agricultural Marketing Federation of India (Nafed) and Maharashtra Farmers Producer Co (MahaFPC), MahaOnion, has announced the launch of India's first onion storage and marketing infrastructure through the public-private-partnership (PPP) model.**
- **This initiative is an agri-business venture for establishing warehousing facilities of 1,000 tonne of onion at each of the 25 locations.** This will benefit farmers by giving them access to centralised infrastructure to help reduce post-harvest losses as well as assured market linkages.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



Chandrayaan-2 captures image of crater on Moon; ISRO names it after Vikram Sarabhai

- Chandrayaan-2 has captured images of the Moon and one of the craters has been named after Vikram Sarabhai, the father of the Indian space programme. Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office Jitendra Singh said that as Sarabhai's birth centenary year completed on August 12, this is a thanksgiving tribute to the scientist.
- The Department of Space directly comes under the Prime Minister's Office. "The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) has sought to pay tribute to him in a special way by announcing that Chandrayaan-2 Orbiter has captured the Moon images of 'Sarabhai Crater'. The Sarabhai Crater is around 250 to 300 kilometres east of the crater where the Apollo 17 and Luna 21 Missions had landed.

Chandrayaan-2 is the second lunar exploration mission developed by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), after Chandrayaan-1. It consists of a lunar orbiter, and also included the Vikram lander, and the Pragyan lunar rover, all of which were developed in India. The main scientific objective is to map and study the variations in lunar surface composition, as well as the location and abundance of lunar water. The spacecraft was launched on its mission to the Moon from the second launch pad at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Andhra Pradesh on 22 July 2019 by a GSLV Mark III M1. The craft reached the Moon's orbit on 20 August 2019 and began orbital positioning manoeuvres for the landing of the Vikram lander. The lander and the rover were scheduled to land on the near side of the Moon, in the South Polar Region at a latitude of about 70° south on 6 September 2019 and conduct scientific experiments for one lunar day, which approximates to two Earth weeks. However, the lander deviated from its intended trajectory while attempting to land on 6 September 2019 which caused a 'hard landing'.

India, Israel Conducting Trials for Rapid Testing That Detects COVID in 30 Seconds

- Israel and India are conducting trials in New Delhi on a large sample of patients for four different kinds of technologies that have the potential to detect COVID-19 in about 30 seconds, including a breath analyser and a voice test.
- The rapid testing is being jointly developed in cooperation with the Defense Research and Development Directorate of the Israeli Ministry of Defence, India's Defence Research and Development Organisation, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research and Principal Scientific Advisor, India – coordinated by the ministries of foreign affairs of Israel and India.

Unique COVID Prevention Kiosk 'UV Baggage Bath' inaugurated At Bengaluru Railway Station

- A unique COVID prevention kiosk was inaugurated at Bengaluru Railway Station with an aim to fight the pandemic, South Western Railway said. It was inaugurated by Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Bengaluru Division, AN Krishna Reddy along with Kalyani Sethuraman, Additional Divisional Railway Manager (Admin), Bengaluru Division.
- The kiosk has been named 'UV Baggage Bath'. It has been set up at the second entry of the station where most of the scheduled special trains arrive and depart to ensure passenger luggage is completely sanitized before the passengers' board trains, South Western Railway said.

IIT Madras develops patient monitoring solutions for Covid-19

- IIT Madras' Healthcare Technology Innovation Centre (HTIC) and Helyxon, a healthcare startup in IIT Madras Research Park announced the **successful deployment of remote patient monitoring solutions for Covid-19** that they have jointly developed.
- The device is a **first-of-its-kind** in the market that does **clinically accurate continuous monitoring of four critical parameters Temperature, Oxygen Saturation, Respiratory Rate and Heart Rate**. The cost of the device ranges from Rs. 2,500 to 10,000 depending on the configuration and parameters.

IIT Kanpur partners with MoD for using AI, ML to redress grievances

- Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kanpur signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Defence (MoD) for developing a prompt and predictive grievance redress mechanism using artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning tools.
- A tripartite MoU was signed between IIT Kanpur, MoD (Department of Defence) and Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances (DAR&PG) in the presence of Defence minister Rajnath Singh, union minister of state for Personnel Jitendra Singh and IIT Kanpur Deputy Director S Ganesh.

Microsoft to power its data centres with hydrogen fuel cells

- Microsoft is testing hydrogen fuel cells to power its data centre servers, making it the **first company to build a clean energy power source using the most abundant element on the planet**. The company is working on replacement technologies for diesel to maintain or improve service availability.
- It is seeing promise in hydrogen fuel cells and batteries, said Brian Janous, general manager of Microsoft's team for data centre, energy and sustainability strategy. **Microsoft has successfully tested a 250-kilowatt fuel system** that powered a row of data centre servers for 48 consecutive hours this June. **Power Innovations had built the system to help Microsoft explore the potential of using hydrogen fuel cells.**

NHAI Signs MoU with IIT Delhi for Setting UP Center of Excellence

- National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways **signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi to set up a Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Use of Artificial Intelligence** in Data Driven decision making and Advance Data Management System for Highways. MoU was signed in presence of Dr. Sukhbir Singh Sandhu, Chairman NHAI and Dr V Ram Gopal Rao Director, IIT Delhi and other senior officials.

Delhi Airport Develops Online Portal for International Passengers

- The Delhi airport has developed an online portal that will allow international passengers to fill a **mandatory self-declaration form**. Eligible passengers can apply for exemption from compulsory institutional quarantine for coronavirus. This will make traveling **contactless as they won't have to fill physical copies of self-declaration and quarantine exemption forms when they arrive in India**. A total of five categories of passengers can get exemption from the mandatory seven-day institutional quarantine.
- These five categories include **pregnant women, those who have had bereavement in their families, people suffering from serious illnesses, parents accompanying children below 10 and those who have COVID-negative certificate from test done 96 hours before the journey.**

Indian Coast Guard Offshore Patrol Vessel 'Sarthak' launched

- An Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) for the Indian Coast Guard was launched and re-christened as Indian Coast Guard Ship 'Sarthak'. The launching ceremony held at Goa Shipyard Limited was conducted through video conferencing from Coast Guard headquarters at New Delhi.
- Sarthak is the 4th in the series of five OPVs deployed by the Coast Guard to enhance maritime security. It has been designed and built indigenously by Goa Shipyard Limited in line with the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of 'Make in India'. The Ship is fitted with state-of-the-art Navigation and Communication equipment, sensor and machinery.

- The 105 Metre ship displaces approximately 2350 tons and is propelled by two 9100 KW diesel engines designed to attain a maximum speed of 26 knots, with an endurance of 6000 Nautical Miles.

Indian Coast Guard (ICG) is an 4th Armed Forces of India, Search and Rescue and Maritime Law Enforcement agency that protects India's maritime interests and enforces its maritime law, with jurisdiction over the territorial waters of India, including its contiguous zone and exclusive economic zone. The Indian Coast Guard was formally established on 18 August 1978 by the Coast Guard Act, 1978 of the Parliament of India. It operates under the Ministry of Defence. The Indian Coast Guard organisation is headed by the Director-General (DG ICG) who is located at Coast Guard Headquarters (CGHQ), New Delhi. The current Director-General is Krishnaswamy Natarajan.

STIP -2020 being formulated in unique way of making it more inclusive

- The Science Technology and Innovation Policy, STIP-2020 is being formulated in the country in a unique way of making it more inclusive.
- For the first time, the Department of Science and Technology, DST along with the Office of Principal Scientific Advisor (PSA), have initiated a methodology which focuses on decentralization of policy design by making it a bottom-up and inclusive process.
- National Council for Science and Technology Communication, NCSTC, has devised a way to capture the inputs of people for science and technology through involvement of Community Radio Stations. Out of 291 Community Radio Stations across the country, 25 have been identified to provide inputs based on regional diversity, gender, and outreach capability.

IIT Guwahati, in collaboration with Imperial College London, develops nanoparticle 'meta-grid'

- Researchers from the Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati, India, and Imperial College London, UK, have developed a tailored 'meta-grid' of nanoparticles that could make light-emitting diodes (LEDs) brighter, energy-efficient and durable.
- Meta-grid' or 'metamaterial grid' is a specifically patterned array (grid) of nanoparticles acting as metamaterials, capable of exhibiting extraordinary optical properties.
- IIT stated that in world, LEDs are deployed almost everywhere — from traffic lights to backlighting for electronic displays, smartphones, large billboards, decorative lightings, water purification, and decontamination of infected surfaces. An increase in LED light output would significantly reduce energy needs on a large scale, and therefore, will contribute towards curbing global warming and climate change.

IUCAA to build India's first optical atomic clock

- The Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA) will build India's first optical atomic clock.
- The accuracy level of the clock is so high that it may miss only one second over the entire age of the universe which is 13.8 billion years, approximately.

Russia names new Covid-19 vaccine 'Sputnik V' in reference to Cold War space race

- Russia has named its first approved Covid-19 vaccine 'Sputnik V' for foreign markets, a reference to the world's first satellite and what Moscow sees as its success at becoming the first country to approve a vaccine.
- Kirill Dmitriev, head of the country's RDIF sovereign wealth fund, said Russia had already received requests from more than 20 countries for 1 billion doses of its newly-registered Covid-19 vaccine.

Microwave device 'Atulya' to disintegrate novel Coronavirus unveiled by Nitin Gadkari

- A microwave device named 'Atulya' that can disinfect any premises in just 30 seconds, disintegrating COVID-19 virus was unveiled by Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Nitin Gadkari in Nagpur.

- Certified by the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) and based on French and American standards, the device is 100 per cent Made in India and has been manufactured under the aegis of the MSME. The device disintegrates the COVID-19 virus with the help of differential heating in the range of 56 to 60 degrees Celsius temperatures.
- The positive thing about this device is it is 100 per cent safe for humans and does not emit Ultraviolet rays for disinfection that could be harmful to the human body. Depending upon the size and shape of objects, the disinfection time is 30 seconds to one minute.

Hyderabad-based Skyroot Aerospace test-fires upper stage rocket engine

- Skyroot Aerospace, a city-based startup has successfully test-fired its upper stage rocket engine named 'Raman, which can place multiple satellites into orbit.
- Founded by former scientists of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), Skyroot is into building India's first privately built space launch vehicles.

Skyroot Aerospace Private Limited is an Indian privately funded Aerospace manufacturer located in Hyderabad, Telangana. It plans to launch its own built rocket Vikram-1 by December 2021. In August 2020, Skyroot test-fired 'Raman', India's first private domestic upper-stage rocket engine.

TERI launches flood and heavy rain warning system for Guwahati, in collaboration with NDMA

- The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) have launched a Flood Early Warning System (FEWS) for Guwahati to alert local authorities about flash floods and/or heavy rainfall. The fully automated web-based tool will help them take timely and appropriate measures.
- Developed under TERI's project supported by the NDMA in collaboration with the India Meteorological Department (IMD) and the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA), the tool can be replicated to predict urban floods in any part of the country.

The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) is a research institute based in New Delhi that conducts research work in the fields of energy, environment and sustainable development. The Institute's present Director General is Ajay Mathur.

On 23 December 2005, the Government of India enacted the Disaster Management Act, which envisaged the creation of National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), headed by the Prime Minister, and State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs) headed by respective Chief Ministers, to spearhead and implement a holistic and integrated approach to Disaster Management in India.

Solar Powered Fruits & Vegetable Vending van well suited to be used during lockdown

- The solar powered evaporative cooled fruits and vegetable vending van developed by the Bengaluru based Indian Institute of Horticulture Research has found interest among the Farmers Producers Organisations (FPOs) since Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a one lakh crore agriculture Infrastructure Fund to boost investment in the farm sector, especially in cold storage, warehousing and markets for farmers.
- The Solar Powered Fruits and Vegetable Vending van is designed to keep produce fresh for two days using the evaporating cooling technology with solar power. This also provides dust free and hygienic storage space. The van has a LED TV for displaying prices of produce and an audio system for announcements. Fitted with GPS the movement of the van can be tracked remotely.

IIT Madras-incubated start-up develops portable hospital unit for COVID-19 patients

- IIT Madras-incubated Start-up, Modulus Housing has developed a portable hospital unit that can be installed anywhere within two hours by four people. 'MediCAB' is a decentralized approach to detect, screen, identify, isolate and treat COVID-19 patients in their local communities through these portable microstructures.

- **‘MediCAB’ was launched recently in Wayanad District of Kerala** where the units are being deployed to treat COVID-19 Patients. **The startup is developing micro hospitals that can be deployed rapidly across the nation.** The hospital unit is foldable and is composed of four zones - a doctor’s room, an isolation room, a medical room/ward and a twin-bed ICU, maintained at negative pressure.

IIT Madras researchers discover new material to split hydrogen and water using solar power

- **Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology Madras have discovered a new material to split hydrogen and water, using solar power.** The research is expected to bring the conversion and storage part in a single system, which would reduce the cost per kWh of solar energy.
- **Department of Chemical Engineering and the Solar Energy Research Group (SERG) at the Institute** are together specialising in **developing materials and devise architecture for solar cells, solar water splitting to hydrogen fuels, carbon dioxide recycling and metal-air batteries** for electric vehicles.
- **Solar energy conversion to electricity and its storage at low cost is an integral part of renewable energy research.** The research aims to **reduce the world’s reliance on fossil fuels** and in turn move out of anthropogenic greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide. It is an immediate requirement to develop low-cost solar energy conversion and storage systems that can produce energy equal to, or lower than the cost of grid power.

Asteroid predicted to pass close to Earth on November 2, says NASA

- **An asteroid has been spotted on a collision course with Earth and is projected to come very close to the planet** on November 2, according to the Center for Near Objects Studies at NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory.
- **According to NASA data**, based on 21 observations conducted over 12.968 days, there could be three potential impacts. However, **the space agency has found that there is only a 0.41% chance that the celestial body will enter the Earth’s atmosphere.**
- **The asteroid, dubbed 2018VP, was first discovered at the Palomar Observatory in California’s San Diego County** two years ago. A 13-day observational arc followed, after which the asteroid was not detected again.
- **According to NASA’s close approach database, the asteroid’s distance from Earth could be anywhere between 4,700 miles and 260,000 miles.** On the Palermo Technical Impact Hazard Scale, which is used by astronomers to assess the impact risk posed by an asteroid, 2018VP is pegged at a low -3.57.
- According to a study published in the journal Science in 2019, **the Earth and moon have faced more than twice as many asteroid collisions in the last 290 million years, than in the previous 700 million years.**

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.

China launches fifth Gaofen-9 series Earth observation satellite

- **China launched its latest Gaofen-9 Earth observation satellite** and two smaller payloads from the Jiuquan launch center. Gaofen satellites are nominally part of the civilian China High-resolution Earth Observation System (CHEOS). **Land surveying, urban planning, road network design, agriculture and disaster relief are noted as the major uses of Gaofen satellites.**

Indian Satellite Detects UV Light from Galaxy 9 Billion Light Years Away

- **AstroSat, India’s first multi-wavelength satellite, has detected an extreme ultraviolet (UV) light from a galaxy which is 9.3 billion light-years away from Earth.** A release from the Pune-based Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics said global teams led by IUCAA scientists have achieved the major breakthrough.
- **“India’s first multi-wavelength satellite, which has five unique X-ray and ultraviolet telescopes working in tandem, AstroSat, has detected extreme-UV light from a galaxy, called AUDFs01, 9.3 billion light-years away from Earth.”**

- Earlier, NASA's Hubble Space Telescope (HST), a significantly larger than UVIT (UV imaging telescope), did not detect any UV emission (with energy greater than 13.6 eV) from this galaxy because it is too faint.

ISRO Signs Agreement with Technical Institute in Odisha to promote space research

- Veer Surendra Sai University of Technology (VSSUT), Odisha signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) for setting up Space innovation centre at the technical institute to promote knowledge about space research among students.
- With this, VSSUT Odisha has become the first university in the country to pen down a MoU with the Indian space agency. As part of the agreement, ISRO will offer technical consultancy support and financial assistance of Rs 50 lakh to the VSSUT for development of infrastructure.

IIT Alumni Council to build world's largest, fastest hybrid quantum computer

- The Indian Institute of Technology's Alumni Council has signed an agreement with Lomonosov Moscow State University and Russoft to access and transfer key technologies from Russia to build the world's largest and fastest hybrid quantum computer in India.
- Under the agreement, the Russian state-owned companies will transfer critical modules in cryogenics, cryptography and modularised cloud management technology to IIT Alumni Council. The deal with the companies, which are key Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) owners, are part of the Quantum Mission.

DRDO expert panel to review charter of labs to cut overlap

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has set up an expert panel to review the charter of its laboratories and minimise the overlap of technologies they are working on at a time when self-reliance in the defence sector is a top priority for the government. DRDO chief G Satheesh Reddy has constituted the five-member committee under the chairmanship of Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi director V Ramagopal Rao and asked the panel to submit its report within 45 days.

Inventions/ Discoveries

Global magnetic field of Sun's atmosphere measured for the first time

- **The Sun is our closest star and we have been studying it for a long time.** Yet, it has many associated puzzles that are unexplained. A significant advancement has been **made by an international team of solar physicists led by those from Peking University, China, and National Center for Atmospheric Research of the United States.**
- **The group has measured the global magnetic field of the Sun's corona, or outer atmosphere, for the very first time.** This research has been published in the journal Science. There are two main puzzles about the Sun which this advancement will help address. First is the coronal heating problem.
- **Though the core of the Sun is at a temperature of about 15 million degrees, its outer layer, the photosphere is a mere 5700 degrees hot.** However, its corona or outer atmosphere, which stretches up to several million kilometres beyond its surface, is much, much hotter than the surface. It is at a temperature of one million degrees or more.

The Sun is the star at the center of the Solar System. It is a nearly perfect sphere of hot plasma, with internal convective motion that generates a magnetic field via a dynamo process. It is by far the most important source of energy for life on Earth. Its diameter is about 1.39 million kilometers (864,000 miles), or 109 times that of Earth, and its mass is about 330,000 times that of Earth. It accounts for about 99.86% of the total mass of the Solar System. Roughly three quarters of the Sun's mass consists of hydrogen (73%); the rest is mostly helium (25%), with much smaller quantities of heavier elements, including oxygen, carbon, neon, and iron. It formed approximately 4.6 billion years ago from the gravitational collapse of matter within a region of a large molecular cloud.

ISRO and IISc Bengaluru develop sustainable process to make space bricks on lunar surface

- **In a significant step towards space exploration, a team of researchers from the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bengaluru has developed a sustainable process to make space bricks on the lunar surface.**
- The process enables **making load bearing bricks by using lunar soil, bacteria and guar beans.** Named as space bricks, it could be used to assemble structures for habitation on the moon surface in future.
- **Sending bricks from Earth is not viable as it takes Rs 7.5 lakh to transport one pound of construction material.** The process developed now uses urea sourced from human urine, which could be mixed with lunar soil to build structures on the moon. This decreases the overall expenditure considerably. **Since guar gum is used instead of cement, there will be a lower carbon footprint.**
- The bacteria is added to further crystallise the brick in any shape needed. **One such bacterium, called 'Sporosarcina pasteurii' produces calcium carbonate crystals through a metabolic pathway called the ureolytic cycle: it uses urea and calcium to form these crystals as byproducts of the pathway.**

ISRO is the space agency 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 ISRO. It is located in Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.

Dwarf planet Ceres an 'ocean world' with salty water deep underground

- **Ceres, the largest object in the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter, is an "ocean world" with a big reservoir of salty water under its frigid surface,** scientists said in findings that raise interest in this dwarf planet as a possible outpost for life.
- **Research published based on data obtained by NASA's Dawn spacecraft, which flew as close as 22 miles (35 km) from the surface in 2018,** provides a new understanding of Ceres, including evidence indicating it remains geologically active with cryovolcanism - volcanoes oozing icy material.

- **The findings confirm the presence of a subsurface reservoir of brine - salt-enriched water - remnants of a vast subsurface ocean that has been gradually freezing. “This elevates Ceres to ‘ocean world’ status, noting that this category does not require the ocean to be global,” said planetary scientist and Dawn principal investigator Carol Raymond. “In the case of Ceres, we know the liquid reservoir is regional scale but we cannot tell for sure that it is global. However, what matters most is that there is liquid on a large scale.”**

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NASA satellite finds 66 new exoplanets, 2,100 more ‘candidates’

- **TESS, short for Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite, scanned about 75 per cent of the starry sky during its primary mission that ended on July 4. “TESS is producing a torrent of high-quality observations providing valuable data across a wide range of science topics,” said Patricia Boyd, the project scientist for TESS at NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland.**
- **“As it enters its extended mission, TESS is already a roaring success.” TESS monitors 24-by-96-degree strips of the sky called sectors for about a month using its four cameras. The mission spent its first year observing 13 sectors comprising the southern sky and then spent another year imaging the northern sky.**

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‘Baby’ Milky Way discovered 12 billion light years away

- **A golden halo glinting 12 billion light years away is the farthest galaxy resembling our Milky Way yet spotted, astronomers, adding the “surprisingly unchaotic” infant star system challenges our understanding of the early years of the Universe.**
- **The galaxy, called SPT0418-47, is so far away that it took billions of years for its light to reach Earth and so our image of it is from deep in the past, said the European Southern Observatory (ESO), which was involved in the discovery.**
- **This was when the Universe was 1.4 billion years old – just 10 per cent of its current age – and galaxies were still forming. The “baby” SPT0418-47 was picked up by the powerful Alma radio telescope in Chile using a technique called gravitational lensing, where a nearby galaxy acts as a powerful magnifying glass, the ESO said in a statement.**

World’s first helium gas exploration plant coming up at Bakreswar

- **In a major development Atomic Minerals Directorate (sole explorer of Uranium in India), under the Department of Atomic Energy is collaborating with National Institute of Technology (NIT), Durgapur for world’s first commercial helium gas exploration plant from hot spring site using non-cryogenic PSA technique from Bakreswar in Birbhum, about 230 kilometres from Kolkata as part of Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative and stop dependency on costly import from the USA.**
- **USA, Russia recovers helium found in natural petroleum gas and concentration is up to 7 per cent, in India 0.05 per cent and can’t produce helium from petroleum gases. Out of 340 hot springs in India, fifty per cent have a concentration of about 3.5 per cent helium gas. India’s annual consumption of He is 0.15 billion cubic feet, about 2.3 per cent of global consumption, import cost price has increased fourfolds.**

- Helium, best known as a party gas for filling balloons and making the voice squeaky, widely used in India as rocket fuel in atomic research (ISRO) and missiles, aerostat (high altitude spy balloon) in defence sectors (DRDO), nuclear power plants, as well as in Medical Resonance Imaging (MRI) etc.

World's first high-efficiency thermoelectric material discovered

- Scientists have come up with a novel high-efficiency thermoelectric material that is intrinsically self-healable and highly stretchable. This is the world's first ionic thermoelectric (ITE) material that has good elasticity and self-healing abilities. By incorporating self-healing properties in TE materials that generate power directly from the heat, scientists were able to synthesize materials that possess intrinsic flexibility, stretchability, and self-healability all at once.
- Thermoelectric generators (TEG) have gained large interest from scientists with the advent of wearable technology products. Despite having high efficiency, these TE materials are rigid and brittle inorganic materials, such as glasses or ceramics. Because these materials are clearly not so flexible and break easily, the inorganic-based TE materials are also vulnerable to deformation or mechanical strain caused by human motion.

IIT Bombay, Shiv Nadar researchers develop environment friendly, cost efficient lithium batteries

- Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay and Shiv Nadar University claim to have developed a technology for production of environment friendly Lithium-Sulfur (Li-S) batteries which will be three times more energy efficient and cost effective than Lithium-ion batteries commonly used at present.
- According to the team, the Li-S battery technology leverages principles of green chemistry, incorporating usage of by-products from the petroleum industry (Sulfur), agro-waste elements and copolymers such as cardanol (a by-product of cashew nut processing) and eugenol (clove oil) as cathodic materials.
- The researchers said the technology has the potential to aid multi-billion dollar industries including tech gadgets, drones, electric vehicles (EV) and several more that depend on such batteries.



Health/ Disease

Malaysia detects new coronavirus strain that is ten times more infectious

- Malaysia has detected a strain of the new coronavirus that has been found to be 10 times more infectious.
- The mutation, earlier seen in other parts of the world and called D614G, was found in at least three of the 45 cases in a cluster that started from a restaurant owner returning from India and breaching his 14-day home quarantine. The man has since been sentenced to five months in prison and fined.

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that cause respiratory illnesses, according to the CDC. This family includes the viruses that cause SARS and MERS (Middle East respiratory syndrome), as well as those that cause milder illnesses, like the common cold. Right now, the severity of this new virus, known as 2019-nCoV, is somewhat unclear. The genomic size of coronaviruses ranges from approximately 26 to 32 kilobases, the largest for an RNA virus. The name “coronavirus” is derived from the Latin corona, meaning crown or halo. The most trafficked mammal of Asia, Pangolin was identified as the host of the virus by the researchers of China.

Pathogens listed as critical by WHO found in river Yamuna

- In 2017, the World Health Organisation published the first list of antibiotic-resistant “priority pathogens” – bacteria that pose the greatest threat to human health.
- The top of the list - the most critical group - included pathogens in urgent need of new antibiotics. A research paper from Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, has shown that the river Yamuna harboured some of these critical group, multidrug-resistant bacteria. They note that sewage was the main source of their entry into the river.
- The team studied 20 major sewer drains and Yamuna River at five locations across New Delhi over two seasons and was able to isolate faecal coliform in abundance in all the samples. They also found bacteria that produce Extended-spectrum Beta-lactamases - enzymes that help bacteria resist many commonly-used antibiotics.

First-of-its-kind mobile Covid-19 lab dedicated to public

- Touted as a first of its kind in the nation, a mobile Covid-19 lab was inaugurated by the Karnataka Medical Education Minister Dr K Sudhakar. The lab, approved by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) can do 9,000 RT-PCR (reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction) tests per month.
- “This is a unique lab having all safety features and capable of producing 100% accurate results within four hours,” Dr Sudhakar was quoted as saying in the press release. The Indian Institute of Science (IISc) had developed the lab and handed it over to the Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences (RGUHS).

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.

India's first home-grown pneumonia vaccine gets DCGI approval

- India's first fully indigenously developed vaccine against pneumonia has got approval from the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI), the Union health ministry. The ministry said the vaccine will be used for active immunisation against invasive disease and pneumonia caused by ‘Streptococcus pneumoniae’ among infants.
- With the help of Special Expert Committee (SEC) for vaccines, the drug regulator reviewed the phase I, II and III clinical trial data submitted by Pune-based firm Serum Institute of India and then granted the market approval for Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Conjugate Vaccine. The vaccine is administered in an intramuscular manner.

- The Serum Institute of India first obtained the approval of the DCGI to conduct Phase I, II and III clinical trials of the vaccine in India. These trials have since been concluded within the country. The company also conducted the clinical trials in Gambia.

Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) is a department of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization of the Government of India responsible for approval of licences of specified categories of drugs such as blood and blood products, IV fluids, vaccines, and sera in India. Drugs Controller General of India comes under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare. DCGI also sets standards for manufacturing, sales, import, and distribution of drugs in India.

IISc Designs Eye Gaze-Controlled Robotic Arm for Speech, Motor Impaired

- An Indian Institute of Science (IISc) research team has designed a robotic arm that can be manipulated by eye movement using a computer interface, to help people with Severe Speech and Motor Impairment (SSMI).
- This interface is non-invasive since it is through a webcam and a computer, unlike other eye gaze-tracking devices that use head-mounted systems, according to Bengaluru-based IISc.
- People with SSMI find it difficult to physically operate devices such as a joystick, mouse or trackball, or use speech recognition systems, it was noted. Eye gaze-controlled computer interfaces can help them perform various tasks on par with their non-disabled peers.

Chennai doctors perform Asia's first lung transplant on Covid-19 patient

- A brain dead man has breathed new life into a Covid-19 patient with severe lung infection and given new hope to a young Mumbai woman after his lungs and hands were transplanted to the respective donors. The 34-year-old deceased man's wife also agreed to donate his heart, liver and skin for various recipients in city hospitals. Incidentally, the hands were airlifted to Mumbai with the hope of giving the woman a real pair of limbs.
- While Global Hospital Chennai retained the liver, the heart, lungs, kidneys and skin were donated to different hospitals in the city.
- His hands went to Monika More, a young woman from Mumbai's suburban area, who was using artificial hands and is now set to get a real pair, if the bilateral surgery succeeds. Incidentally, the 48 year-old recipient of lungs from Delhi turned out to be the first case of "successful completion of a critical bilateral lung transplant" on a Covid-19 positive patient, MGM Healthcare, where he is undergoing treatment, said. It claimed this was Asia's "first known lung transplant" on a Covid-19 positive patient.

Water Science India launches India's first shower filter with aroma therapy

- Aroma Therapy Shower Filter CLEO launched by Water Science India promises to eliminate chlorine and conditions hardness from water and offer the benefits of natural essential oils. With a unique 4-layer filter which eliminates chlorine and conditions hardness, CLEO shower filters help one reduce hair fall and protect skin from hard water and treated water.
- Now the added benefits include Aroma Therapy, with a refillable aroma therapy pad infused with natural essential oils. Everyday can be a SPA day with aroma therapy shower filter. Families living in India's metros and Tier 2 cities are no stranger to poor water quality, Water Science India points out.
- Water that is heavily chlorinated and full of hard water salts and impurities are the cause of many health and hygiene woes: starting with the most common issue — excessive and premature hair loss — to skin allergies and eczema to corroded appliances and clogged pipes, to name just a few.

ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT



Warming waters drive unprecedented algal blooms in Antarctica, scientists find

- Scientists at the National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (which comes under Ministry of Earth Sciences), located in Goa, have noticed the unprecedented algal blooms within sea ice sheet of Antarctica which they say is indicative of the warming climate in the region.
- The algal bloom was noticed in the Maud Rise polynya, a large stretch of open water that is surrounded by ice, using satellite data to measure the concentrations of chlorophyll-a from 2017 onwards and are an indicator of warm water which helps algae propagate.
- “Satellite derived chlorophyll-a concentration showed the new phytoplankton blooms reached up to 4.67 mg m⁻³. Multi-satellite data indicated that the bloom appeared for the first time since the entire mission records started since 1978,” Dr Babula Jena who led the research study said. A polynya is a ‘hole’ in the Antarctic sea ice that occurs if ice begins to melt in the middle of the ice sheet, rather than at the edges as is usually the case.

An algal bloom or algae bloom is a rapid increase or accumulation in the population of algae in freshwater or marine water systems, and is often recognized by the discoloration in the water from their pigments. Algal bloom commonly refers to rapid growth of microscopic, unicellular algae, not macroscopic algae. An example of a macroscopic algal bloom is a kelp forest.

Centre to launch projects for Lion & Dolphin conservation to replicate successes of Project Tiger

- The Prime Minister announced that the Centre will soon launch Project Lion and Project Dolphin for the biodiversity conservation of these species to replicate the successes of Project Tiger launched in 1973.
- Mr Modi we have successfully carried forward Project Tiger and Project Elephant. The Tiger population has increased in India. Project Dolphin will focus on both river and sea dolphins.

The Ganges river dolphin is the national aquatic animal of India and also selected as city animal for the Indian city of Guwahati, found only in India and neighbor countries. There are only two subspecies of South Asian river dolphin found in India, Ganges river dolphin and Indus river dolphin. The Ganges river dolphin found in the Ganges and Brahmaputra rivers and their tributaries, Assam and Bihar are two best place in India to spot Ganges river dolphins, rest of the place are famous for oceanic dolphins, Irrawaddy dolphin and Bottlenose dolphins.

Climate change: Polar bears could be lost by 2100

- Polar bears will be wiped out by the end of the century unless more is done to tackle climate change, a study predicts. Scientists say some populations have already reached their survival limits as the Arctic sea ice shrinks.
- The carnivores rely on the sea ice of the Arctic Ocean to hunt for seals. As the ice breaks up, the animals are forced to roam for long distances or on to shore, where they struggle to find food and feed their cubs.

New grasshopper species discovered after 116 years, named after 28-year-old Indian biologist

- A new species of pygmy grasshopper, discovered after 116 years by a group of foreign researchers in Sri Lanka, has been named after a 28-year-old Indian orthopterist (one who studies grasshoppers) and conservation biologist Dhaneesh Bhaskar of Kerala.
- The new species, which was discovered by a group of Croatian and German researchers in Sinharaja rainforests of Sri Lanka, hails from *Cladonotus* genus and has been named as *Cladonotus Bhaskari*.
- The discovery is based on a single specimen of the species photographed in 2016 by Tom Kirschey in its natural rain forest habitat in Sri Lanka. The researchers then studied it and found it to be distinct from all the other discovered species of grasshoppers and then declared it as a new species in research journal *Zootaxa*.

Canada's last fully intact Arctic ice shelf collapses

- The last fully intact ice shelf in the Canadian Arctic has collapsed, losing more than 40% of its area in just two days at the end of July. The Milne Ice Shelf is at the fringe of Ellesmere Island, in the sparsely populated northern Canadian territory of Nunavut.
- The Arctic has been warming at twice the global rate for the last 30 years, due to a process known as Arctic amplification. But this year, temperatures in the polar region have been intense. The polar sea ice hit its lowest extent for July in 40 years. Record heat and wildfires have scorched Siberian Russia.

MoU signed with IIT-B for smog tower at CP

- The Delhi government has signed a MoU with IIT-Bombay and Tata Projects Limited to construct a smog tower in Connaught Place following Supreme Court orders.
- The smog tower is a 20-metre-high structure fitted with several air purifiers to clean the air. "The smog tower would be completed in 10 months as per the MoU. The government has identified a 45x40 metre land for the tower and land preparation has also been done".

Chhattisgarh's Jagdalpur becomes India's first municipal corporation to provide forestland right certificates to people of urban area

- Chhattisgarh government has decided to provide urban forestland under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, to the tribals and other traditional forest-dwellers for household purposes.
- Chhattisgarh's Jagdalpur has become the first municipal corporation in the country where people of an urban area have been provided forest land right certificates.
- On the occasion of the International Day of World's Indigenous Peoples, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel commenced the distribution of forestland right certificates by giving away the certificates to four beneficiaries of Jagdalpur via video conferencing. Jagdalpur is among the few municipal corporations, jurisdiction areas of which includes forestlands.
- The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, recognises rights on forest land of tribals and other traditional forest-dwellers in both rural and urban areas. The forest rights act allows the provision to allot the forest land lease to the eligible forest dwellers in the forestland of the urban region.

Himalayan Geothermal Springs release huge amount of carbon dioxide in atmosphere

- Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (WIHG), an autonomous institute under the Department of Science & Technology, Govt. of India, which investigated and characterized the gas emissions from Himalayan geothermal springs, found that these springs which cover about 10,000 square km in the Garhwal region of Himalaya show a significant discharge of Carbon dioxide (CO₂).
- The estimated carbon dioxide degassing (removal of dissolved gases from liquids, especially water or aqueous solutions) flux is nearly 7.2×10^6 moles/year to the atmosphere.

- The study published in the scientific journal Environmental Science and Pollution Research suggested that **CO₂ in these thermal springs are sourced from metamorphic decarbonation of carbonate rocks present deep in the Himalayan core** along with magmatism and oxidation of graphite. **Most of the geothermal water is dominated by evaporation** followed by weathering of silicate rocks.

India ranks first in number of organic farmers, 9th in area

- **India ranks first in the number of organic farmers and ninth in terms of area under organic farming. Sikkim became the first state in the world to become fully organic** and other States including Tripura and Uttarakhand have set similar targets.
- **North East India has traditionally been organic and the consumption of chemicals** is far less than the rest of the country. Similarly, the tribal and island territories are being nurtured to continue their organic story.
- With the **aim of assisting farmers to adopt organic farming and improve remunerations due to premium prices**, two dedicated programs namely Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North East Region (MOVCD) and Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) were launched in 2015 to encourage chemical-free farming

Indigenous Air Unique-quality Monitoring (AUM) Photonic System developed for Real-Time Remote Monitoring of Air Quality

- **World Health Organisation (WHO)’s reports show that the worsening state of poor air quality is responsible for more than 7.5 million fatalities worldwide annually.** This highlights the necessity for accurate, yet cost-effective monitoring of air quality parameters as monitoring is critical to solution.
- The current systems and technologies used for air quality monitoring are prohibitively expensive for wider deployment. This underlines the need for development of systems for real-time remote monitoring of relevant air quality parameters. **The AUM system (patent pending) is an innovative application of the principles of laser backscattering, statistical mechanics, optoelectronics, artificial intelligence, machine/deep learning, and Internet of Things.**
- It can identify, classify, and quantify various pollutants simultaneously (of orders of less than one part per billion) and meteorological parameters, with very high precision, sensitivity and accuracy. **AUM was successfully evaluated during laboratory trials with gold standards (in collaboration with EffecTech, UK), and also compared in the field with imported systems from France, and Australia and operated by Karnataka State Pollution Control Board.**

The first Arctic summer without ice is coming in just 15 years

- **There’s a standard image of the Earth as seen from space** that we carry in our heads: vast blue seas, green bands of forests, and frozen white caps on the top and bottom. **By the summer of 2035, it may not be accurate.**
- **Scientists estimate that in just 15 years Arctic summer sea-ice could disappear for the first time** since primitive humans left Africa. The new research is the latest in a steady stream that has moved up the **predicted timeframe for the ice-free Arctic milestone.** The amount of sea-ice floating atop the Arctic Ocean at summer’s end has fallen about 13% per decade since 1979.
- **The 2035 estimate made by Guarino and her colleagues** is based on what’s known about past climates. Scientists over the years have assembled evidence about previous eras from chemical traces in ice, rocks, and sediment. **The new Arctic study looks specifically at a period 130,000 years ago, called the Last Interglacial.**

The Arctic is a polar region located at the northernmost part of Earth. The Arctic consists of the Arctic Ocean, adjacent seas, and parts of Alaska (United States), Canada, Finland, Greenland (Denmark), Iceland, Norway, Russia, and Sweden. **In 2015, India set up an underground observatory, called IndARC, at the Kongsfjorden fjord, half way between Norway and the North Pole.** India has already established a high-altitude research station in the Himalayas, called HIMANSHI, at Spiti, Himachal Pradesh. Himadri Station is India’s first Arctic research station located at Spitsbergen, Svalbard, Norway.

SPORTS



Sports Personalities in News

MS Dhoni, Suresh Raina quit International Cricket

- **Former Indian Cricket Team Skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni announced his retirement from International Cricket.** Under his captaincy, India won the 2007 ICC World Twenty-Twenty, the 2010 and 2016 Asia Cups, the 2011 ICC Cricket World Cup and the 2013 ICC Champions Trophy. A right-handed middle-order batsman and wicket-keeper, Dhoni is one of the highest run scorers in One Day Internationals (ODIs) with a formidable score of more than 10 thousand runs.
- He made his ODI debut in December 2004 against Bangladesh, and played his first Test a year later against Sri Lanka. Dhoni has been the recipient of many awards, including the ICC ODI Player of the Year award in 2008 and 2009 (the first player to win the award twice), the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award in 2007, the Padma Shri, India's fourth highest civilian honour, in 2009 and the Padma Bhushan, India's third highest civilian honour, in 2018.
- He was named as the captain of the ICC World Test XI in 2009, 2010 and 2013. He has also been selected a record 8 times in ICC World ODI XI teams, 5 times as captain. The Indian Territorial Army conferred the honorary rank of Lieutenant Colonel to Dhoni on 1 November 2011. He is the second Indian cricketer after Kapil Dev to receive this honour.
- In the semi-final World Cup 2019 against New Zealand, Dhoni scored a fighting half-century in the second innings but was unfortunately run out at a crucial stage thus ending India's World Cup run and his career.
- **Suresh Raina is a former international cricketer from Uttar Pradesh, India. On 15 August 2020, Raina announced his retirement from all formats of international cricket.** Raina made his ODI debut in July 2005 against Sri Lanka at the age of 19. However, his Test debut came about five years later, in July 2010, against the same opposition. He is the first Indian batsman to hit a century in all three formats of international cricket.

Lewis Hamilton wins British GP

- **Lewis Hamilton held on to win the British Grand Prix despite a puncture on the last lap to clinch an 87th career win and move within four of Michael Schumacher's Formula One record.** The championship leader's record-extending seventh Silverstone win saw him finish six seconds ahead of Red Bull's Max Verstappen, who unexpectedly moved up a place after Hamilton's Mercedes teammate Valtteri Bottas sustained a puncture with three laps left.

Ishant Sharma among 29 recommended for Arjuna Award

- **India pacer Ishant Sharma was named in a 29-strong list of athletes recommended for this year's Arjuna award** by the sports ministry's selection committee. Ishant has played 97 Tests and 80 ODIs for India, grabbing over 400 international wickets.
- **Male recurve archer Atanu Das, women's hockey team player Deepika Thakur, kabaddi player Deepak Hooda and tennis player Divij Sharan** have also been recommended for the award. It has also been learnt that Olympic bronze-winning wrestler Sakshi Malik and former world champion weightlifter Mirabai Chanu too

have got the committee's nod but the final decision has been left on sports minister Kiren Rijiju as both the women are former Khel Ratna awardees.

- The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has congratulated Indian pacer Ishant Sharma and women's team all-rounder Deepti Sharma on being conferred with the prestigious Arjuna Award.

The Arjuna Awards are given by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India to recognize outstanding achievement in sports. Started in 1961, the award carries a cash prize of Rs. 5,00,000, a bronze statue of Arjuna and a scroll.

Lewis Hamilton wins Spanish Grand Prix for 88th career victory in Formula One

- Lewis Hamilton had no problems with his tires this time as he coasted to victory at the Spanish Grand Prix, extending his championship lead to 37 points and clinching an 88th career victory to move within three of Michael Schumacher's Formula One record.

Simona Halep beats Elise Mertens to win Prague title

- Top seed Simona Halep claimed her second successive title, albeit six months apart, as she comfortably beat Elise Mertens to win the Prague Open.

First female golfer from Germany Sophia Popov wins Women's British Open

- World number 304 Sophia Popov became the first female golfer from Germany to capture a major title after winning the Women's British Open by two strokes at Royal Troon in Scotland. Thailand's Jasmine Suwannapura was the runner-up after shooting 67. It completed one of the most unlikely wins in the tournament's history.

Jacques Kallis, Zaheer Abbas, Lisa Sthalekar inducted into ICC Hall of Fame

- Legendary South African all-rounder Jaques Kallis, Pakistan batting great Zaheer Abbas and Pune-born former Australian captain Lisa Sthalekar were inducted into the International Cricket Council's Hall of Fame in a virtual ceremony.
- Among the finest all-rounders to play the game, Kallis represented South Africa in 166 Tests, 328 ODIs and 25 T20s between 1995 and 2014. Remarkably, Kallis is the only player to score at least 10,000 runs and take at least 250 wickets in both Test and ODI cricket.

James Anderson Becomes the First Pace Bowler to take 600 Scalps in International Test Cricket

- James Anderson creates history as he registered his 600th Test wicket in the series-deciding third and final Test match against Pakistan at the Ageas Rose Bowl in Southampton.
- He is the only pacer to pick up 600 wickets in international test cricket. Jimmy now becomes the fourth-highest wicket-taker in red-ball cricket after the likes of Muttiah Muralitharan (800), Shane Warne (709), and, Anil Kumble (619) respectively. While Muralitharan was an off-spinner, his counterparts Warne and Kumble were leggies.

Neelkantha Bhanu Prakas has won the first gold medal for India at the Mental Calculation World Championship at Mind Sports Olympiad

- Neelkantha Bhanu Prakash, a student of Mathematics at Delhi's St Stephen's College, holds the world record for being the 'fastest human calculator.'
- Neelkantha Bhanu Prakash, 20, from Hyderabad has won the first gold medal for India at the Mental Calculation World Championship at Mind Sports Olympiad held in London recently.
- "Beating 29 competitors, up to 57 years of age, from 13 countries, I won the gold medal with a clear margin of 65 points. The Mind Sport Olympiad was held virtually with 30 participants from the UK, Germany, UAE, France, Greece and Lebanon.
- The Mental Calculation World Championship, or Mind Sports Olympiad, is a multidisciplinary annual competition with numerous mind games which test mental skills. The competition has been held every year

since its inauguration in 1997. However, this year, owing to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the competition was held online.

- By winning gold at the championship, **Bhanu has broken the records held previously by prominent faces like Scott Flensburg and Shakuntala Devi. Shakuntala Devi set the record of the Fastest Human Computation by multiplying two randomly selected 13-digit numbers in just 28 seconds, at Imperial College London on June 18, 1980.**
- **Scott Flensburg, an American, is popularly known as The Human Calculator** and has a Guinness Record for his speed in mental calculation. He is also the host for The National Counting Bee held every year.

India's first virtual sports festival for children launched

- **India on Track has partnered with some of the world's leading sporting entities to host an online sports festival** from September 1 to 5. In a one-of-its-kind opportunity, the festival will have interactive sessions on football, basketball, baseball and badminton for children aged 5-18 years.
- A series of virtual sessions are part of the plan, with focus on training, nutrition and injury prevention, fun games and quizzes, skill challenges and various interactive activities. These programs will be conducted by utilising training protocols from some of the **world's best sport entities, including LaLiga Football Schools, NBA Basketball School, Prakash Padukone Badminton Schools & Major League Baseball First Pitch.**
- At the end of the festival, **training scholarships and merchandise will be awarded to participants who win skill challenges set by the technical partners.**

Pravin Tambe Becomes First Indian to Play CPL

- **Spinner Pravin Tambe became the first Indian to play in the Caribbean Premier League (CPL).** The 48-year-old has **achieved the feat as was named in Trinbago Knight Riders' (TKR's) starting XI against St Lucia Zouks** as one of three spinners alongside Fawad Ahmed and Khary Pierre.

Dwayne Bravo becomes first bowler to take 500 wickets in T20s

- **West Indies all-rounder Dwayne Bravo became the first bowler to take 500 T20 wickets.** Bravo achieved the feat during the CPL match. The all-rounder, who was one shy of the landmark, **dismissed Rahkeem Cornwall for his prized 500th wicket in the fourth over of the match.**

India and Russia announced as joint winners of FIDE Chess Olympiad

- **India and Russia were announced as joint winners of the FIDE Chess Olympiad** as **Nihal Sarin and Divya Deshmukh lost connection to their games in the second round and had to forfeit.**
- **In a first, the olympiad was conducted online. Originally, Russia were declared as the winners, but India filed an appeal and after investigation, both India and Russia were announced as joint winners.**
- **This was the first time that India reached the finals of the FIDE Chess Olympiad. India's best finish at the Olympiad had come in 2014 when the contingent returned with a bronze medal.**

Sport Events

Sports Ministry organises Fit India Freedom Run from Aug 15 to Oct 2

- The Sports Ministry is being organised the largest country-wide run, the Fit India Freedom Run from 15th August to 2nd October, which boasts of a unique concept. In keeping with the current pandemic situation and social distancing norms, the government has decided to encourage participants of the event to run at their own pace - anywhere and at any time of their convenience.

Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports is a branch of the Government of India, which administers Department of youth affairs and Department of Sports in India. Kiren Rijiju is the current Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, who is in the capacity of Minister of State (Independent Charge).

Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju chairs 1st General Council meeting of Khelo India Scheme

- Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju chaired the 1st General Council meeting of the Khelo India Scheme. Mr Rijiju urged the states to organise State-level Khelo India Games annually with an effort to identify a larger number of grassroots-level talents.

BCCI suspends title sponsorship deal with Vivo for upcoming IPL

- The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has suspended the title sponsorship deal with Chinese mobile phone company Vivo for the upcoming edition of the Indian Premier League. VIVO had won the IPL title sponsorship for five years from 2018 to 2022 for a reported sum of 2190 crore rupees.
- The IPL this year shifted to the UAE because of the prevailing COVID-19 situation in India. The tournament will be held from September 19 to November 10 amid COVID-19 protocols laid down by the ICC and BCCI.

RFC Football Academy launches India's first full-fledged girls residential football academy

- FC Girls Football Academy, India's first full-fledged girls residential football training facility was launched by Rebels FC in Bengaluru. The academy will provide top of the line scientific training for young, talented and passionate female footballers to achieve their dream of becoming a professional football player.

Dream11 wins IPL 2020 title sponsorship rights with bid of Rs 222 crore

- Fantasy gaming platform Dream11 has won the IPL title sponsorship rights with a bid of 222 crore rupees. IPL Chairman Brijesh Patel has informed that the deal will be valid for four and a half months, ending December 2020.
- Dream11 will replace VIVO after the Chinese mobile phone maker suspended its deal owing to a border stand-off between India and China. The company, however, had been under BCCI's scanner after it was linked to the fake T20 league held in Punjab but was live-streamed as a game in Sri Lanka.

Dream11 is a fantasy sports platform based in India that allows users to play fantasy cricket, hockey, football, kabaddi and basketball. Dream11 was co-founded by Harsh Jain and Bhavit Sheth in 2008. Cricketer Mahendra Singh Dhoni is the brand ambassador of Dream11 and it is headquartered in Mumbai.

Army Sports Institute, Pune awarded with Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puraskar 2020

- Army Sports Institute, Pune has been identified and awarded with "Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puraskar 2020" by Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Govt of India.
- Army Sports Institute, Pune was raised as part of Indian Army's "Mission Olympics" programme on 01 Jul 2001. The aim was to train the vast reservoir of talent in the Army in selected seven disciplines to include Archery, Athletics, Boxing, Diving, Fencing, Weightlifting and Wrestling with an ultimate aim of winning medals at Olympics. The institute draws its sportsmen from the Army as well as from young raw and proven talent in 'Boys Sports Companies' (8-14 years age).

Football: Bayern Munich beat Paris Saint-Germain to win UEFA Champions League

- In Football, German giants Bayern Munich have won the European Champions League for the sixth time after beating French side Paris Saint-Germain 1-0 at the final in Portugal's capital, Lisbon.
- A goal by French winger Kingsley Coman at the 59th minute was enough for the Munich side to dash the Parisians' dream of winning for the first time the UEFA Champions League. A competition which started in June 2019 with the preliminary round comes to a climax between the best side in world football against one of the planet's finest forward lines.

'Pride of Punjab' partnership of State Govt, YuWaah for youth development launched

- Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh launched a collaborative 'Pride of Punjab' programme as a partnership between the Department of Youth Services and Sports and YuWaah – a joint initiative of UNICEF, other UN agencies, civil society organizations and the private sector.
- Aimed at enabling the best opportunities for Punjab's young people, the project will work with the youth to help them realize their aspirations, become change leaders in their communities, and support other young people in their journeys.

India to host ICC Men's T20 World Cup in 2021; Women's T-20 postponed till 2022

- International Cricket Council has confirmed that the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2020 that was postponed due to Covid-19 will be held in Australia in 2022. India will host the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2021 as planned. Cricket's governing body has also decided to postpone the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup 2021 in New Zealand till February – March 2022 because of the impact the Covid-19 pandemic has had on cricket globally.
- The format of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2021 will remain as it was for 2020 and all teams that qualified for that event will now participate in India in 2021. A new qualification process will be run for the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2022. Five teams have already qualified for the event and that will stand for 2022.



AWARDS



Rohit Sharma along with 4 athletes won Khel Ratna Award

- India's limited-overs vice-captain Rohit Sharma, who is one of the most established white-ball cricketers in world cricket, is all set to get India's highest sporting award - The Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award. Rohit had a sensational run in the year 2019 - where he became the first batsman ever to score five centuries in an ODI World Cup.
- On August 21, the Sports Ministry confirmed five names for the prestigious Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award. Along with Mariappan Thangavelu (Para Athletics), table tennis champion Manika Batra, wrestler Vinesh Phogat and hockey player Rani Rampal, 'Hitman' Rohit Sharma also got a mention in the elite list.
- Thus, Rohit became only the fourth Indian cricketer – after Sachin Tendulkar, MS Dhoni and Virat Kohli – to be conferred with Khel Ratna award.
- On the other hand, Rani will become only the third Indian hockey player after Dhanraj Pillay and Sardar Singh to receive the Khel Ratna. Phogat became the first woman wrestler to win an Asian Games gold medal in 2018.
- All the sportspersons will receive the awards on August 29 - which is also celebrated as National Sports Day to commemorate the birth anniversary of hockey wizard Major Dhyan Chand. This year, due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the ceremony is likely to be held virtually.

Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna, officially known as Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award in Sports and Games, is the highest sporting honour of the Republic of India. The award is named after Rajiv Gandhi, former Prime Minister of India who served the office from 1984 to 1989. It is awarded annually by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. Khel Ratna is usually awarded to two athletes with exceptional cases taking the count to three also recommended subject to Sports Ministry's approval. As of 2018, the award comprises a medallion, a certificate, and a cash prize of Rs. 7.5 lakh (US\$10,000). The first recipient of the award was Chess Grandmaster Viswanathan Anand, who was honoured for the performance in the year 1991–92. In 2001, sport shooter Abhinav Bindra, then aged 18, became the youngest recipient of the award. Devendra Jhajharia is the first para athlete to receive Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna and Deepa Malik is the first and oldest Indian women para-athlete to the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna.

Ministry of Tribal Affairs receives SKOCH Gold Award

- SKOCH Gold Award has been awarded to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) for its "Empowerment of Tribals through IT enabled Scholarship Schemes" project.
- The project was launched to show Government of India's commitment to realize the dreams of Digital India and bringing transparency as well as ease in the delivery of services. MoTA integrated the 5 Scholarship Schemes with DBT Portal under the guidance of DBT Mission in order to align with the larger vision of 'Digital India'.

‘Moothon’, ‘Son Rise’ won awards at 20th New York Indian Film Festival

- National Award-winning documentary “Son Rise” and Geetu Mohandas-directed “Moothon” were among the films that took home the big honours at the 20th New York Indian Film Festival (NYIFF), which switched to a virtual edition this year amid the ongoing COVID19 pandemic.
- Over 45 feature length narratives, shorts and documentaries from the Indian subcontinent were showcased at the festival’s virtual edition that ran for 10 days beginning July 24. The films programmed were in various languages including Assamese, Bengali, Haryanvi, Hindi, English, Ladakhi, Maithili, Malayalam, Marathi, Nepali and Tamil.

DIAT bags 1st prize in Smart India Hackathon 2020

- Defence Institute of Advanced Technology, DIAT, has bagged 1st prize in Smart India Hackathon, SIH, 2020, held from 1st to 3rd of this month at Noida Institute of Engineering and Technology, Uttar Pradesh.
- This 36- hour non-stop digital product building competition was a national level competition for software edition, which was organized jointly by the Ministry of Human Resource Development and All India Council for Technical Education.
- During the competition, Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacted with the participants in a live event. Six-member team of the institute received one lakh rupees as prize money for solving a technical problem using artificial intelligence.

SS Motivation Founder & CEO Sunil ydv SS Receives Karamveer Chakra Award from United Nations and ICONGO

- Founder of SS Motivation, World record holder Sunil ydv SS was honoured with “Karamveer Chakra Award” by Global Fellowship Award instituted by United Nations and International Confederation of NGO (iCONGO) at the ReX ConclIVE hosted in IIT Delhi.
- He received the award for his relentless contribution to society through his Telegram channel “SS Motivation.” He addresses social issues and motivates people every day through his channel. Sunil belongs to Budhi Bawal in Alwar, Rajasthan, and he achieved 127 million views in 2019, one of the highest global records attained by a Telegram channel that addresses and provides solutions to Indian social issues along with motivational content.
- The Karamveer Chakra is a global award given to people who contribute to society by showing courage, initiating change, and walking through the less-travelled life paths. The award is a sign of respect for its ambassador Dr A. P. J. Abdul Kalam, a former President of India and recognizes noble laureates.

IISc Professor selected for 2021 Joel Henry Hildebrand Award

- An Honorary Professor at Indian Institute of Science (IISc) has been selected as the 2021 recipient of the Joel Henry Hildebrand Award in the Theoretical and Experimental Chemistry of Liquids.
- Professor Biman Bagchi was about the award by the American Chemical Society in Washington DC. The Institute described the award as being “prestigious” in the area of liquids and gasses. “After a long time an Indian has got this award”.

WHO Chief Scientist honoured with Tamil Nadu’s CM’s special award

- Chief Scientist of World Health Organisation, Soumya Swaminathan was conferred with the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister’s special award, in recognition of her advisory role in combating the COVID-19 pandemic in the state. Swaminathan received the award from Chief Minister K Palaniswami on the 74th Independence Day celebration at Fort St George.

Wing Commander Gajanand Yadava gets ‘Tenzing Norgay National Adventure Award 2019’

- Wing Commander Gajanand Yadava is awarded the ‘Tenzing Norgay National Adventure Award 2019’ in ‘air adventure’ category. Gajanand Yadava is a Parachute Jump Instructor and member of IAF Skydiving Team ‘AkashGanga’. He has undertaken more than 2900 jumps till date.

- Meanwhile, the Air Force also congratulated to Air Force Sports Control Board (AFSCB), for being awarded the 'Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar 2020', which is given for making sustained efforts towards encouragement and promotion of Sports.

Government school teacher from Ladakh selected for National Awards to Teachers, 2020

- A government school teacher from Ladakh has been selected for the National Awards to Teachers, 2020. Head Teacher of Middle School Taknak Sakti in Kharu block of Leh - Ladakh, Sonam Gyaltsan, has been selected for the prestigious National award.
- An independent jury constituted by the Ministry of Education, Department of School Education & Literacy has selected the teachers for their excellence in the field of teaching with innovation and dedication.
- Sonam Gyaltsan also utilised ITBPs Civil Action Program to take his students to Bharat Darshan. Taknak Sakti is one of the longest villages in Leh district. In three years the enrollment of Students rose from 4 to 103 now. This depicts the changed scenario of the government school in Ladakh.

Anand Mahindra, Shantanu Narayen to receive 2020 Leadership Awards from USISPF

- A top US-based India-centric business advocacy group will honour Mahindra group Chairman Anand Mahindra and Adobe Chairman and CEO Shantanu Narayen with its 2020 Leadership Awards in recognition of their exemplary vision towards promoting US-India bilateral ties.
- The award, announced would be presented during the third Annual Leadership Summit, titled "US-India Week: Navigating New Challenges", which will convene virtually from August 31, the US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF) said.

Dr. Sneha Rakesh wins Best Emerging Women Entrepreneur award from Business Mint

- Dr. Sneha Rakesh, a rural entrepreneur travelled all the way from Hassan to Belgium, creating success stories.
- She is a woman entrepreneur who has achieved great heights in the technology industry. With sheer dedication and heightened passion, she has done everything to reach the position. She followed a common saying: never to quit, and don't lose hope.
- A diploma in computer science from Smt LV Polytechnic College, Karnataka, followed by MSC Engg from MS Ramaiah School Of Advance Studies, Dr Sneha Rakesh started working at the age of 19. She started as a Software Engineer after her diploma in the field. Alongside her job in a startup, she joined an evening college for further studies.

World War II Spy First Indian-Origin Woman to Get Memorial Plaque in London

- Britain's World War II spy, Noor Inayat Khan, became the first Indian-origin woman to be honoured with a memorial Blue Plaque at her former family home in central London. The Blue Plaque scheme, run by the English Heritage charity, honours notable people and organisations who were connected with particular buildings across London.
- Khan's plaque has gone up at 4 Taverton Street in Bloomsbury, where she lived before she left for Nazi-occupied France in 1943 as an undercover radio operator for Britain's Special Operations Executive (SOE). The new plaque reads: "Noor Inayat Khan GC, 1914-1944, SOE Agent codename 'Madeleine' stayed here".
- Noor, the daughter of Indian Sufi saint Hazrat Inayat Khan and a descendant of the 18th century Mysore ruler Tipu Sultan, went on to be killed at Dachau concentration camp in 1944, having revealed nothing to her captors, not even her real name.
- The SOE was an independent British Secret Service set up in 1940 by Britain's then Prime Minister Winston Churchill. Noor was the first female radio operator sent into Nazi-occupied France and was posthumously awarded the George Cross (GC) for her bravery in 1949.
- Mahatma Gandhi and BR Ambedkar are among some of the other Indian-origin historical figures have been honoured with the Blue Plaques at buildings associated with their stay in London.

The Blue Plaque scheme, run by the English Heritage charity, honours notable people and organisations connected with particular buildings across London. The “official” scheme traces its origins to that launched in 1866 in London, on the initiative of the politician William Ewart, to mark the homes and workplaces of famous people

Para swimmer Satyendra Singh gets prestigious Adventure Award

- Para-swimmer Satyendra Singh Lohia of Madhya Pradesh is the first Divyanga Indian sportsperson of the country, who has been awarded with the Tenzing Norgay Adventure Award. He is also the first Asian Divyang swimmer to cross the 42-kilometer Catalina Channel in the US in just 11 hours 34 minutes.

Dutch book ‘The Discomfort of Evening’ wins 2020 International Booker Prize

- ‘The Discomfort of Evening’, written by Marieke Lucas Rijneveld and translated from Dutch by Michele Hutchison, was announced as the winner of the 2020 International Booker Prize, making the writer the youngest winner of the prize at 29.
- The £50,000 prize will be split between Rijneveld and Hutchison, giving both the author and translator equal recognition. The winner was announced by chair of the judges, Ted Hodgkinson, at a digital event.

International Booker Prize (formerly known as the Man Booker International Prize) is an international literary award hosted in the United Kingdom. The introduction of the International Prize to complement the Man Booker Prize was announced in June 2004. Since 2016, the award has been given annually to a single book in English translation, with a pounds £50,000 prize for the winning title, shared equally between author and translator. The 2005 inaugural winner of the prize was Albanian writer Ismail Kadare.

Subedar Sawant gets Arjuna Award for tent pegging

- Subedar Ajay Anant Sawant from the Army’s 61 Cavalry has been conferred the Arjuna award for the equestrian sport of tent pegging.
- Subedar Sawant joined the Army in 1993 and had no prior background in equestrian sports. Subedar Sawant has won several medals over the years. He won his first international participation in 2002 and won the team silver in the 2018 World Cup in Abu Dhabi.

Arjuna Awards are given by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India to recognize outstanding achievement in sports. Started in 1961, the award carries a cash prize of Rs.15,00,000, a bronze statue of Arjuna and a scroll.

PERSONS IN NEWS

Ajay Tyagi gets 18 months' extension as SEBI chairman

- **Ajay Tyagi** has been given an 18 month extension as the chairman of markets regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India, SEBI. His term will continue till February 2022.
- Department of Personnel and Training in an order said, the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the extension of Ajay Tyagi's term for 18 months with effect from 1st September 2020 to 28th February 2022. Tyagi, a 1984 batch retired IAS officer of Himachal Pradesh cadre was appointed as the SEBI chairman in March 2017 for three years.

D Roopa appointed home secretary, 'first woman to do so'

- **D. Roopa**, a 2000 batch officer, currently in the role of Inspector General of Police (IGP), Railways, Bengaluru has been transferred as IGP and PCAS, Home Department. She replaces Umesh Kumar, who has been transferred as ADGP Criminal Investigation Department (CID), Economic Offences in Bengaluru.

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor G C Murmu resigns

- **Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor G C Murmu** has resigned from his post. Mr Murmu, a 1985 batch Gujarat cadre IAS officer was appointed as the LG in October last year.

Dr. Pradeep Kumar Joshi takes oath as Chairman of UPSC

- **Dr. Pradeep Kumar Joshi** took oath as Chairman of Union Public Service Commission (UPSC). Prof. Joshi joined the Commission as a member in the year 2015.
- He served as Director of the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration. During his career, Dr. Joshi taught more than 28 years at post-graduation level and held many important positions in various policy making, academic and administrative bodies.

Gen. Charles Q. Brown sworn in as first Black Air Force chief

- President Donald Trump hosted the swearing-in of the first Black Chief of Staff of the Air Force, Gen. Charles Q. Brown. Vice President Mike Pence administered the oath of office to Gen. Brown, who was confirmed by the Senate in June in a 98-0 vote.

Charges framed against former Chief Justice of Bangladesh in money laundering case

- A Dhaka court framed charges against the former Chief Justice of Bangladesh Justice S.K. Sinha and ten others in a money laundering case filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC). Out of the 11 accused, three were present in the court during the hearing while eight others including former Chief Justice S.K. Sinha are absconding.
- The ACC had filed the case against Justice Sinha and others in July last year for a fraudulent loan transaction and money laundering of 4 crore Taka from Farmers Bank in 2016. It had filed the chargesheet in a Dhaka court in December last year which was transferred to the court of a special judge in February this year.
- Justice Sinha was appointed as Chief Justice of Bangladesh in 2015. He had resigned amid controversy about a judgment of the Supreme Court which struck down the law giving power to parliament to remove justices of the Supreme Court.

Former Indian cricketer and Uttar Pradesh Minister Chetan Chauhan passed away

- **Former Indian cricketer and Uttar Pradesh minister Chetan Chauhan** passed away following multiple organ failure. He was 73. Chauhan was Minister of Sainik Welfare, Home Guards, PRD and Civil Security in the UP Cabinet. Chauhan is the second Uttar Pradesh minister after Kamal Rani Varun, who held the Technical Education portfolio, to have succumbed to Covid-19.

- A flamboyant cricketer and Sunil Gavaskar's longest serving opening partner in the 1970s, Chauhan represented India in 40 Tests and served the Delhi & Districts Cricket Association (DDCA) in various capacities — president, vice-president, secretary and chief selector.

Renowned lyricist & poet Rahat Indori passes away

- In Madhya Pradesh, noted Urdu poet and lyricist Rahat Indori died of cardiac arrest in Indore. He was also tested positive for COVID-19. The 70-year-old poet was undergoing treatment at Sri Aurobindo Institute of Medical Sciences in Indore.

Legendary Indian classical vocalist Pandit Jasraj passes away

- Legendary Indian classical vocalist Pandit Jasraj passed away at his home in New Jersey, USA. Pandit Jasraj, who belonged to the Mewati Gharana, was in the US when the coronavirus-led lockdown happened and decided to stay back there. The Padma Vibhushan music legend, who belonged to the Mewati Gharana, was also known as Sangeet Martand.
- Jasraj was born on 28 January 1930 in Pili Mandori, a village in the Hisar district of Haryana, in a middle-class Brahmin family to Pandit Motiram, a classical singer and Krishna Bai. Motiram died in 1934 when Jasraj was four, on the day he was to be appointed as the state musician in the court of Mir Osman Ali Khan. His eldest brother was vocalist Pandit Maniram, who instructed Jasraj after the passing of their father. Jasraj's elder brother, Pandit Pratap Narayan, was also an accomplished musician and was the father of music composer duo Jatin-Lalit, singer-actress Sulakshana Pandit and actress Vijeta Pandit.
- The Padma Vibhushan artiste was the first Indian musician to have a minor planet named after him in September 2019. International Astronomical Union (IAU) named minor planet 2006 VP32 (number -300128), discovered on November 11, 2006, as Panditjasraj. It traverses the cosmos between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter.

Indian Idol Fame Shahzan Mujeeb signed as first ever National Brand Ambassador of Aligarh Municipal Corporation

- Aligarh Municipal Corporation (AMC) has recently roped in Indian Idol Season 11 Finalist and Oscar Nominated Playback Singer Shahzan Mujeeb as its first ever National Brand Ambassador for Swachh Bharat Abhiyan Campaign at National and International level.
- Shazan apart from being a Finalist on Indian Idol Season 11 is also a Music Composer and Music Director by profession. Recently, his film Gera won the National Award for Best Gujarati Film.

Rakesh Asthana appointed as DG of Border Security Force

- 1984 batch Gujarat cadre IPS officer Rakesh Asthana has been appointed as the Director General of Border Security Force, BSF. According to a Personnel Ministry order issued, he will be in the post up to 31st July, 2021, the date of his superannuation.
- Mr Asthana is at present working as the Director General of Bureau of Civil Aviation Security, BCAS. He will continue to hold the additional charge of DG, Narcotics Control Bureau.

Jeff Bezos becomes world's first \$200 billionaire

- Amazon founder Jeff Bezos has become the world's first-ever \$200 billionaire. Around \$82 billion of his net worth was added this year after e-commerce and contactless purchasing got a push during the pandemic.
- Bezos's net worth is up by \$4.9 billion, making the 56-year-old the first-ever person to amass a \$200 billion fortune.

Former IOC Chairman Sanjiv Singh joins Reliance as group president

- Former Indian Oil Corp (IOC) chairman Sanjiv Singh has joined Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL) as group president for billionaire Mukesh Ambani-run firm's oil-to-chemicals business.

- A communication by RIL Executive Director Hital R. Meswani to the company employees said Mr. Singh, who **superannuated from India's largest oil firm on June 30**, will be a member of the oil-to-chemicals (O2C) business leadership team.

Satpal Singh Satti appointed as chairman of 6th State Finance Commission of Himachal Pradesh

- **Mr Satpal Singh Satti** has been **appointed the chairman of sixth State Finance Commission of Himachal Pradesh**. The newly-constituted commission will **review the financial position of the panchayats and municipalities and devolution of resources to these institutions**.
- **Mr Satti will enjoy the status of a Cabinet Minister**. The tenure of the commission will commence from the date of issuance of the notification. The commission will make its report available by December 31, 2021 covering a period of five years from April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2027.

US Republican Party re-nominates Donald Trump and Mike Pence as Presidential, Vice Presidential candidates

- The Republican National Convention (RNC) has **formally re-nominated President Donald Trump as the party's Presidential candidate for the November 3 election**.
- **Mr Trump, who faces a formidable challenge from former Democratic vice president Joe Biden**, is delivered his acceptance speech from the South Lawn of the White House on 27th of August. **The once in four-year GOP (Grand Old Party) convention is being held in virtual mode due to the raging Coronavirus pandemic**.

Satheesh Reddy gets two-year extension as DRDO Chief

- **Dr. G. Satheesh Reddy, Head of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)**, has been given a **two-year extension as the Secretary, Department of Defence Research and Development and Chairman DRDO beyond his tenure of August 26, 2020**.

MISCELLANEOUS

Singapore-based NGO to invest up to USD 100m on environmental projects in India

- Alliance to End Plastic Waste, a Singapore-based-NGO working in the environmental sector, plans to invest between USD 70 million to 100 million in India over the next five years to majorly to reduce plastic waste.
- India currently generates around 26,000 tonnes of plastic waste every day, over 10,000 tonnes of which is not collected. The latest project by the Alliance and Deutsche Gesellschaft for Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) is the Aviral, Reducing Plastic Waste in the Ganga.
- The initiative, which was announced on July 28, coinciding with Nature Conservative Day, aims to reduce the amount of plastic waste entering the environment in the northern Indian cities of Haridwar and Rishikesh.

DNHDD launches E-Gyan Mitra mobile app for online education

- Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu bordering Gujarat has launched E-Gyan Mitra mobile app for online education.
- The E-Gyan Mitra app launched by the Education Department of Daman Administration is becoming popular among the students and parents.

Andhra Chief Minister launches E-Rakshabandhan for Cybercrime Awareness

- Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy launched E-Rakshabandhan in the state capital Amaravati. It is an innovative virtual cybercrime awareness programme of the state CID and the police.
- The programme was organised to ensure the safety of women and children in cyberspace. It is a month-long programme to bring awareness in the public, especially women, youth and children. Webinars will be conducted as a part of the E-Rakshabandhan. Cybercrime experts will speak on different types of cyber-crimes and create awareness among the public.

Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor approves creation of Block Development Fund on pattern of Constituency Development Fund

- Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Girish Chandra Murmu has approved the creation of Block Development Fund on the pattern of Constituency Development Fund.
- 25 lakh rupees each will be placed at the disposal of Block Development Council (BDC) Chairpersons to be used for local block developmental works. The works in this regard, could be identified by the BDC Chairpersons as per the local priorities.

Indian School of Business to help Andhra revive economy in post-Covid-19 world

- Hyderabad-based Indian School of Business (ISB), one of the prestigious business schools in the country, will help the Andhra Pradesh government in reviving the state's economy and generation of employment in the state in the post-Covid-19 scenario.
- The state government entered into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the ISB to work with various departments for chalking out measures for economic recovery and growth monitoring.

Chhattisgarh launches scheme for tendu leaves collectors

- Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel launched a social security scheme for tendu leaves collectors in the state, which will benefit over 12 lakh families, mostly tribals and forest dwellers engaged in its collection.
- The scheme, named after slain Congress leader Mahendra Karma, was inaugurated on the occasion of his birth anniversary. Karma was popularly known as Bastar tiger for his tough stand against Naxals, was among 29 people, including senior Congress leaders, who were killed in a Naxal attack in Jhiram valley of Bastar district on May 25, 2013.
- Shaheed Mahendra Karma Tendupatta Sangraha Samajik Suraksha Yojana, introduced in the memory of the leader, will benefit around 12.50 lakh families involved in tendu leaves collection. Tendu leaves, used for

making bidis (leaf-wrapped cigarettes), are collected by forest dwellers and from them it is purchased by the state government.

Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and Smriti Irani launch the book ‘Swachh Bharat Kranti’

- The book was officially launched by Union Minister of Jal Shakti, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, and Union Minister of Textiles and Women & Child Development Smriti Irani in New Delhi.
- The Swachh Bharat Kranti captures the remarkable journey of the SBM through 35 essays by a diverse range of stakeholders and contributors to the SBM, sharing their perspective on this social revolution. The essays are arranged in four key sections which are the four key pillars of SBM's success: Political Leadership, Public Financing, Partnerships and People's Participation.
- With a foreword by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, it is a compilation of essays written by Arun Jaitley, Amitabh Kant, Ratan Tata, Sadhguru, Amitabh Bachchan, Akshay Kumar, Tavleen Singh, Bill Gates amongst others.

Khattar launches “Parivar Pehchan Patra”

- Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar launched “Parivar Pehchan Patras” to enable the citizens to get the benefits of various central and state government schemes.
- At present, four schemes – Mukhya Mantri Parivar Samridhi Yojana (MMPSY), Old Age Samman Allowance Scheme, Divyang Jan Pension Scheme, and Widow and Destitute Women Pension scheme – have been integrated with “Parivar Pehchan Patra” (PPP). The chief minister announced that various welfare schemes of all government departments in the state will be linked to these “Pehchan Patras” within the next three months.

Indira Rasoi Yojana to start in Rajasthan

- Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot directed officials to start the Indira Rasoi Yojana in urban areas of Rajasthan from August 20. Reviewing the preparations for the scheme, named after former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi,
- The state government would spend Rs 100 crore per year on it. The poor would get quality nutritious food for just Rs 8. The chief minister said the scheme should be implemented with the spirit of public service, transparency and public participation so that it becomes an example in the direction of providing food security to the poor in the country.

Dr Harsh Vardhan launches ‘Vidyarthi Vigyan Manthan 2020-21

- Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan launched ‘Vidyarthi Vigyan Manthan, 2020-21. This initiative is a national programme for popularizing science among school students of Class 6th to 11th. It was designed to identify the bright minds with a scientific aptitude among the student community.
- While launching the Vidyarthi Vigyan Manthan, 2020-21, the Minister said, this is a platform to identify the talent in the field of science and to promote the scientific acumen among the students.

Assam council of ministers approves “Assam Non-Government Education Institutions (Regulation of Fees) Rules 2020”

- In Assam, the council of ministers approved the Assam Non-Government Education Institutions (Regulation of Fees) Rules 2020. This would regulate the fees structure of the private educational institutes.
- The council of ministers meeting also approved the Assam Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) scheme 2020. The meeting also took decision for implementation of ‘Uberization’ scheme of Assam State Transport Corporation. Under this scheme, 668 new buses would operate for 5 years.

Education Minister launches Minimum Standards of Architectural Education Regulations, 2020

- Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank virtually launched the Minimum Standards of Architectural Education Regulations, 2020 in New Delhi. Addressing the participants, Mr Pokhriyal highlighted about unique architectural beauty of India, its monuments and temples. He said that Council of Architecture should draw

inspiration from the present and past treasures of Architecture and bring a paradigm shift in the field of Architecture to make India a world leader again.

Jamia gets highest score in Central University assessment

- **Jamia Millia University scored a total of 90% in a self-assessment exercise**, based on annual targets set by each university under performance parameters determined by the Centre.
- Jamia, which has been in the spotlight for police violence and riots on campus last December, **achieved the highest score for 2019-20, followed by Rajiv Gandhi University in Arunachal Pradesh**, and Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi.
- However, **the Education Ministry (formerly the Ministry of Human Resource Development or MHRD) notes that this is an internal assessment, not a ranking**, as the targets are self-determined and not comparable across universities.

CM Amarinder Singh launches 'Punjab Smart Connect Scheme'

- **Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh launched a state-wide Rs 92 crore 'Punjab Smart Connect Scheme' that aims at providing more than 1.74 lakh class XII students with smartphones** by November 2020. CM Amarinder personally handed over smartphones to six Class XII students in a symbolic gesture.

Deputy Commissioner of Rajouri launches 'Awaz-e-Rajouri' mobile app

- **In order to improve public Grievances redressal mechanism**, Deputy Commissioner of Rajouri, Nazir Sheikh, has **launched a mobile app "Awaz-e-Rajouri"**. The launch of mobile app would improve public grievances mechanism. The use of the app by general public would make the officers and officials more accountable and instill confidence among the people in district administration.

Assam to roll out Arunodoi scheme to provide financial assistance

- **With an aim to provide financial assistance to around 17 lakh families**, the Assam government is all set to roll out **Arunodoi scheme** in the state from 2nd of October.
- Finance minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said that **under this scheme an amount of 830 rupees will be given to eligible families per month to buy essential food items**. This will be the largest Direct Benefit Transfer scheme in Assam.

UP opens 16 new cyber-crime Police stations in different cities

- In view of the growing cyber-crimes in the state, **Uttar Pradesh government has opened 16 new cyber-crime Police stations in different cities of the state**.
- **Earlier there were only two police Stations in Lucknow and Gautam Budh Nagar**. The state government had decided to open cyber stations and police stations in 16 cities and a proposal related to this was passed by the State cabinet.

Himachal Pradesh launches Nutritional Immunity Boosting 'Him Haldi Dudh'

- **Himachal Pradesh state government launched Nutritional Immunity Boosting 'Him Haldi Dudh (Turmeric Latte)' manufactured by MILKFED**. On this occasion, Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur also disbursed incentives to the Milk Producers of Mandi, Shimla and Kullu district under the National Programme for Dairy Development.
- **Him Haldi Dudh has been developed by the Bio Technology Department of Punjabi University Patiala and has been patented**. This drink is a **Detox drink which has anti-hangover, anti-oxidant, anti-inflammatory and immunity booster contents in it**.

Odisha tops in implementation of AMRUT scheme

- **Odisha has retained its top position in implementation of the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) scheme**.
- The scheme was **launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in June 2015 to establish an infrastructure that would ensure robust sewage networks and water supply for urban transformation**.

- According to the ranking of the states released by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, **Odisha has retained its first position by securing a score of 85.67 per cent. Chandigarh and Telangana have secured the second and third positions followed by Gujarat and Karnataka.**

Launch of 'AYUSH for Immunity Campaign' receives enthusiastic response in digital space

- **The Ministry of AYUSH launched a three-month campaign on "Ayush for Immunity"** through a webinar. More than 50 thousand people participated in the Webinar. **Key-note address by spiritual Guru Sri Sri Ravisankar**, wherein he stated that Ayush solutions could lead the entire world to healthier and happier lives was the highlight of the event.
- As the key objective of the event was to acquaint the people with **valuable information about strengths of various Ayush-based solutions for enhancing immunity and preventing diseases**, the event concluded with a final immunity message for the citizens from each expert. These messages revealed how simple measures adopted in daily lives can go a long way in preventing diseases.

Chairman Railway Board releases E-pass module of HRMS through video conferencing

- **Chairman Railway Board has launched E-pass module of Human Resource Management System, HRMS developed by Centre For Railway Information Systems (CRIS)** through video conferencing. The launch event was attended by Finance Commissioners Railways, all Board Members, CMD of IRCTC, MD of CRIS, all General Managers, Principal Chief Personnel Officers, Principal Chief Commercial Managers, Principal Financial Advisors and Divisional Railway Managers.
- **Process for issuance of pass has been largely manual in Indian Railways** and also there was **no facility for booking of ticket online on Pass for Railway employees**. With this facility a Railway employee is neither supposed to come to office to apply for Pass nor has to wait for a Pass being issued. Employees will be able to apply for a pass online from anywhere and get the E-Pass generated online.

First ever online patriotic film festival kicks off on 7th August

- **National Film Development Corporation is organizing a first of its kind, online patriotic film festival.** The festival, **a part of Independence Day Celebrations 2020 by Ministry of Information and Broadcasting**, begins on 7th August, 2020 and runs till 21st August.
- The festival will **showcase Indian history that marks the bravery of our freedom fighters and aims to create a festive and patriotic mood among Indians across the globe.** The festival will showcase high quality Independence Day themed patriotic films daily at the website www.cinemasofindia.com free of cost.

Chingari, 23 more apps win Aatma Nirbhar App Innovation challenge

- **Indian Short video platform Chingari, news app Logically-Check Fake News and Verify Facts and 22 more apps emerged as winners of the government's Aatma Nirbhar App Innovation challenge.**
- **Koo, MaymyIndiamove, Asksarkar, myitreturn** are some of the other apps that won the challenge, across eight categories—news, social, games, entertainment, e-learning, among others.
- The app challenge was launched days after the government banned 59 Chinese apps citing national security and privacy concerns. On July 4, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the challenge to promote existing Indian apps as well as the development of new apps.
- **The government had said it will identify the 'best Indian apps'** that citizens are already using and have the potential to scale up and become world class apps in their respective categories.

Goa signs MoU with NSDC for advanced skills institute

- **The Goa government signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) for setting up an institute to provide advanced skills training.**
- **Union Minister for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Mahendra Nath Pandey and Goa Skill Development Minister Vishwajit Rane** were present for the ceremony to sign the MoU, which was executed online. The institute will provide training in advanced skills in highly specialized areas across sectors like

healthcare, tourism and hospitality and other emerging business domains to meet the requisite industry demands.

Union Minister Prakash Javadekar launches portal on Human Elephant Conflict on World Elephant Day

- The Minister for Environment and Forest **Prakash Javadekar** released document on Best Practices and launched a portal on Human Elephant Conflict on the eve of World Elephant Day, 2020.
- **The World Elephant Day is observed every year on 12th August** to spread awareness about the animal. It was launched in 2012 to bring attention to the urgent plight of Asian and African elephants.
- **Poaching, habitat loss, human-elephant conflict and mistreatment in captivity are some of the threats to both African and Asian elephants.**
- **Indian Elephant has also been listed in the Appendix I of the Convention of the Migratory species** in the recently concluded 13th Conference of Parties on Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) at Gandhi Nagar, Gujarat in February this year.
- 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.
- **In 2010, India's Environment Ministry has declared the elephant a National Heritage Animal** in order to increase protective measures for the country's nearly 29,000 elephants.

Puducherry celebrates its 'De-Jure' day

- The Union Territory of Puducherry celebrated its 59th anniversary of the "De-Jure" day. Puducherry became independent by virtue of a referendum on October 18, 1954.
- But the treaty of cession signed between the French and Indian governments was ratified by the French Parliament only on August 16, 1962. So on that day the "De-Jure" (The Legal Merger of the UT with the Indian Union) was effected. The Puducherry administration organized a function at the Keezhoor memorial where the referendum was signed to mark the occasion.

Puducherry, also known as Pondicherry is one of the 8 union territories of India. It was formed out of four territories of former French India, namely Pondichery (Pondicherry; now Puducherry), Karaikal (Karaikal), Mahe and Yanam (Yanam), excluding Chandernagore. It is named after the largest district, Puducherry. Historically known as Pondicherry, the territory changed its official name to Puducherry on 20 September 2006. Puducherry is a Union Territory of India rather than a state, which implies that governance and administration fall directly under federal authority. However, Puducherry is one of the three union territories in India (the other being National Capital Territory of Delhi and Jammu and Kashmir) that is entitled by a special constitutional amendment to have an elected legislative assembly and a cabinet of ministers, thereby conveying partial statehood. Velu Narayanasamy is serving as the 10th and current Chief Minister of the Union Territory of Puducherry since June 2016. Kiran Bedi is a retired Indian Police Service officer, social activist, former tennis player and politician who is the current Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry.

Rail Bicycle introduced to quickly travel on rail tracks for inspections

- **Indian Railways has introduced an innovative system to ensure passenger security in the country.** Recently, the national transporter introduced a novel mechanism, Rail Bicycle to quickly travel on rail tracks for inspections, monitoring, and urgent repairs.
- The Railway Ministry said, during monsoon seasons, sometimes the situation becomes very difficult, causing unwanted detention of train services. **With the help of Rail Bicycle, any emergency location can be easily reached for urgent repairs.**
- Apart from emergency situations, **Rail Bicycle is also very helpful for Hot Weather Patrolling** as well as daily monitoring of the rail tracks. **Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, some of the sections over the Indian Railways network are currently closed for the traffic.** In these sections, Rail Bicycle is used for patrolling, ensuring safety and security.

Drone based surveillance system introduced for Railway Security

- **Indian Railways have introduced Drone based surveillance system for Railway security.** Railway Ministry said, Railway Protection Force, RPF has planned extensive use of drones for the purpose of Railway security.
- **Nine drones have been procured by RPF so far at a cost of around 32 lakh at South Eastern Railway, Central Railway, Modern Coaching Factory, Raebareli and South Western Railway.**

Manduadih becomes 'Banaras': MHA gives nod for name change of major railway station in UP

- **The Union Home Ministry has approved the renaming of Manduadih railway station in Uttar Pradesh as 'Banaras'.**
- **The Uttar Pradesh government had sent a request for renaming the railway station in Varanasi district. A 'no objection certificate' has been issued for changing the name of the Manduadih railway station to 'Banaras'.**

Vice President urges political parties to arrive at consensus to provide reservation to women in Parliament & state legislatures

- **Vice President, M Venkaiah Naidu called for a national movement for women's empowerment.** Mr Naidu urged all to ensure that no girl child is left out of school.
- **While observing that the flagship scheme Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao has undoubtedly created a positive impact,** Mr Naidu said that much more needs to be done to change the societal mindset.
- **In a Facebook Post titled "End Discrimination, Empower Women",** Mr Naidu pointed out that with **women constituting about 50 percent of India's population,** progress cannot be achieved unless they are given equal opportunities in all spheres, including the political arena.
- **He urged all political parties to arrive at a consensus at the earliest on the long-pending proposal to provide adequate reservation to women in parliament and state legislatures** at the earliest. Mr Naidu also emphasized the need for giving equal property rights to women for their economic emancipation.
- **The Vice President recently released a report- Status of Sex Ratio at Birth in India** which mentioned that there has **not been any change in the sex ratio at birth in India from 2001-2017—the number of girl children born is much less** than what is the general or natural norm. It was **brought out by the Indian Association of Parliamentarians for Population and Development (IAPPD).**

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari laid foundation stone & inaugurates 35 highway projects in MP

- **Road, Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari laid foundation Stone and inaugurated 35 highway projects in Madhya Pradesh.**
- **The total length of road will be 1,139 kilometers, involving construction value of over Rs. 9,400 crore.** These roads will enhance better connectivity, convenience and economic growth in the State.

Defence ministry to host Aero-India in Bengaluru

- **The defence ministry has taken an in-principle decision to host the next edition of Aero India considered Asia's largest aerospace exhibition** in its traditional venue of Bengaluru from February 3-5 next year notwithstanding the coronavirus pandemic.

Fresh tender for Vande Bharat express trains to allow over 50 pct local components: Railways

- **Railways has said that the new tender document for 44 semi-high speed Vande Bharat trains will include provision for more than 50 percent local components.** Addressing a virtual press conference yesterday, Railway Board chairman VK Yadav said, the new tender document will include provision for local components of more than 50 in line with the government's Aatma Nirbhar Bharat initiative.
- **Earlier on Friday, Railways had cancelled the tender for manufacturing 44 Vande Bharat Express trains,** which was floated last year. Mr Yadav said, while evaluating the technical bids of tenders, the tender committee had noticed that some of the details of financial offers have been revealed in the technical bids.

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi had flagged off the maiden run of a Vande Bharat train on the New Delhi-Varanasi route on February 15, 2019. The second such train service between New Delhi and Shri Mata Vaishnodevi Katra was flagged off by home minister Amit Shah on October 3, 2019.

Ahmedabad Railway Division successfully introduces unique concept of Baggage Sanitization

- In Gujarat, Ahmedabad Railway Division has successfully introduced a unique concept of Baggage Sanitization and Wrapping at Ahmedabad Railway Station. It is a first of its kind across the Indian Railways.
- Considering the momentum in transport and travel services after Unlock-1, the Division has come up with baggage sanitization and wrapping machine to ensure safe travel amid the pandemic. The baggage sanitization and wrapping machine ensure 360 degree sanitization of the luggage by using ultra violet radiation. The machine has been installed by a private enterprise.

Odisha introduces Biofloc fish farming technology

- To provide employment to people during the pandemic period, the Odisha government has launched a new scheme for promoting intensive aquaculture through Biofloc technology in fisheries.
- The scheme will provide livelihood support to entrepreneurs, unemployed youth and interested progressive fish farmers and will also increase fish production in the state. Biofloc based farming system is a new technology for the promotion of intensive fish/ shrimp production in a limited area without significantly increasing the usage of the basic natural resources of water and land.
- A person having small landholding (as small as 150-200 square metre of land) and having either municipal piped water supply or bore well water supply can establish this business with a small investment. This programme aims to support fish farmers and young entrepreneurs for generation of income and livelihood support.

IIT Madras retains its number-one position in list of top innovative educational institutes

- Indian Institute of Technology, Madras has retained its number-one position in the list of top innovative educational institutes in India for the second consecutive year. The premier institute has been ranked number-one in the 'Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievements,' released by Vice President Venkaiah Naidu, in presence of Union Minister of Education, Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank,' in a virtual event.
- The ranking was launched last year by the Innovation Cell of the Ministry of Education. 674 Institutions of National Importance, Central Universities and centrally funded technical institutions participated in the rankings this year, as compared to 496 last year, says a release by the IIT, Madras.

Indian Railways set to meet all its energy needs of over 33 billion units by 2030

- Indian Railways is set to meet all its energy needs of more than 33 billion units by 2030. The current annual requirement is about 21 billion units.
- Railways Minister Piyush Goyal said, Railways have developed a mega plan for installing solar plants of 20 Gigawatt capacity by utilizing its vacant land by 2030. The use of solar power will accelerate the mission to achieve conversion of Indian Railways to Net Zero Carbon Emission Railway.
- Railway is committed to utilize solar energy for meeting its traction power requirement and become a complete Green mode of transportation. Railway has adopted a multi-pronged approach towards decarbonization which will be fulfilled by the solar projects, making it the first transport organization to be energy self-sufficient.

CM Yediyurappa to Flag off First RORO Train from Bengaluru to Solapur

- The maiden 'Roll On Roll Off' (RORO) train between Bengaluru and Solapur in Maharashtra consisting of open flat wagon on which trucks with goods are loaded will start.
- The train will take 17 hours to reach its final destination which is at a distance of about 682 kms. As many as 42 trucks with goods can be carried at time in this train. The train will run via Dharmavaram, Guntakal, Raichur and Wadi to reach Bale near Solapur in Maharashtra.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Lung Cancer Day

- **World Lung Cancer Day is observed on August 1 to raise awareness about the causes and treatment of lung cancer** and to highlight the issues that a lack of sufficient research funding can create.
- The theme for **World Lung Cancer Day 2020** is “I Can and I Will”.

Hiroshima day: Japan marks 75th year of the atomic destruction

- **On August 6, 75 years ago the world changed - a US warplane dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima in Japan killing 1, 40,000 people. The United States detonated two nuclear weapons over the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6 and 9, 1945, respectively, with the consent of the United Kingdom, as required by the Quebec Agreement.**
- **On August 9, 1945, the US dropped the second nuclear bomb on Nagasaki, three days after Hiroshima was destroyed by the first one - a uranium bomb - ‘Little Boy’. Code-named the ‘Fat Man’, the bomb that was dropped on Nagasaki, killed over 80,000 people. This led to Japan’s unconditional surrender in Second World War.**

National Handloom Day to be celebrated on virtual platform

- **National Handloom Day is being organised by the Ministry of Textiles on virtual platform.** Textiles Minister Smriti Irani will be the Chief Guest on the occasion.
- **7th August was chosen as the National Handloom Day to commemorate the Swadeshi Movement which was launched on the same date in the year 1905.** The objective is to generate awareness about Handloom Industry among public and its contribution to the socio-economic development.

World Tribal Day

- **International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples or World Tribal Day is being observed on 9th August.** The day is aimed at promoting and protecting the rights of the world’s indigenous population. The date recognizes the first meeting of the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations in Geneva in 1982.
- **The theme for the 2020 is “Covid-19 and the indigenous peoples’ resilience”.**

Petroleum and Natural Gas Ministry observes World Biofuel Day

- **World Biofuel Day is observed every year on 10th August to create awareness about the importance of non-fossil fuels as an alternative to conventional fossil fuels.**
- **Petroleum and Natural Gas Ministry organised a webinar on the occasion of the World Biofuel day with the theme ‘Biofuels towards Atmanirbhar Bharat’.**

World Lion Day to be observed virtually on August 10, 2020

- **World Lion Day is observed across the world on August 10 every year.** The main purpose of the day is to raise awareness about lions and educate people about issues concerning their protection and conservation.

International Youth Day, 12 August

- **12 August was first designated International Youth Day by the UN General Assembly in 1999, and serves as an annual celebration of the role of young women and men as essential partners in change, and an opportunity to raise awareness of challenges and problems facing the world’s youth.**
- **The theme of International Youth Day 2020, is “Youth Engagement for Global Action”.**

World Organ Donation Day

- **Every year on 13th August, world organ donation day is celebrated to create awareness about organ donation and encourage people to donate their organs so that the gap between organ demand and supply can be reduced and more patients with organ failure can benefit from these organs.**

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- Every year there is a theme made for the day and **this year's World Blood Donor Day** theme is “Safe blood saves lives” with the tagline “Give blood and make the world a healthier place”.

World Humanitarian Day, 19 August

- **On World Humanitarian Day (WHD) August 19**, the world commemorates humanitarian workers killed and injured in the course of their work, and we honour all aid and health workers who continue, despite the odds, to provide life-saving support and protection to people most in need.
- As World Humanitarian Day this year comes amid the global coronavirus pandemic, the **World Health Organization** has a global campaign that celebrates **#RealLifeHeroes**, who have “committed their lives to helping others.”

International Day of Remembrance and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism, 21 August

- **The General Assembly established 21 August as the International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism** in order to honor and support the victims and survivors of terrorism and to promote and protect the full enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms

World Photography Day

- **The World Photography Day takes place on August 19th, 2020.** World Photography Day is an annual, worldwide celebration of the art, craft, science and history of photography.

International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief - 22 August

- **The General Assembly, in its resolution designated 22 August as the International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief** recognizing the importance of providing victims of acts of violence based on religion or belief and members of their families with appropriate support and assistance in accordance with applicable law.
- **It strongly deplored all acts of violence against persons on the basis of their religion or belief**, as well as any such acts directed against their homes, businesses, properties, schools, cultural centres or places of worship, as well as all attacks on and in religious places, sites and shrines that are in violation of international law.

International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition- 23 August

- **The night of 22 to 23 August 1791, in Santo Domingo** saw the beginning of the uprising that would play a crucial role in the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade.
- It is against this background that the **International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition is commemorated on 23 August each year.**

Women's Equality Day

- **Women's Equality Day is celebrated in the United States on August 26 to commemorate the 1920 adoption of the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution**, which prohibits the states and the federal government from denying the right to vote to citizens of the United States on the basis of sex.

National Sports Day

- **The National Sports Day in India is celebrated on 29 August**, on the birth anniversary of hockey player **Major Dhyan Chand**. This day marks the birthday of **Major Dhyan Chand Singh**, the hockey player who won gold medals in Olympics for India in the years 1928, 1932 and 1936. He scores 570 goals in his career, from 1926 to 1949 (according to his autobiography, goals).

QUESTIONS

1. Who among the following won the British Grand Prix despite a puncture on the last lap to clinch 87th career?
(a) Lewis Hamilton (b) Max Verstappen (c) Valtteri Bottas (d) Sebastian Vettel
2. Which of the following states launched E-Rakshabandhan, an innovative virtual cybercrime awareness programme of the state CID and the police?
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Maharashtra (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Rajasthan
3. In a first in the country, 120 traffic signals across 13 junctions between _____ will feature female pedestrians in traffic lights.
(a) Dadar and Mahim (b) Nariman Point to Gateway of India
(c) Canaught Place to India Gate (d) Parliament Street to Chanakyapuri
4. Recently, Defence Ministry has formulated a draft Defence Production and Export Promotion Policy 2020 (DPEPP-2020). The policy aims to provide impetus to self-reliance in defence manufacturing under _____.
(a) Make in India (b) Atmanirbhar Bharat Scheme
(c) Built In India (d) Swanirbhar Bharat Scheme
5. The Central Government will spend nearly twelve crore rupees for funding _____ startups to promote agri firms in the current financial year.
(a) 34 (b) 112 (c) 198 (d) 222
6. Recently, Northern Railway ran first-ever Vyapar Mala Express train. This train is destined for Jirania in _____ and has 46 wagons.
(a) Tripura (b) Meghalaya (c) Nagaland (d) Arunachal Pradesh
7. Who among the following is planning to set up a virtual museum of securities market to highlight achievements and milestones in the Indian capital market?
(a) Bombay Stock Exchange (b) National Stock Exchange
(c) SEBI (d) IRDAI
8. For the first time in the world, which of the following companies has launched Haldi Ice Cream with the goodness of Haldi, Pepper and Honey and richness of dry fruits like dates, almonds and cashews?
(a) Parag (b) Amul (c) Mother Dairy (d) Patanjali
9. Recently, Scientists at the National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (which comes under Ministry of Earth Sciences), located in Goa, have noticed the unprecedented algal blooms within sea ice sheet of _____ which they say is indicative of the warming climate in the region.
(a) Antarctica (b) Arctic (c) Pacific (d) Atlantic
10. India and _____ are conducting trials on a large sample of patients for four different kinds of technologies that have the potential to detect COVID-19 in about 30 seconds, including a breath analyser and a voice test.
(a) USA (b) Japan (c) Russia (d) Israel
11. Who among the following launched 'CREDAI Awaas App' and NAREDCO's online portal 'HousingforAll.com'?
(a) Narendra Modi (b) Hardeep Singh Puri (c) Amitabh Kant (d) Amit Shah
12. Which of the following states launched the Indira Rasoi Yojana in urban areas?
(a) Chhattisgarh (b) Punjab (c) Maharashtra (d) Rajasthan

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13. Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan launched 'Vidyarthi Vigyan Manthan, 2020-21'. This initiative is a national programme for popularizing science among school students of Class _____.
(a) 3rd to 6th (b) 5th to 10th (c) 6th to 11th (d) 8th to 12th
14. Who among the following virtually launched India Report on Digital Education, 2020?
(a) Shri Narendra Modi (b) Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank'
(c) Dr Harshvardhan (d) Shri Ramnath Kovind
15. Which of the following countries has successfully trained police dogs to detect Covid-19 cases in passengers arriving at its airports, making the country the first in the world to successfully do so?
(a) UAE (b) USA (c) Canada (d) China
16. Which of the following Indian Union territory has launched E-Gyan Mitra mobile app for online education?
(a) Lakshadweep (b) Dadra and Nagar Haveli
(c) Andaman & Nicobar Islands (d) Jammu & Kashmir
17. Which of the following companies surged over 10% to a record high after reporting blockbuster quarterly results, helping to become the world's most valuable publicly listed company?
(a) Apple Inc (b) Saudi Aramco
(c) Reliance Industry Limited (d) Exxon Mobil
18. Recently, the government has approved a programme for the benefit of artisans involved in manufacturing of _____ and to develop village industry under the 'Gramodyog Vikas Yojana'.
(a) Candle (b) Chicken Work on Clothes
(c) Agarbatti (d) Perfumes
19. Which of the following Indian ministries has been awarded SKOCH Gold Award recently?
(a) Ministry of Home Affairs (b) Ministry of Tribal Affairs
(c) Ministry of Defence (d) Ministry of HRD
20. Recently, Scientists have come up with a novel high-efficiency _____ that is intrinsically self-healable and highly stretchable.
(a) Thermoelectric material (b) Piezoelectric material
(c) Quartz Material (d) Glass Material
21. Who among the following launched the Sahakar Cooptube NCDC Channel, a new initiative by National Cooperative Development Corporation?
(a) Shri Narendra Modi (b) Shri Rajnath Singh
(c) Shri Amit Shah (d) Shri Narendra Singh Tomar
22. Recently, which of the following union territories has approved the creation of Block Development Fund on the pattern of Constituency Development Fund?
(a) Ladakh (b) Jammu & Kashmir (c) Lakshadweep (d) Andaman & Nicobar Islands
23. Who is the first woman to be appointed as Home Secretary?
(a) Smita Jaykar (b) Shikha Kulshrestha (c) Mrinalini Goswami (d) D. Roopa
24. Who has been recently sworn in as the first Black Chief of Staff of the Air Force of USA?
(a) Gen. Charles Q. Brown (b) Gen. Jonathan Swift
(c) Gen. Abraham B Rosert (d) Gen. Mike B Penson
25. Recently, HDFC Bank Ltd, India's biggest private lender, has announced that _____ will be its Managing Director & CEO for a period of three years from his date of taking charge.
(A) Amit Panghal (b) Sashidhar Jagdishan (c) Venkatesh Sreedharan (d) Vivek Rajgoitra

26. Recently, 'UV Baggage Bath' has been set up at the second entry of the station where most of the scheduled special trains arrive and depart to ensure passenger luggage is completely sanitized before the passengers' board trains at:
(a) Bhopal Railway Station (b) Jaipur Central Station
(c) Bengaluru Railway Station (d) Lucknow Charbagh Station
27. Which of the following IIT's signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Defence (MoD) for developing a prompt and predictive grievance redress mechanism using artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning tools?
(a) IIT Madras (b) IIT Bombay (c) IIT Kharagpur (d) IIT Kanpur
28. Recently, Bull Moose Tube, a subsidiary of the Caparo Bull Moose Company in the United States owned by London-based industrialist _____ has won the Fastmarkets Global Awards for Steel Excellence in the category of Best Innovation – Product.
(a) Swraj Paul (b) Sri Chand Hinduja (c) Laxmi Niwas Mittal (d) Amit Bhatia
29. Recently, who among following chaired the first General Council meeting of the Khelo India Scheme?
(a) Kiren Rijiju (b) Saurav Ganguly (c) Shashank Manohar (d) Amit Shah
30. Recently, who among following was honored "Karamveer Chakra Award" by Global Fellowship Award instituted by United Nations and International Confederation of NGO (iCONGO) at the ReX ConclIVE hosted in IIT Delhi?
(a) Ramesh Niranjana SS (b) Amit Ranjan GH
(c) Sunil ydv SS (d) Gauri Shankar SS
31. Who has been appointed as the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir?
(a) Manoj Sinha (b) Hitesh Modi (c) Amit Nagar (d) Jatin Shah
32. Which of the following states launched "Parivar Pehchan Patras" to enable the citizens to get the benefits of various central and state government schemes?
(a) Rajasthan (b) Haryana (c) Punjab (d) Tamil Nadu
33. Recently, India has contributed _____ to the India-UN Development Partnership Fund, underscoring the country's commitment to supporting developing nations in its developmental priorities across all the Sustainable Development Goals.
(a) USD 10.22 million (b) USD 11.34 million
(c) USD 15.46 million (d) USD 18.92 million
34. Recently, the joint venture between the National Agricultural Marketing Federation of India (Nafed) and _____ has announced the launch of India's first onion storage and marketing infrastructure through the public-private-partnership (PPP) model.
(a) TamilOnion (b) MahaOnion (c) GoaOnion (d) GujOnion
35. Recently, _____ has been given an 18 month extension as the chairman of markets regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India, SEBI.
(a) Ajay Tyagi (b) Sudhakar Reddy (c) Amit Vardhan (d) Manoj Shinde
36. Recently, A new species of pygmy grasshopper, discovered after 116 years by a group of foreign researchers in _____ has been named after a 28-year-old Indian orthopterist (one who studies grasshoppers) and conservation biologist Dhaneesh Bhaskar of Kerala.
(a) Mauritius (b) Maldives (c) Sri Lanka (d) Bangladesh
37. Recently, G C Murmu has resigned from his post as Lieutenant Governor of:
(a) Ladakh (b) Jammu & Kashmir
(c) Andaman & Nicobar Islands (d) Puducherry

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38. Recently, the mobile lab, approved by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) which can do 9,000 RT-PCR (reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction) tests per month was inaugurated in:
(a) Maharashtra (b) Karnataka (c) Goa (d) Andhra Pradesh
39. Recently, World Lung Cancer Day is observed on _____ to raise awareness about the causes and treatment of lung cancer and to highlight the issues that a lack of sufficient research funding can create.
(a) 31st July (b) 1st August (c) 2nd August (d) 4th August
40. Recently, An unarmed Minuteman 3 intercontinental ballistic missile was launched in:
(a) China (b) USA (c) France (d) Germany
41. India's first Kisan Special Parcel Train or Kisan Rail started in August 2020. This train will transport material between:
(a) Maharashtra's Solapur and Bihar's Katiyar Railway station
(b) Maharashtra's Devlali and Bihar's Danapur Railway station
(c) Maharashtra's Devlali and Uttar Pradesh's Dadri Railway station
(d) Maharashtra's Chandrapur and Bihar's Patna Sahib Railway station
42. Which of the following payment banks in partnership with Bharti AXA General Insurance offered Shop Insurance exclusively for its Retailers and Merchants recently?
(a) Paytm Payments Bank (b) Airtel Payments Bank
(c) India Post Payments Bank (d) Fino Payments Bank
43. Which of the following states has recently launched a social security scheme for tendu leaves collectors in the state, which will benefit over 12 lakh families, mostly tribals and forest dwellers engaged in its collection?
(a) Jharkhand (b) Bihar (c) Madhya Pradesh (d) Chhattisgarh
44. In Sri Lanka, the ruling party led by Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa won a landslide victory at the general elections held in 2020. What is the name of the political party of Prime Minister?
(a) Samagi Jana Balawega (b) Sri Lanka People Party
(c) Sri Lanka Jannayak Party (d) United National Party
45. According to report by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), as the world goes through an unprecedented recession amid the pandemic, global remittances may fall by _____ in 2020 if the economic impact of Covid-19 persists throughout the year.
(a) \$98.6 billion (b) \$102.5 billion (c) \$108.6 billion (d) \$122.8 billion
46. Chinese-owned video app TikTok will set up its first European data centre in _____.
(a) United Kingdom (b) France (c) Sweden (d) Ireland
47. Name the films which took home the big honours at the 20th New York Indian Film Festival (NYIFF), which switched to a virtual edition this year amid the ongoing COVID19 pandemic.
(a) Veereyungana (b) Moothon (c) Aarya (d) Sun Set
48. Hiroshima Day is celebrated every year on:
(a) 2nd August (b) 4th August (c) 5th August (d) 7th August
49. Recently, National Handloom Day is celebrated every year on:
(a) 3rd August (b) 5th August (c) 7th August (d) 31st July
50. Which among the following has bagged first prize in Smart India Hackathon, SIH, 2020?
(a) Defence Institute of Advanced Technology, DIAT (b) Bharat Electronics Limited, Bengaluru
(c) Adani Port and SEZ Ltd (d) NCR Corporation (India) Private Limited

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51. Reserve Bank of India (RBI) constituted the proposed expert committee under the chairmanship of veteran banker _____ to make recommendations on norms for the resolution of COVID-19 related stressed loans.
(a) Bimal Jalan (b) K.V. Kamath (c) Urjit Patel (d) Rana Kapoor
52. Recently, Gujarat Industrial Policy 2020 that aims to provide an estimated _____ as subsidies to industries in the next five years.
(a) Rs 20,000 crore (b) Rs 30,000 crore (c) Rs 40,000 crore (d) Rs 50,000 crore
53. Recently, who among the following launched a week-long campaign to free India of garbage and stressed that the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan has been a big support in the fight against coronavirus?
(a) Amit Shah (b) Piyush Goyal (c) Narendra Modi (d) Prakash Javadekar
54. According to the United Nation's policy brief on the pandemic's impact on education, almost _____ children are at risk of not returning to school next year due to the economic fallout of COVID-19.
(a) 12 million (b) 20 million (c) 24 million (d) 35 million
55. Recently, Reserve Bank of India has barred banks from opening _____ for customers who have availed cash credit or overdraft facilities, with a view to improve credit discipline.
(a) Saving Account (b) Current Account
(c) Recurring Deposit Account (d) Fixed Deposit Account
56. Name the institute which has designed a robotic arm that can be manipulated by eye movement using a computer interface, to help people with Severe Speech and Motor Impairment (SSMI).
(a) Indian Institute of Science (b) Indian Institute of Technology, Madras
(c) Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay (d) Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur
57. Name the company which is testing hydrogen fuel cells to power its data centre servers, making it the first company to build a clean energy power source using the most abundant element on the planet?
(a) Google (b) Microsoft (c) Yahoo (d) Amazon Inc
58. Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has suspended the title sponsorship deal with Chinese mobile phone company _____ for the upcoming edition of the Indian Premier League.
(a) Oppo (b) Vivo (c) Huawei (d) Honor
59. International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples or World Tribal Day is being observed on:
(a) 5th August (b) 6th August (c) 1st August (d) 9th August
60. The Arctic has been warming at twice the global rate for the last 30 years, due to a process known as _____.
(a) Arctic amplification (b) Arctic tectonic (c) Arctic frequency (d) Arctic modulation
61. Who has been recently appointed as the new Comptroller and Auditor General of India?
(a) Sanjeev Pathak (b) Deepak Kalra
(c) Girish Chandra Murmu (d) Mahesh Kumar Jain
62. Recently, two coastal villages of _____ have been declared 'Tsunami-Ready', the first in India as well as the Indian Ocean region.
(a) Gujarat (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Odisha (d) West Bengal
63. Which of the following states has launched a collaborative programme as a partnership between the Department of Youth Services and Sports and YuWaah – a joint initiative of UNICEF, other UN agencies, civil society organizations and the private sector?
(a) Haryana (b) Punjab (c) Maharashtra (d) Uttar Pradesh

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64. Who has been recently appointed as the Sri Lanka's new Prime Minister for the fourth time?
(a) Sajith Premadasa (b) Mahinda Rajapaksa
(c) R. Sampanthan (d) Anura Kumara Disسانayaka
65. Which among the following Indian Ocean countries recently declared a "state of environmental emergency" after a Japanese-owned ship that ran aground offshore days ago began spilling tons of fuel?
(a) Maldives (b) Mauritius (c) Seychelles (d) Sri Lanka
66. Recently, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced a loan restructuring window for _____ following demands from bankers and industry.
(a) Students (b) Corporate (c) Old Age People (d) Women Sportsperson
67. Government of India has constituted a three-member committee for determination of ceiling rates under a scheme for reimbursement of taxes and duties to exporters. The committee would be chaired by:
(a) Gautam Ray (b) G K Pillai (c) R N Paranjape (d) Y G Parande
68. Recently, NHAI under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the _____ to set up a Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Use of Artificial Intelligence in Data Driven decision making and Advance Data Management System for Highways.
(a) Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi
(b) Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur
(c) Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay
(d) Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur
69. Recently, International Cricket Council has confirmed that the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2020 will be held in _____ in 2022.
(a) Australia (b) India (c) New Zealand (d) West Indies
70. Who has taken oath as Chairman of Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)?
(a) Dr. B.S.Bassi (b) S Jayalaxmi
(c) Dr. Pradeep Kumar Joshi (d) Vipul Kumar Mehra
71. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the financing facility of _____ under the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund through video conferencing.
(a) 50 thousand crore rupees (b) 1 lakh crore rupees
(c) 2 lakh crore rupees (d) 5 lakh crore rupees
72. Which of the following Indian states became the first State in the country to announce a partnership with Google to promote remote learning for students?
(a) Maharashtra (b) Gujarat (c) Rajasthan (d) Uttar Pradesh
73. In a resumption of bilateral and multilateral military exercises which were deferred due to coronavirus (COVID-19), India will take part in the _____ Kavkaz 2020 strategic command-post exercise.
(a) Russian (b) American (c) German (d) Canadian
74. In order to improve public Grievances redressal mechanism, Deputy Commissioner of Rajouri has launched a mobile app _____.
(a) "Goonj-e-Rajouri" (b) "Awaz-e-Rajouri" (c) "Heer-e-Rajouri" (d) "Voice-e-Rajouri"
75. In a world first, which of the following countries schools will teach LGBT+ history as part of the curriculum by 2021?
(a) Ireland (b) Sweden (c) Finland (d) Scotland

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76. As per the data published by Central Electricity Authority _____ has emerged as the top performing thermal power plant in the country with 97.42 percent plant load factor, PLF, between April to July this year.
(a) NTPC Korba in Chattisgarh (b) NTPC Dibrugarh in Uttar Pradesh
(c) NTPC Ganjam in Odisha (d) NTPC Faridabad in Haryana
77. Recently, Researchers from _____ and Imperial College London, UK, have developed a tailored 'meta-grid' of nanoparticles that could make light-emitting diodes (LEDs) brighter, energy-efficient and durable?
(a) Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur (b) Indian Institute of Technology Madras
(c) Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (d) Indian Institute of Technology Bodh Gaya
78. Recently, Kisawa Sanctuary on Bengueria Island in _____ will be the world's first 3D-printed, ultra-luxury eco resort.
(a) Mozambique (b) Lesotho (c) Suriname (d) Ghana
79. National Film Development Corporation is organized a first of its kind, online patriotic film festival. The festival is a part of Independence Day Celebrations by the _____.
(a) Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (b) Ministry of Human Resource Development
(c) Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (d) Ministry of New & Renewable Energy
80. Recently, Indian Short video platform _____ news app Logically-Check Fake News and Verify Facts and 22 more apps emerged as winners of the government's Aatma Nirbhar App Innovation challenge.
(a) Lava (b) Chingari (c) Margdarshan (d) Saundarya
81. Which of the following has become the first municipal corporation in the country where people of an urban area have been provided forest land right certificates?
(a) Ranchi (b) Guntur (c) Jagdalpur (d) Chandigarh
82. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the first ever undersea optical fibre project for _____.
(a) Andaman and Nicobar Islands (b) Sagar Island
(c) Puducherry (d) Minicoy Island
83. The World Elephant Day is observed every year on:
(a) 7th August (b) 9th August (c) 11th August (d) 12th August
84. Prime Minister Hassan Diab has resigned from his post in the wake of major blast that has triggered public outrage in the country. He hails from:
(a) Oman (b) Egypt (c) Tunisia (d) Lebanon
85. Which of the following countries along with India recently signed a contract for development of five eco-tourism zones in Addu atoll of the island nation?
(a) Mauritius (b) Maldives (c) Seychelles (d) Sri Lanka
86. Who among the following inaugurated the National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) and Online Dashboard in New Delhi through video conferencing?
(a) Amit Shah (b) Nirmala Sitharaman (c) Narendra Modi (d) Arundhati Bhattacharya
87. According to a research paper from Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, which of the following Indian rivers harboured some of the critical group, multidrug-resistant bacteria?
(a) River Mahanadi (b) River Teesta (c) River Yamuna (d) River Krishna
88. Which of the following has launched its own business intelligence and analytics enabled omni-channel multi-branded loyalty platform – 'nth Rewards'?
(a) National Payment Corporation of India (b) Mastercard
(c) Visa (d) NITI Aayog

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89. World Biofuel Day is observed every year on:
(a) 3rd August (b) 5th August (c) 8th August (d) 10th August
90. Which of the following justices presided over DSLSA's first online Lok Adalat in Delhi?
(a) Justice Uday U. Lalit (b) Justice N.V. Ramana
(c) Justice Arun Mishra (d) Justice Rohinton Fali Nariman
91. Recently, the central election commission of which of the following countries declared Alexander Lukashenko as reelected for his sixth term as President?
(a) Belarus (b) Panama (c) Monaco (d) Siberia
92. Tribal Affairs Ministry is developing "Tribal Freedom Fighters' Museums dedicated to the contributions of the tribal people in India to the freedom struggle. How many museums are included in this list?
(a) 4 (b) 7 (c) 9 (d) 14
93. Recently, Minister of Railways dedicated first of its kind Railway Museum which is located in:
(a) North Karnataka (b) South Kerala (c) South Tamil Nadu (d) North Andhra Pradesh
94. Employees' Provident Fund Organisation, EPFO has ensured hassle free service delivery through _____ during COVID-19 pandemic.
(a) SHAKTI app (b) UMANG app (c) HELP app (d) MADAD app
95. Democratic Presidential nominee Joe Biden has named Indian-origin senator _____ as his Vice-Presidential running mate.
(a) Kamala Harris (b) Parmila Jayapal (c) Arundhati Verma (d) Anandita Stephen
96. In the wake of COVID-19 crisis, _____ has launched the first pocket Android POS device for contactless ordering and payments in India, a move that will make this technology more affordable for SMEs.
(a) India Post Payments Bank (b) Paytm
(c) Airtel (d) Mahindra Payments
97. The Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA) will build India's first optical atomic clock. The IUCAA is located in India at:
(a) Nagpur (b) Jaipur (c) Thissur (d) Pune
98. Recently, Rahat Indori died of cardiac arrest in Indore. He was a renowned _____.
(a) Agriculture Scientist (b) Mathematician (c) Urdu Poet (d) Music Composer
99. World Lion Day is observed across the world on _____ every year.
(a) 2nd August (b) 5th August (c) 10th August (d) 14th August
100. Which of the following countries has named its first approved Covid-19 vaccine 'Sputnik V' for foreign markets, a reference to the world's first satellite?
(a) USA (b) Israel (c) Russia (d) Canada
101. Which of the following state governments launched Nutritional Immunity Boosting 'Him Haldi Dudh (Turmeric Latte)' manufactured by MILKFED?
(a) Himachal Pradesh (b) Rajasthan (c) Uttarakhand (d) Uttar Pradesh
102. Who among the following launched the platform for Transparent Taxation - Honoring the Honest through video conferencing?
(a) Shri Narendra Modi (b) Shri Amit Shah
(c) Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman (d) Shri Rajnath Singh

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103. Which of the following states is all set to roll out Arunodoi scheme in the state from 2nd of October?
(a) Assam (b) Bihar (c) Madhya Pradesh (d) Maharashtra
104. Recently, Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar has launched ICAR's data recovery centre _____.
(a) Krishi Ambuj (b) Krishi Megh (c) Krishi Sarthak (d) Krishi Darshan
105. In a landmark judgment, Supreme Court has ruled that daughters will have inheritance rights equal to those of sons from properties of fathers and grandfathers right from the codification of the law in _____.
(a) 1949 (b) 1952 (c) 1956 (d) 1958
106. Which of the following has partnered US Agency for International Development (USAID) to launch the W-GDP WomenConnect Challenge across India this year with an aim to bridge the gender digital divide in India?
(a) Wipro Foundation (b) Nadar Foundation (c) Reliance Foundation (d) Adani Foundation
107. A leading diaspora group in the US will hoist India's National Flag at the Times Square the first time the Indian tricolour will be unfurled at the iconic _____ destination.
(a) Washington D.C (b) New York (c) Las Vegas (d) Boston
108. A golden halo glinting 12 billion light years away is the farthest galaxy resembling our Milky Way. The galaxy is called _____.
(a) Gagandeep (b) SPT0418-47 (c) Marthan (d) SPT090809-89
109. Recently, A microwave device named _____ that can disinfect any premises in just 30 seconds, disintegrating COVID-19 virus was unveiled by Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Nitin Gadkari in Nagpur.
(a) 'Atulya' (b) 'Amulya' (c) 'Albha' (d) 'Abhutpoorya'
110. The _____ signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) for setting up an institute to provide advanced skills training.
(a) Gujarat Government (b) Goa Government
(c) Madhya Pradesh Government (d) Andhra Pradesh Government
111. Union Minister Jitendra Singh informed that work has started on the first-of-its-kind _____ Express Road Corridor which will be ready by 2023.
(a) Katra (Jammu and Kashmir)-Delhi (b) Katra (Jammu and Kashmir)-Chandigarh
(c) Leh (Ladakh)-Ambala (d) Anantnag (Jammu and Kashmir)- Moradabad
112. Which of the following state's traditional festive sweet dish 'Khaje', spicy Hermal Chilli and Myndoli Banana (Moir Banana) has obtained Geographical Indication (GI) tag?
(a) Haryana (b) Rajasthan (c) Goa (d) Gujarat
113. Recently, An Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) for the Indian Coast Guard was launched and re-christened as Indian Coast Guard Ship _____.
(a) 'Sarthak' (b) 'Samarth' (c) 'Sumant' (d) 'Samrat'
114. In view of the growing cyber-crimes in the state, _____ government has opened 16 new cyber-crime Police stations in different cities of the state.
(a) Uttarakhand (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Rajasthan (d) Madhya Pradesh
115. Recently, Russia and _____ have agreed to cooperate in the production and marketing of the world's first registered coronavirus vaccine Sputnik V.
(a) India (b) China (c) Brazil (d) Australia

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116. Recently, NASA satellite founded _____ new exoplanets.
(a) 22 (b) 26 (c) 55 (d) 66
117. Recently, Skyroot Aerospace, Hyderabad based startup has successfully test-fired its upper stage rocket engine named _____ which can place multiple satellites into orbit.
(a) Daman (b) Prakash (c) Raman (d) Akarsh
118. Which of the following ministries is being organised the largest country-wide run, the Fit India Freedom Run from 15th August to 2nd October, which boasts of a unique concept?
(a) HRD Ministry (b) Sports Ministry (c) Home Ministry (d) Defence Ministry
119. The world organ donation day is celebrated every year on _____ to create awareness about organ donation and encourage people to donate their organs.
(a) 3rd August (b) 7th August (c) 11th August (d) 13th August
120. Recently, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched the _____ through an online webinar.
(a) Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (NIIO)
(b) Army Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (AIIO)
(c) Air Force Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (AFIIO)
(d) Paramilitary Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (PIIO)
121. In a significant step towards space exploration, a team of researchers from the Indian Space Research Organisation, ISRO and the _____ has developed a sustainable process to make space bricks on the lunar surface.
(a) Indian Institute of Science, IISc Bengaluru (b) Indian Institute of Technology Madras
(c) Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (d) Indian Institute of Technology Delhi
122. External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar has announced that India will fund the implementation of _____ Connectivity Project through a 400 million dollar Line of Credit and 100 million dollar grant.
(a) Greater Male (b) Greater Port Louis (c) Greater Dhaka (d) Greater Thimphu
123. Recently, The Ministry of AYUSH launched a three-month campaign on _____ through a webinar.
(a) “Ayush for Immunity” (b) “Ayush for Corona”
(c) “Ayush for Pandemic” (d) “Ayush for Life”
124. Recently, Chairman Railway Board has launched E-pass module of Human Resource Management System (HRMS) developed by _____ through video conferencing.
(a) Central Railway Information Systems, CRIS
(b) Centre For Railway Information Synchronization, CRIS
(c) Central Railway Inform Services, CRIS
(d) Centre for Railway Information Systems, CRIS
125. Recently, The Science Technology and Innovation Policy _____ is being formulated in the country in a unique way of making it more inclusive.
(a) STIP -2020 (b) STIP -2022 (c) STIP -2020-2025 (d) STIP -2019-2024
126. Recently, A Dhaka court framed charges against the former Chief Justice of Bangladesh _____ and ten others in a money laundering case filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).
(a) Justice Anuj Ganguly (b) Justice S.K. Sinha
(c) Justice N.K.Sarkar (d) Justice Manzil Islam
127. Which of the following Indian Private Banks has launched a first-of-its-kind product for the armed forces titled as “Shaurya KGC Card”?
(a) ICICI bank (b) Axis Bank (c) HDFC Bank (d) IDFC Bank

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128. Recently, Singapore-based fintech Bond Evalve, founded by an Indian launched the world's first block chain-based exchange christened as _____.
(a) BondbloX Bond Exchange (BBX) (b) Singapore Bond exchange (SBX)
(c) Bong Bond Exchange (BBX) (d) DoubleBlog Bond Exchange (DBX)
129. Recently, the former Indian Cricket Team Skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni announced his retirement from International Cricket. Which of the following ICC tournaments did not win under his captaincy?
(a) 2007 ICC World Twenty-Twenty (b) 2009 ICC World Twenty-Twenty
(c) 2011 ICC Cricket World Cup (d) 2013 ICC Champions Trophy
130. World Humanitarian Day (WHD) is celebrated every year on:
(a) 11th August (b) 13th August (c) 16th August (d) 19th August
131. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on August 15 announced that the task to connect India's over _____ with optical fibre network will be completed in the next 1,000 days.
(a) three-lakh villages (b) four-lakh villages (c) six-lakh villages (d) eight-lakh villages
132. Which of the following central universities scored a total of 90% in a self-assessment exercise, based on annual targets set by each university under performance parameters determined by the Centre?
(a) Aligarh Muslim University in Uttar Pradesh
(b) Jamia Millia University in New Delhi
(c) Rajiv Gandhi University in Arunachal Pradesh
(d) Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi
133. Recently, Prime Minister announced that the Centre will soon launch Project Lion and _____ for the biodiversity conservation of these species to replicate the successes of Project Tiger.
(a) Project Dolphin (b) Project Elephant (c) Project Deer (d) Project Antelope
134. Who among the following has announced the launch of National Digital Health Mission in India?
(a) Ramnath Kovind (b) Narendra Modi (c) Amit Shah (d) Nirmala Sitharaman
135. Recently, which of the following Asian countries for the first time has appointed a non-foreign service person as the Secretary to the Foreign Ministry?
(a) Sri Lanka (b) Pakistan (c) Indonesia (d) Malaysia
136. The Central Board of the _____ approved the transfer of Rs 57,128 crore as surplus — or dividend — to the central government for accounting year 2019-20, sharply lower by 67.5 per cent from Rs 1.76 lakh last year.
(a) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) (b) State Bank of India (SBI)
(c) Ministry of Finance (d) Ministry of Corporate Affairs
137. Recently, India ranked _____ in the number of organic farmers and ninth in terms of area under organic farming.
(a) First (b) Second (c) Third (d) Fifth
138. Who won Spanish Grand Prix for 88th career victory in Formula One recently?
(a) Lewis Hamilton (b) Sebastian Vettel (c) Andrew Desty (d) Valtteri Bottas
139. The International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism is observed on:
(a) 11th August (b) 14th August (c) 18th August (d) 21st August
140. Recently, the former Indian cricketer and Uttar Pradesh minister _____ passed away following multiple organ failure.
(a) Chetan Sharma (b) Chetan Chauhan (c) Sunil Shastri (d) Ashish Winston Zaidi

141. Which of the following exchanges of India has launched India's first bullion index, Bulldex, on August 24?
(a) Bombay Stock Exchange (b) Inter-connected Stock Exchange of India
(c) Multi Commodity Exchange of India (d) National Stock Exchange
142. Recently, The Hemant Soren government in Jharkhand unveiled the new State logo at Ranchi on the eve of 74th Independence Day. The logo accommodates _____ which is the State flower of Jharkhand.
(a) Lotus (b) Rose (c) Palash (d) Jasmine
143. Indian Railways is constructing the world's tallest pier bridge in _____, the bridge which is being constructed across river Ijai near Noney is an engineering marvel because the tallest pier height will be 141 meter.
(a) Mizoram (b) Manipur (c) Nagaland (d) Arunachal Pradesh
144. Which of the following states has retained its top position in implementation of the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) scheme?
(a) Jharkhand (b) West Bengal (c) Odisha (d) Bihar
145. Recently, India announced a slew of new connectivity measures for the _____ including air, sea, intra-island and telecommunications in an effort to help the Indian Ocean Islands deal with the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
(a) Mauritius (b) Maldives (c) Seychelles (d) Sri Lanka
146. As per announcement made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi which is to be India's first carbon neutral region?
(a) Ladakh, Leh and Kargil region (b) Bastar Region
(c) Chota Nagpur region (d) Sikkim
147. Recently, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) have launched a Flood Early Warning System (FEWS) for _____ to alert local authorities about flash floods and/or heavy rainfall.
(a) Guwahati (b) Patna (c) Bhubaneswar (d) Kolkata
148. Who won the Prague open women singles title?
(a) Venus Williams (b) Serena Williams (c) Simona Halep (d) Elise Mertens
149. Which of the following union territories celebrated its 59th anniversary of the "De-Jure" day by virtue of a referendum on October 18, 1954?
(a) Union Territory of Puducherry (b) Union Territory of Daman & Diu
(c) Union Territory of Lakshadweep (d) Union Territory of Andaman & Nicobar Islands
150. Which of the following Uttar Pradesh Municipal Corporations has recently roped in Indian Idol Season 11 Finalist and Oscar Nominated Playback Singer Shahzan Mujeeb as its first ever National Brand Ambassador for Swachh Bharat Abhiyan Campaign at National and International level?
(a) Agra Municipal Corporation (b) Aligarh Municipal Corporation
(c) Meerut Municipal Corporation (d) Ghaziabad Municipal Corporation
151. Recently, the state of art quality control laboratory for Sea food export set up at _____ in Gujarat.
(a) Surat (b) Porbandar (c) Gandhinagar (d) Vadodara
152. Recently, Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda inaugurated the e-portal on tribal health and nutrition named _____.
(a) 'Swasthya' (b) 'Health' (c) 'Swasth Jeevan' (d) 'Healthy India'
153. Recently, Hamed Bakayoko, has been named Prime Minister of:
(a) Ghana (b) Gambia (c) Ivory Coast (d) Zimbabwe

154. Which of the following government has launched a 3-million pound innovation challenge fund in India to support scientists in academia and industry to tackle the most acute global challenges like Covid-19 and the threat to the environment?
(a) United Kingdom (b) France (c) Germany (d) Russia
155. Which of the following banks has launched a campaign to encourage customers to use digital banking channels under the campaign 'DIGITAL APNAYEN'?
(a) State Bank of India (b) Punjab National Bank
(c) Canara Bank (d) Union Bank of India
156. Recently, Gujarat cadre IPS officer _____ has been appointed as the Director General of Border Security Force, BSF.
(a) Rakesh Asthana (b) Vijay Mehdirattta (c) Amulya Patnaik (d) Dibaker Bannerjee
157. FC Girls Football Academy, India's first full-fledged girl's residential football training facility was launched in:
(a) Hyderabad (b) Bengaluru (c) Mumbai (d) Chennai
158. Which of the following countries has detected a strain of the new coronavirus that has been found to be 10 times more infectious?
(a) Indonesia (b) Malaysia (c) Sri Lanka (d) Cambodia
159. Recently, Pandit Jasraj passed away at his home in New Jersey, USA. He was Legendary Indian _____.
(a) Santoor Player (b) Sitar Player (c) Classical Vocalist (d) Shehnai Player
160. Which of the following states has launched India's biggest United Payments Interface (UPI) based payment system?
(a) Karnataka (b) Telangana (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Andhra Pradesh
161. Recently, The Governor of Goa, Satya Pal Malik has been transferred and appointed as Governor of _____.
(a) Sikkim (b) Manipur (c) Nagaland (d) Meghalaya
162. The First World Solar Technology Summit will be organized by International Solar Alliance, ISA on a virtual platform on 8th of September. Who is the President of the ISA Assembly?
(a) Shri Narendra Modi (b) Shri Amit Shah (c) Shri R.K.Singh (d) Shri Peeyush Goyal
163. Ravi Shankar Prasad launched Swadeshi Microprocessor Challenge - Innovate Solutions for Aatmanirbhar Bharat. _____ and Center for Development of Advance Computing have developed two microprocessors named SHAKTI (32 bit) and VEGA (64 bit) respectively using Open Source Architecture.
(a) IIT Madras (b) IIT Bombay (c) IIT Delhi (d) IIT Kharagpur
164. Which of the following states has announced to launch a special scheme under which school students will be able to learn in their respective localities in view of the suspension of classes due to the coronavirus outbreak?
(a) Jharkhand (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Chhattisgarh (d) Uttar Pradesh
165. Which of the following E-commerce companies has inked an agreement with IIT-Patna to help create industry-focused applied research in the areas of artificial intelligence, natural language processing and machine learning ?
(a) Amazon (b) Flipkart (c) Snapdeal (d) Myntra
166. Which of the following IIT's has retained its number-one position in the list of top innovative educational institutes in India for the second consecutive year?
(a) Indian Institute of Technology, Madras
(b) Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay
(c) Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi
(d) Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur

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167. On August 13, 2020, which of the following two countries have agreed to the “Abraham Accord”?
(a) UAE and Yemen (b) Israel and United Arab Emirates
(c) Oman and Qatar (d) South Korea and North Korea
168. Recently, Election Commissioner Ashok Lavasa resigned from his post to join the _____ as vice-president next month.
(a) World Bank (b) International Monetary Fund
(c) Asian Development Bank (d) New Development Bank
169. Which of the following has won the IPL title sponsorship rights with a bid of 222 crore rupees?
(a) Oppo (b) Unacademy (c) Dream11 (d) Britannia
170. Who among the following Indian cricketer is among the 4 athletes who have been recommended for India’s highest sporting honour, the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award?
(a) K.L. Rahul (b) Rohit Sharma (c) Jasprit Bumrah (d) Prithvi Shah
171. Which of the following state governments has signed a MoU for establishing the first manufacturing unit of a Defense Category Industry in the state?
(a) Chhattisgarh (b) Haryana (c) Punjab (d) Madhya Pradesh
172. Recently, Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a USD 1 billion (about Rupees 7,485 crore) loan to support the construction of the modern, high-speed _____ regional rapid transit system, a first of its kind in India.
(a) Mumbai-Pune (b) Pune-Nagpur (c) Delhi-Meerut (d) Bhopal-Indore
173. Recently, Chrystia Freeland has been named as first female finance minister of _____.
(a) Greece (b) Canada (c) Mexico (d) Portugal
174. In the United States, Democratic Party has formally nominated _____ as its presidential nominee for the 2020 elections.
(a) Joe Biden (b) Kamala Harris (c) Donald Trump (d) Jedd Kirchner
175. Which of the following countries President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita has recently announced his resignation amid a military coup?
(a) Gambia (b) Mali (c) Haiti (d) Suriname
176. Which of the following central banks implements first retail payments system in the world using blockchain technology?
(a) Mexican central bank (b) Cambodian central bank
(c) Canadian central bank (d) Russian central bank
177. Reserve Bank of India has unveiled the framework for setting up of pan-India Umbrella Entity for Retail Payments. As per the framework, the companies with a net worth of over _____ rupees will be eligible to set up an umbrella entity.
(a) 100 crore (b) 250 crore (c) 500 crore (d) 1000 crore
178. Which of the following exchanges will commence trading of green energy on its power trading platform, the first such for the country?
(a) Indian Energy Exhibition (b) Indian Energy Exchange
(c) Indian Emergency Exchange (d) India Green Energy Exchange Board
179. Recently, Chandryaan-2 has captured images of the Moon and one of the craters has been named after _____ the father of the Indian space programme.
(a) Vikram Sarabhai (b) K Kasturiranjana (c) APJ Abdul Kalam (d) Homi J Bhabha

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180. Name the Indian cricketer who was named in a 29-strong list of athletes recommended for this year's Arjuna award by the sports ministry's selection committee.
(a) Umesh Yadav (b) Ishant Sharma (c) Ravindra Jadeja (d) Cheteshwar Pujara
181. Which of the following cities has become the cleanest city in the country for the fourth consecutive time, leaving behind 4,242 cities of the country in Swachh Survekshan 2020?
(a) Guntur of Andhra Pradesh (b) Surat of Gujarat
(c) Indore of Madhya Pradesh (d) Mysuru of Karnataka
182. Recently, Union Cabinet approved setting up of National Recruitment Agency to conduct Common Eligibility Test. NRA will have representatives of Ministry of Railways, _____, SSC, RRB and IBPS.
(a) Ministry of Finance (b) Ministry of Home
(c) Ministry of Science & Technology (d) UPSC
183. The Union Home Ministry has approved the renaming of Manduadih railway station in Uttar Pradesh as _____.
(a) Kashi (b) Banaras (c) Chandauli (d) Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Nagar
184. Recently, President Ram Nath Kovind gave assent to the change in name of the ministry of human resource development (MHRD) as _____.
(a) Ministry of Education (b) Ministry of Shiksha
(c) Ministry of Addhayan (d) Ministry of Talent
185. Recently, Indian Railways has introduced an innovative system to ensure passenger security in the country. _____ to quickly travel on rail tracks for inspections, monitoring, and urgent repairs.
(a) Rail Bicycle (b) Rail Wheel (c) Rail Maintain (d) Rail Car
186. Recently, Jacek Czaputowicz resigned in pre-announced move. He was the foreign minister of:
(a) Finland (b) France (c) Sweden (d) Poland
187. In a global index on digital quality of life in 85 countries, India ranked _____ on the internet affordability indicator, and 15th on e-government.
(a) 2nd (b) 4th (c) 9th (d) 15th
188. Recently, Reliance Industries Ltd has acquired a majority stake in online pharmacy _____ for about 6.2 billion rupees in cash, days after e-commerce giant Amazon.com Inc launched an online drug sales service in India.
(a) Netmeds (b) Apollo 247 (c) Medlife (d) 1mg.com
189. Which of the following companies recently became the first publicly listed US Company with a \$2 trillion stock market value?
(a) Facebook (b) Apple Inc (c) Exxon Mobil (d) Berkshire Hathway
190. The General Assembly, in its resolution designated _____ as the International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief.
(a) 20th August (b) 21st August (c) 22nd August (d) 25th August
191. The metro trains in India will now run on the indigenously manufactured rails built in _____.
(a) Haryana (b) Tamil Nadu
(c) Rajasthan (d) Chhattisgarh
192. The report of the technical group on population projections titled population projections for India and States 2011 – 2036 has observed that the lowest sex ratio of 899 is expected to be in _____ in 2036.
(a) NCT of Delhi (b) Gujarat (c) Haryana (d) Rajasthan

193. Recently, Pakistan government has declared former Prime Minister _____ currently in London for treatment, an absconder and approached the U.K. government for his extradition.
(a) Shahid Khaqan Abbasi (b) Yousaf Raza Gillani
(c) Nawaz Sharif (d) Raja Pervaiz Ashraf
194. Recently, who won Best Emerging Women Entrepreneur award from Business Mint?
(a) Dr. Sneha Rakesh (b) Dr. Suraiya Mishra (c) Dr. Meenakshi Jha (d) Dr. Tiya Vajpayee
195. Recently, _____ and Bharti AXA Sign Definitive Agreements to combine their Non-Life Insurance Businesses.
(a) HDFC Ergo (b) SBI life Insurance (c) PNB Metlife (d) ICICI Lombard
196. Recently, Researchers at the _____ and Shiv Nadar University claim to have developed a technology for production of environment friendly Lithium-Sulfur (Li-S) batteries which will be three times more energy efficient and cost effective than Lithium-ion batteries.
(a) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay
(b) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi
(c) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras
(d) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur
197. Which of the following IIT's has developed a portable hospital unit 'MediCAB' that can be installed anywhere within two hours by four people?
(a) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur
(b) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras
(c) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi
(d) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay
198. Name the honorary Professor at Indian Institute of Science (IISc) who has been selected as the 2021 recipient of the Joel Henry Hildebrand Award in the Theoretical and Experimental Chemistry of Liquids.
(a) Professor Biman Bagchi (b) Professor Anupam Khurana
(c) Professor Deepak Khajuria (d) Professor Amulya Narain
199. Recently, Chief Scientist of World Health Organisation, Soumya Swaminathan was conferred with the _____ Chief Minister's special award, in recognition of her advisory role in combating the COVID-19 pandemic in the state.
(a) Kerala (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Karnataka (d) Maharashtra
200. Who among the following is awarded the 'Tenzing Norgay National Adventure Award 2019' in 'air adventure' category recently?
(a) Flight Lieutenant Hitesh Shah (b) Flight Lieutenant Pushkar Solanki
(c) Wing Commander Gajanand Yadava (d) Wing Commander Samar Pratap
201. Who has been recently appointed as the new election commissioner?
(a) Rajiv Kumar (b) Ashutosh Maheshwari
(c) Amitabh Chatopadhyay (d) Rishabh Trivedi
202. Recently, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan announced the discovery of a large natural gas reserve off the _____ coast that will help ease the country's dependence on imports.
(a) Mediterranean Sea (b) Black Sea (c) Sargasso Sea (d) Caspian Sea
203. Recently, Ministry of External Affairs in partnership with the Foreign Ministry of _____ has organized the 6th Round Table of ASEAN-India Network of Think Tanks (AINTT).
(a) Myanmar (b) Thailand (c) Cambodia (d) Singapore

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204. Recently, who has been appointed as the new Managing Director of State Bank of India?
(a) Ashwani Bhatia (b) Bhupinder Gupta (c) Neelesh Juneja (d) Mithilesh Kumar
205. Recently, Consumer Affairs Minister Ram Vilas Paswan has informed that hallmarking of precious metals will be mandatory from _____ next year.
(a) 1st March (b) 1st May (c) 1st June (d) 1st November
206. Recently, WWF-India is joining hands with the Society for Odonate Studies (SOS) and Thumbipuram for the first-ever state Dragonfly Festival in _____ christened 'Thumbi Maholsavam 2020'.
(a) Tamil Nadu (b) Kerala (c) Karnataka (d) Andhra Pradesh
207. International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition is observed every year on:
(a) August 19 (b) August 20 (c) August 22 (d) August 23
208. Who has been appointed the chairman of sixth State Finance Commission of Himachal Pradesh?
(a) Mr Krisnapal Rawat (b) Mr Santosh Sharma
(c) Mr Satpal Singh Satti (d) Mr Deepak Luthra
209. A top US-based India-centric business advocacy group will honour _____ and Adobe Chairman and CEO Shantanu Narayen with its 2020 Leadership Awards in recognition of their exemplary vision towards promoting US-India bilateral ties.
(a) Mahindra group Chairman Anand Mahindra
(b) Reliance group Chairman Mukesh Ambani
(c) Wipro group Chairman Azim Premji
(d) Adani group Chairman Gautam Adani
210. Researchers at the _____ have discovered a new material to split hydrogen and water, using solar power. The research is expected to bring the conversion and storage part in a single system, which would reduce the cost per kWh of solar energy.
(a) Indian Institute of Technology, Madras (b) Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur
(c) Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi (d) Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee
211. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has greeted the nation on the occasion of Nuakhai a harvest festival celebrated in parts of the country, especially in which of the following states of India?
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Odisha (c) Jharkhand (d) Maharashtra
212. In August 2020, Saudi Arabia's state oil company Aramco has suspended a deal to build a 10 billion dollar refining and petrochemicals complex in _____.
(a) China (b) Pakistan (c) Iran (d) UAE
213. Which of the following countries has granted approval to abolish the 19th amendment to the constitution and replace it with the 20th amendment in August 2020?
(a) USA (b) Bhutan (c) Nepal (d) Sri Lanka
214. Dawood Ibrahim, one of the most wanted men in India, who is accused of the _____ serial blasts in Mumbai among other terrorist attacks, has long been on India's most wanted list, but governments in Pakistan have repeatedly denied his presence in that country.
(a) 1993 (b) 2003 (c) 2008 (d) 2009
215. Government of India has activated Aadhaar authentication for new goods and services tax (GST) registration to enhance ease of doing business. For those opting for Aadhaar authentication, new GST registration will be issued within _____ working days and will not need to wait for physical verification.
(a) Three (b) Five (c) Seven (d) Ten

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216. According to the Center for Near Objects Studies at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, an asteroid has been spotted on a collision course with Earth and is projected to come very close to the planet on November 2, 2020. What is the name of the asteroid?
(a) 2017VP (b) 2018VP (c) 2019VP (d) 2020VP
217. Which of the following has been identified and awarded with "Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puraskar 2020" by Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Government of India?
(a) Army Sports Institute, Mumbai (b) Army Sports Institute, Kolkata
(c) Army Sports Institute, Hyderabad (d) Army Sports Institute, Pune
218. European Champions League is associated with which of the following sports?
(a) Badminton (b) Hockey (c) Football (d) Tennis
219. Sophia Popov became the first female golfer from _____ to capture a major title after winning the Women's British Open by two strokes at Royal Troon in Scotland.
(a) Netherland (b) France (c) Italy (d) Germany
220. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had flagged off the first run of a Vande Bharat train on the _____ route on February 15, 2019.
(a) Mumbai-Varanasi (b) New Delhi-Varanasi (c) New Delhi-Lucknow (d) New Delhi-Chennai
221. Recently, the longest river ropeway of India is inaugurated in _____.
(a) Jammu & Kashmir (b) Himachal Pradesh (c) Uttarakhand (d) Assam
222. Recently, National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has developed a mobile App, _____ to facilitate creation of Green Highways across the country.
(a) Green Way (b) Harit Path (c) Harit Marg (d) Hariyali Marg
223. Recently, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has constituted the National Council for Transgender Persons, a requirement under the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019. Who will be chairperson of this council?
(a) Social Justice Minister (b) HRD Minister
(c) Home Minister (d) Prime Minister
224. Putting the belief to rest that recovered covid-19 patients have immunity against re-infection because most developed a serum neutralizing antibody response _____ documented the world's first case of covid-19 re-infection.
(a) University of Hong Kong (b) University of Cambridge
(c) University of Oxford (d) University of Singapore
225. Recently, India's largest commodity exchange the Multi-Commodity Exchange of India Ltd (MCX) launched the country's first bullion index _____.
(a) Bulldex (b) BullionMX (c) CurrencyMK (d) MetalOS
226. Apple is set to open the world's first floating retail store in _____.
(a) USA (b) Canada (c) Singapore (d) India
227. Who among the following got two-year extension as DRDO Chief?
(a) Dr. K Sivan (b) Dr. G. Satheesh Reddy
(c) Dr. L B Singh (d) Dr Tessa Thomas
228. Recently, three international cricketers were inducted into the International Cricket Council's Hall of Fame in a virtual ceremony. Who is not among the three?
(a) Jaques Kallis (b) Sana Mir (c) Lisa Sthalekar (d) Zaheer Abbas

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229. Which of the following countries launched its latest Gaofen-9 Earth observation satellite and two smaller payloads?
(a) Japan (b) South Korea (c) China (d) USA
230. Which of the following states has launched a new scheme for promoting intensive aquaculture through Biofloc technology in fisheries recently?
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Karnataka (c) Kerala (d) Odisha
231. Which of the following Indian railway stations has successfully introduced a unique concept of Baggage Sanitization and Wrapping, a first of its kind across the Indian Railways?
(a) Ahmedabad Railway Division (b) Bikaner Railway Division
(c) Surat Railway Division (d) Pune Railway Division
232. The Republican National Convention (RNC) has formally nominated _____ as the party's Presidential candidate for the November 3 election in America.
(a) Joe Biden (b) Donald Trump (c) Mike Pence (d) Kamala Harris
233. The Road Transport and Highways Ministry has decided to extend the validity of Motor Vehicle documents till the _____.
(a) 31st of August (b) 31st of October (c) 31st of December (d) 31st of January
234. Recently, World Health Organization has declared _____ free of polio.
(a) Africa (b) Asia (c) Australia (d) South America
235. SBI General Insurance announced the launch of first-of-its-kind offering _____ a unique gift of Personal Accident policy.
(a) "Shagun - Gift an Insurance" (b) "Saubhagya- Gift an Insurance"
(c) "Sahayata - Gift an Insurance" (d) "Suvidha - Gift an Insurance"
236. Name the first bank of India which has announced the introduction of usage of satellite data imagery from earth observation satellites to assess credit worthiness of its customers belonging to the farm sector.
(a) HDFC Bank (b) ICICI Bank (c) RBL Bank (d) Axis Bank
237. In its annual report released, Reserve Bank has projected India's growth rate at _____ percent for 2020-21.
(a) (-) 1.5 (b) (-) 4.5 (c) (+) 0.5 (d) (+) 2.5
238. AstroSat, India's first multi-wavelength satellite, has detected an extreme _____ light from a galaxy which is 9.3 billion light-years away from Earth.
(a) Visible (b) Infrared (c) Ultraviolet (d) Radio Frequency
239. Name the first fast bowler to take 600 International test wickets recently?
(a) Stuart Broad (b) James Anderson (c) Trent Boult (d) Mashrafe Mortaza
240. Who won the first gold medal for India at the Mental Calculation World Championship at Mind Sports Olympiad recently?
(a) Byomkesh Ghosh (b) Aravind Mohan
(c) G V Sadananda Gowda (d) Neelkantha Bhanu Prakash
241. Uttar Pradesh's first 'Medical Device Park' is set to be built in:
(a) Lucknow (b) Agra (c) Gorakhpur (d) Noida
242. Recently, Citing the prevalence of mental health issues the Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry has launched a toll-free helpline _____ to enable access to mental health resources.
(a) Asha (b) Kiran (c) Himmat (d) Prakash

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243. Recently, Manipur State Health and Family Welfare Minister L. Jayantakumar Singh launched Teleconsultation using eSanjeevani OPD platform in _____.
(a) Bishnupur (b) Imphal (c) Churachandpur (d) Tamenglong
244. Which of the following recently released the Export Preparedness Index (EPI) 2020?
(a) Finance Ministry (b) Corporate Affairs Ministry
(c) NITI Aayog (d) Home Ministry
245. Recently, A parachutist completed the world's first jump from a solar-powered aircraft after the plane soared to a height of 1,520 metres (nearly 5,000 ft) over _____.
(a) Switzerland (b) France (c) Germany (d) Poland
246. Which of the following has become the first country in the world to be awarded the recommended status of the Safer Tourism Resilience Seal by global body Rebuilding Travels?
(a) Mexico (b) Kenya (c) Portugal (d) Ghana
247. Which of the following states has been ranked first in the first ever Export Preparedness index 2020 released by NITI Ayog?
(a) Assam (b) Gujarat (c) Maharashtra (d) Uttar Pradesh
248. Who has been announced as the winner of the 2020 International Booker Prize, making the writer the youngest winner of the prize?
(a) Deeklesh Rectiser (b) Marieke Lucas Rijneveld
(c) Butchile Johnson (d) Centric Decktise
249. Who has been conferred the Arjuna award for the equestrian sport of tent pegging?
(a) Subedar Vikrant Makheeja (b) Subedar Deepesh Goyal
(c) Subedar Ajay Anant Sawant (d) Subedar Virendra Sharma
250. Who has become the first Indian player to play in the Caribbean Premier League (CPL)?
(a) Yuzvendra Chahal (b) Pravin Tambe (c) Sairaj Bahutule (d) Jasprit Bumrah
251. Recently, Piyush Goyal e-launched the National GIS-enabled Land Bank system for _____ states.
(a) 2 (b) 4 (c) 6 (d) 10
252. The Ministry of Culture has announced _____ new circles of Archaeological Survey of India, ASI.
(a) 3 (b) 4 (c) 7 (d) 10
253. The _____ will re-examine its 2004 judgment that held that Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (SC/STs) cannot be further sub-classified for the purpose of reservation.
(a) High Court of Karnataka (b) Supreme Court
(c) High Court of Madhya Pradesh (d) Central Administrative Tribunal
254. Recently, who became the world's first-ever \$200 billionaire?
(a) Jeff Bezos (b) Warren Buffet (c) Bill Gates (d) Mukesh Ambani
255. Which of the following states women top the list of MUDRA loan scheme beneficiaries?
(a) Kerala (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Karnataka (d) Andhra Pradesh
256. Recently, Indian Institute of Technology's Alumni Council has signed an agreement with Russoft to access and transfer key technologies from _____ to build the world's largest and fastest hybrid quantum computer in India.
(a) Siberia (b) Russia (c) Finland (d) Netherlands

257. The _____ has set up an expert panel to review the charter of its laboratories and minimise the overlap of technologies they are working on at a time when self-reliance in the defence sector is a top priority for the government.
(a) Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)
(b) Indian Space & Research Centre (ISRO)
(c) Indian Space Ministry
(d) Bhabha Atomic Research Centre
258. In a major development Atomic Minerals Directorate under the Department of Atomic Energy is collaborating with _____ for world's first commercial helium gas exploration plant.
(a) National Institute of Technology (NIT), Durgapur
(b) National Institute of Technology (NIT), Warangal
(c) National Institute of Technology (NIT), Jammu
(d) National Institute of Technology (NIT), Guwahati
259. Who among the following became the first bowler to take 500 T20 wickets?
(a) Andre Russell (b) Dwayne Bravo (c) Trent Boult (d) Yasir Shah
260. National Sports Day is celebrated every year On 29 August 2020 to mark the birth anniversary of:
(a) Kapil Dev (b) Major Dhyan Chand (c) Dhanraj Pillai (d) Nawab Pataudi
261. The Defence Ministry has taken an in-principle decision to host the next edition of Aero India considered Asia's largest aerospace exhibition in _____.
(a) Chennai (b) Bengaluru (c) Lucknow (d) Pune
262. Recently, Commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal India-ASEAN trade can reach \$300 billion and the two can resolve their differences by addressing concerns of all nations and businesses. Presently, how many member nations are there in ASEAN?
(a) 6 (b) 8 (c) 10 (d) 15
263. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurated _____ the first marine ambulance acquired by the state fisheries department, through videoconference.
(a) Prateeksha (b) Patralekha (c) Pareeneeti (d) Prayas
264. Recently, Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Ravi Shankar Prasad launched _____ Next Generation Startup Challenge Contest to further boost startups and software products with special focus on Tier-II towns of the country.
(a) Saraahna (b) Chunaoti (c) Lakshya (d) Prabhaaw
265. Which of the following countries has retained its dominant place in the global offshore wind market in the first half of 2020?
(a) France (b) Germany (c) United Kingdom (d) United States of America
266. Recently, Shinzo Abe resigned from the post of Prime Minister of:
(a) South Korea (b) North Korea (c) Japan (d) China
267. The Banks Board Bureau (BBB) recommended SBI's senior-most managing director _____ as the next chairman of the State Bank of India.
(a) Dinesh Kumar Khara (b) Vedmurthy Krishnaih
(c) Amarnath Dhingra (d) Mayakant Tripathi
268. Which of the following Indian states will set up India's first international women's trade centre (WTC), in consonance with the United Nations sustainable development goals (SDGs)?
(a) Karnataka (b) Kerala (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Andhra Pradesh

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269. Indian Railways is set to meet all its energy needs of more than _____ billion units by 2030.
(a) 11 (b) 22 (c) 33 (d) 44
270. Name Britain's World War II spy who became the first Indian-origin woman to be honoured with a memorial Blue Plaque at her former family home in central London.
(a) Amrita Shergill (b) Deepika Bharadwaj (c) Noor Inayat Khan (d) Sana Mir Khan
271. Which of the following banks has got global recognition for its HR initiative 'Nayi Disha' which over the course of 1.5 years has touched more than 2.40 lakh employees?
(a) Union Bank of India (b) Canara Bank
(c) Punjab National Bank (d) State Bank of India
272. According to the notified new rules for administration in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir by Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) the transaction of business rules, "police, public order, All India Services and anti-corruption," will fall under:
(a) Lieutenant Governor (b) Chief Minister
(c) Central Home Minister (d) President of India
273. In June, India was elected non-permanent member of the Security Council for a two-year term beginning _____.
(a) October 1, 2020 (b) January 1, 2021 (c) April 1, 2021 (d) June 30, 2021
274. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh is scheduled to visit _____ for the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Defence Ministers meeting.
(a) Turkmenistan (b) Uzbekistan (c) Russia (d) China
275. According to a global ranking of average wages prepared by Picodi.com, India has been ranked a lowly _____ among 106 countries in terms of the average wage per month.
(a) 54th (b) 63rd (c) 72nd (d) 87th
276. The Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Government of India and _____ launched the Sustainable Finance Collaborative (SFC).
(a) Ministry of Environment and Forests
(b) NITI Aayog
(c) United Nations Development Programme India
(d) UNICEF
277. In the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the Administrative Council, which met under the chairmanship of _____, gave approval to establishment of State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) by merging the State Institutes of Education?
(a) Home Minister Amit Shah (b) Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha
(c) Prime Minister Narendra Modi (d) Niti Aayog Vice Chairperson Rajiv Kumar
278. Which of the following places doctors recently performed Asia's first lung transplant on Covid-19 patient?
(a) Bengaluru (b) New Delhi (c) Chennai (d) Chandigarh
279. Name the first Divyanga Indian sportsperson of the country, who has been awarded with the Tenzing Norgay Adventure Award.
(a) Amit Nandan (b) Satyendra Singh Lohia
(c) Deepak Parashar (d) Vibhuti Pathak
280. Which of the following two countries have been announced as joint winners of FIDE Chess Olympiad?
(a) India and China (b) Portugal and South Africa
(c) India and Russia (d) Russia and Japan

ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

1. a Lewis Hamilton held on to win the British Grand Prix despite a puncture on the last lap to clinch an 87th career win and move within four of Michael Schumacher's Formula One record.
2. a Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy launched E-Rakshabandhan in the state capital Amaravati. It is an innovative virtual cybercrime awareness programme of the state CID and the police.
3. a In a first in the country, 120 traffic signals across 13 junctions between Dadar and Mahim will feature female pedestrians in traffic lights.
4. b Defence Ministry has formulated a draft Defence Production and Export Promotion Policy 2020 (DPEPP-2020). The policy aims to provide impetus to self-reliance in defence manufacturing under the Atmanirbhar Bharat Scheme.
5. b The Central Government will spend nearly twelve crore rupees for funding 112 startups to promote agri firms in the current financial year.
6. a Northern Railway ran first-ever Vyapar Mala Express train. This train destined for Jirania in Tripura has 46 wagons.
7. c Regulator Sebi is planning to set up a virtual museum of securities market to highlight achievements and milestones in the Indian capital market.
8. b Amul has for the first time launched Haldi Ice Cream with the goodness of Haldi, Pepper and Honey and richness of dry fruits like dates, almonds and cashews
9. a Scientists at the National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (which comes under Ministry of Earth Sciences), located in Goa, have noticed the unprecedented algal blooms within sea ice sheet of Antarctica which they say is indicative of the warming climate in the region.
10. d Israel and India are conducting trials in New Delhi on a large sample of patients for four different kinds of technologies that have the potential to detect COVID-19 in about 30 seconds, including a breath analyser and a voice test.
11. b The minister launched 'CREDAI Awaas App' and NAREDCO's online portal 'HousingforAll.com'. Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri launched digital platforms of real estate bodies CREDAI and NAREDCO to market residential properties, besides releasing a guide book for affordable rental housing scheme for migrants.
12. d Chief Minister of Rajasthan Ashok Gehlot directed officials to start the Indira Rasoi Yojana in urban areas of Rajasthan from August 20. Reviewing the preparations for the scheme, named after former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, the state government would spend Rs 100 crore per year on it. The poor would get quality nutritious food for just Rs 8.
13. c This initiative is a national programme for popularizing science among school students of Class 6th to 11th.
14. b Union Minister for HRD Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' virtually launched India Report on Digital Education, 2020.
15. a The UAE has successfully trained police dogs to detect Covid-19 cases in passengers arriving at its airports, making the country the first in the world to successfully do so.

- 16. b** Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu bordering Gujarat has launched E-Gyan Mitra mobile app for online education.
- 17. a** Apple Inc's surged over 10% to a record high after reporting blockbuster quarterly results, helping the iPhone maker eclipse Saudi Aramco to become the world's most valuable publicly listed company.
- 18. c** The government has approved a programme for the benefit of artisans involved in manufacturing of agarbatti and to develop village industry under the 'Gramodyog Vikas Yojana'.
- 19. b** SKOCH Gold Award has been awarded to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) for its "Empowerment of Tribals through IT enabled Scholarship Schemes" project.
- 20. a** Scientists have come up with a novel high-efficiency thermoelectric material that is intrinsically self-healable and highly stretchable. This is the world's first ionic thermoelectric (ITE) material that has good elasticity and self-healing abilities.
- 21. d** Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar launched the Sahakar Cooptube NCDC Channel, a new initiative by National Cooperative Development Corporation.
- 22. b** Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Girish Chandra Murmu has approved the creation of Block Development Fund on the pattern of Constituency Development Fund.
- 23. d** D Roopa appointed home secretary, 'first woman to do so'.
- 24. a** President Donald Trump hosted the swearing-in of the first Black Chief of Staff of the Air Force, Gen. Charles Q. Brown.
- 25. b** HDFC Bank Ltd, India's biggest private lender, has announced that Sashidhar Jagdishan will be its Managing Director & CEO for a period of three years from his date of taking charge.
- 26. c** A unique COVID prevention kiosk was inaugurated at Bengaluru Railway Station with an aim to fight the pandemic, South Western Railway said. It was inaugurated by Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Bengaluru Division, AN Krishna Reddy along with Kalyani Sethuraman, Additional Divisional Railway Manager (Admin), Bengaluru Division.
- 27. d** Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kanpur signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Defence (MoD) for developing a prompt and predictive grievance redress mechanism using artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning tools.
- 28. a** Bull Moose Tube, a subsidiary of the Caparo Bull Moose Company in the United States owned by London-based industrialist Swraj Paul, has won the Fastmarkets Global Awards for Steel Excellence in the category of Best Innovation – Product.
- 29. a** Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju chaired the 1st General Council meeting of the Khelo India Scheme.
- 30. c** Founder of SS Motivation, World record holder Sunil ydv SS was honoured with "Karamveer Chakra Award" by Global Fellowship Award instituted by United Nations and International Confederation of NGO (iCONGO) at the ReX ConcLIVE hosted in IIT Delhi.
- 31. a** The President Ram Nath Kovind has appointed Manoj Sinha as the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir.
- 32. b** Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar launched "Parivar Pehchan Patras" to enable the citizens to get the benefits of various central and state government schemes.

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- 33. c** India has contributed USD 15.46 million to the India-UN Development Partnership Fund, underscoring the country's commitment to supporting developing nations in its developmental priorities across all the Sustainable Development Goals.
- 34. b** The joint venture between the National Agricultural Marketing Federation of India (Nafed) and Maharashtra Farmers Producer Co (MahaFPC), MahaOnion, has announced the launch of India's first onion storage and marketing infrastructure through the public-private-partnership (PPP) model.
- 35. a** Ajay Tyagi has been given an 18 month extension as the chairman of markets regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India, SEBI.
- 36. c** A new species of pygmy grasshopper, discovered after 116 years by a group of foreign researchers in Sri Lanka, has been named after a 28-year-old Indian orthopterist (one who studies grasshoppers) and conservation biologist Dhaneesh Bhaskar of Kerala.
- 37. b** Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor G C Murmu has resigned from his post.
- 38. b** Touted as a first of its kind in the nation, a mobile Covid-19 lab was inaugurated by the Karnataka Medical Education Minister Dr K Sudhakar.
- 39. b** World Lung Cancer Day is observed on August 1 to raise awareness about the causes and treatment of lung cancer and to highlight the issues that a lack of sufficient research funding can create.
- 40. b** An unarmed Minuteman 3 intercontinental ballistic missile was launched from California on a test flight to a target in the Pacific Ocean, the Air Force Global Strike Command.
- 41. b** India's first Kisan Special Parcel Train or Kisan Rail started in August 2020 and it will transport material between Maharashtra's Devlali and Bihar's Danapur Railway station.
- 42. b** Airtel Payments Bank announced that it will offer Shop Insurance exclusively for its Retailers and Merchants.
- 43. d** Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel launched a social security scheme for tendu leaves collectors in the state, which will benefit over 12 lakh families, mostly tribals and forest dwellers engaged in its collection.
- 44. b** The counting of votes is continuing and the Sri Lanka People party (SLPP) is heading for majority votes in at least 16 out of 22 electoral districts.
- 45. c** As the world goes through an unprecedented recession amid the pandemic, global remittances may fall by \$108.6 billion in 2020 if the economic impact of Covid-19 persists throughout the year.
- 46. d** Chinese-owned video app TikTok, facing the threat of a U.S. ban, said it will set up its first European data centre in Ireland, extending its presence in the country where it already has a hub dealing with regional regulatory issues.
- 47. b** National Award-winning documentary "Son Rise" and Geetu Mohandas-directed "Moothon" were among the films that took home the big honours at the 20th New York Indian Film Festival (NYIFF), which switched to a virtual edition this year amid the ongoing COVID19 pandemic.
- 48. d** On August 6, 75 years ago the world changed - a US warplane dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima in Japan killing 1, 40,000 people.
- 49. c** 7th August was chosen as the National Handloom Day to commemorate the Swadeshi Movement which was launched on the same date in the year 1905.

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- 50. a** Defence Institute of Advanced Technology, DIAT, has bagged 1st prize in Smart India Hackathon, SIH, 2020, held from 1st to 3rd of this month at Noida Institute of Engineering and Technology, Uttar Pradesh.
- 51. b** Reserve Bank of India (RBI) constituted the proposed expert committee under the chairmanship of veteran banker K.V. Kamath to make recommendations on norms for the resolution of COVID-19 related stressed loans.
- 52. c** Gujarat Industrial Policy 2020 that aims to provide an estimated Rs 40,000 crore as subsidies to industries in the next five years.
- 53. c** Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a week-long campaign to free India of garbage and stressed that the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan has been a big support in the fight against coronavirus.
- 54. c** Almost 24 million children are at risk of not returning to school next year due to the economic fallout of COVID-19, according to the United Nation's policy brief on the pandemic's impact on education.
- 55. b** The Reserve Bank of India has barred banks from opening current accounts for customers who have availed cash credit or overdraft facilities, with a view to improve credit discipline.
- 56. a** An Indian Institute of Science (IISc) research team has designed a robotic arm that can be manipulated by eye movement using a computer interface, to help people with Severe Speech and Motor Impairment (SSMI).
- 57. b** Microsoft is testing hydrogen fuel cells to power its data centre servers, making it the first company to build a clean energy power source using the most abundant element on the planet.
- 58. b** The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has suspended the title sponsorship deal with Chinese mobile phone company Vivo for the upcoming edition of the Indian Premier League.
- 59. d** International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples or World Tribal Day is being observed on 9th August.
- 60. a** The Arctic has been warming at twice the global rate for the last 30 years, due to a process known as Arctic amplification.
- 61. c** Former Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, Girish Chandra Murmu will be the new Comptroller and Auditor General of the country. Mr Murmu will succeed Rajiv Mehrishi.
- 62. c** More than 15 years after one of the devastating Tsunamis of history killed over 10,000 people in southern India, two coastal villages of Odisha would be declared 'Tsunami-Ready', the first in India as well as the Indian ocean region.
- 63. b** Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh launched a collaborative 'Pride of Punjab' programme as a partnership between the Department of Youth Services and Sports and YuWaah – a joint initiative of UNICEF, other UN agencies, civil society organizations and the private sector.
- 64. b** Sri Lanka's former President Mahinda Rajapaksa will be sworn in as the country's new prime minister for the fourth time at a historic Buddhist temple consolidating the hard-line political dynasty's grip on power.
- 65. b** The Indian Ocean island of Mauritius declared a "state of environmental emergency" after a Japanese-owned ship that ran aground offshore days ago began spilling tons of fuel.
- 66. b** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced a loan restructuring window for corporates following demands from bankers and industry.

- 67. b** According to an order of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), the committee would be chaired by Secretary (retd) G K Pillai. The other two members are Y G Parande (retd CBIC member) and Gautam Ray (retd chief commissioner of custom and central excise).
- 68. a** National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi to set up a Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Use of Artificial Intelligence in Data Driven decision making and Advance Data Management System for Highways.
- 69. a** International Cricket Council has confirmed that the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2020 that was postponed due to Covid-19 will be held in Australia in 2022.
- 70. c** Dr. Pradeep Kumar Joshi took oath as Chairman of Union Public Service Commission (UPSC). Prof. Joshi joined the Commission as a member in the year 2015.
- 71. b** Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the financing facility of 1 lakh crore rupees under the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund through video conferencing.
- 72. a** Maharashtra became the first State in the country to announce a partnership with Google to promote remote learning for students.
- 73. a** In a resumption of bilateral and multilateral military exercises which were deferred due to coronavirus (COVID-19), India will take part in the Russian Kavkaz 2020 strategic command-post exercise
- 74. b** In order to improve public Grievances redressal mechanism, Deputy Commissioner of Rajouri, Nazir Sheikh, has launched a mobile app "Awaz-e-Rajouri".
- 75. d** In a world first, all Scottish state schools will teach LGBT+ history as part of the curriculum by 2021.
- 76. a** As per the data published by Central Electricity Authority, 2600 Mega Watt NTPC Korba in Chattisgarh has emerged as the top performing thermal power plant in the country with 97.42 percent plant load factor, PLF, between April to July this year.
- 77. c** Researchers from the Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati, India, and Imperial College London, UK, have developed a tailored 'meta-grid' of nanoparticles that could make light-emitting diodes (LEDs) brighter, energy-efficient and durable.
- 78. a** Kisawa Sanctuary on Bengueria Island in Mozambique will be the world's first 3D-printed, ultra-luxury eco resort
- 79. a** National Film Development Corporation is organizing a first of its kind, online patriotic film festival. The festival is a part of Independence Day Celebrations by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
- 80. b** Indian Short video platform Chingari, news app Logically-Check Fake News and Verify Facts and 22 more apps emerged as winners of the government's Aatma Nirbhar App Innovation challenge.
- 81. c** Chhattisgarh's Jagdalpur has become the first municipal corporation in the country where people of an urban area have been provided forest land right certificates.
- 82. a** Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the first ever undersea optical fibre project for Andaman and Nicobar Islands which will provide high speed broadband connections in the Union Territory at par with services in the mainland.
- 83. d** The World Elephant Day is observed every year on 12th August to spread awareness about the animal. It was launched in 2012 to bring attention to the urgent plight of Asian and African elephants.

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- 84. d** Lebanon's Prime Minister Hassan Diab has resigned from his post in the wake of major blast in Beirut that has triggered public outrage.
- 85. b** India and Maldives signed a contract for development of five eco-tourism zones in Addu atoll of the island nation.
- 86. b** Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated the National Infrastructure Pipeline, NIP, Online Dashboard in New Delhi through video conferencing.
- 87. c** A research paper from Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, has shown that the river Yamuna harboured some of these critical groups, multidrug-resistant bacteria. They note that sewage was the main source of their entry into the river.
- 18. a** National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI) said that it has launched its own business intelligence and analytics enabled omni-channel multi-branded loyalty platform – 'nth Rewards'.
- 89. d** World Biofuel Day is observed every year on 10th August to create awareness about the importance of non-fossil fuels as an alternative to conventional fossil fuels.
- 90. b** Supreme Court judge, Justice N.V. Ramana, the Executive Chairman of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA), said the 'e-Lok Adalat', jointly organised with the Delhi State Legal Services Authority (DSLISA) was a step towards meeting new challenges thrown at justice delivery system by COVID-19.
- 91. a** The Opposition in Belarus rejected official election results handing President Alexander Lukashenko a landslide re-election victory saying the poll was rigged and that talks needed to begin on a peaceful transfer of power.
- 92. c** Tribal Affairs Ministry is developing "Tribal Freedom Fighters' Museums dedicated to the contributions of the tribal people in India to the freedom struggle. Out of nine sanctioned museums, two museums are near completion and remaining seven are at different stages of progress.
- 93. a** This Rail Museum is first of its kind in North Karnataka and second in South Western Railway after historic Mysuru Rail Museum at Mysuru.
- 94. b** Employees' Provident Fund Organisation, EPFO has ensured hassle free service delivery through UMANG app during COVID-19 pandemic.
- 95. a** In the United States, Democratic Presidential nominee Joe Biden has named Indian-origin senator Kamala Harris as his Vice-Presidential running mate. Joe Biden made history by selecting the first black woman to compete on a major party's presidential ticket.
- 96. b** In the wake of COVID-19 crisis, Paytm has launched the first pocket Android POS device for contactless ordering and payments in India, a move that will make this technology more affordable for SMEs.
- 97. d** IUCAA is located in the University of Pune campus next to the National Centre for Radio Astrophysics, which operates the Giant Metrewave Radio Telescope. IUCAA has a campus designed by Indian architect Charles Correa.
- 98. c** In Madhya Pradesh, noted Urdu poet and lyricist Rahat Indori died of cardiac arrest in Indore. He was also tested positive for COVID-19.
- 99. c** World Lion Day is observed across the world on August 10 every year.
- 100. c** Russia has named its first approved Covid-19 vaccine 'Sputnik V' for foreign markets, a reference to the world's first satellite and what Moscow sees as its success at becoming the first country to approve a vaccine.
- 101. a** Himachal Pradesh state government launched Nutritional Immunity Boosting 'Him Haldi Dudh(Turmeric Latte)' manufactured by MILKFED.

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- 102. a** Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch the platform for Transparent Taxation - Honoring the Honest through video conferencing.
- 103. a** With an aim to provide financial assistance to around 17 lakh families, the Assam government is all set to roll out Arunodoi scheme in the state from 2nd of October.
- 104. b** Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar has launched ICAR's data recovery centre - Krishi Megh.
- 105. c** In a landmark judgment, Supreme Court has ruled that daughters will have inheritance rights equal to those of sons from properties of fathers and grandfathers right from the codification of the law in 1956.
- 106. c** Reliance Foundation has partnered US Agency for International Development (USAID) to launch the W-GDP WomenConnect Challenge across India this year with an aim to bridge the gender digital divide in India.
- 107. b** A leading diaspora group in the US will hoist India's National Flag at the Times Square this week, the first time the Indian tricolour will be unfurled at the iconic New York City destination.
- 108. b** The galaxy, called SPT0418-47, is so far away that it took billions of years for its light to reach Earth and so our image of it is from deep in the past, said the European Southern Observatory (ESO), which was involved in the discovery.
- 109. a** A microwave device named 'Atulya' that can disinfect any premises in just 30 seconds, disintegrating COVID-19 virus was unveiled by Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Nitin Gadkari in Nagpur.
- 110. b** The Goa government signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) for setting up an institute to provide advanced skills training.
- 111. a** Union Minister Jitendra Singh informed that work has started on the first-of-its-kind Katra (Jammu and Kashmir)-Delhi Express Road Corridor which will be ready by 2023.
- 112. c** Goa's traditional festive sweet dish 'Khaje', spicy Harnal Chilli and Myndoli Banana (Moiri Banana) has obtained Geographical Indication (GI) tag in last three months, thus giving the local producers exclusive brand protection rights. Earlier, the State's popular 'Cashew Feni' and 'Khola Red Chilli', had obtained GI tag.
- 113. a** An Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) for the Indian Coast Guard was launched and re-christened as Indian Coast Guard Ship 'Sarvak'.
- 114. b** In view of the growing cyber-crimes in the state, Uttar Pradesh government has opened 16 new cyber-crime Police stations in different cities of the state.
- 115. c** Russia and Brazil have agreed to cooperate in the production and marketing of the world's first registered coronavirus vaccine Sputnik V.
- 116. d** NASA satellite finds 66 new exoplanets.
- 117. c** Skyroot Aerospace, Hyderabad based startup has successfully test-fired its upper stage rocket engine named 'Raman', which can place multiple satellites into orbit.
- 118. b** The Sports Ministry is being organised the largest country-wide run, the Fit India Freedom Run from 15th August to 2nd October, which boasts of a unique concept.
- 119. d** Every year on 13th August, world organ donation day is celebrated to create awareness about organ donation and encourage people to donate their organs.

- 120. a** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched the Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (NIIO) through an online webinar.
- 121. a** In a significant step towards space exploration, a team of researchers from the Indian Space Research Organisation, ISRO and the Indian Institute of Science, IISc in Bengaluru has developed a sustainable process to make space bricks on the lunar surface.
- 122. a** External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar has announced that India will fund the implementation of Greater Male Connectivity Project through a 400 million dollar Line of Credit and 100 million dollar grant.
- 123. a** The Ministry of AYUSH launched a three-month campaign on “Ayush for Immunity” through a webinar.
- 124. d** “Chairman Railway Board has launched E-pass module of Human Resource Management System, HRMS developed by Centre For Railway Information Systems, CRIS through video conferencing.
- 125. a** The Science Technology and Innovation Policy, STIP -2020 is being formulated in the country in a unique way of making it more inclusive.
- 126. b** A Dhaka court framed charges against the former Chief Justice of Bangladesh Justice S.K. Sinha and ten others in a money laundering case filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).
- 127. c** Private lender HDFC Bank Ltd. has launched a 1st-of-its-kind product for the armed forces. Titled as “Shaurya KGC Card”, this unique product comes with never-seen-before features and eligibility criteria specially crafted for more 45 lakh Indian armed forces personnel, claimed the bank in its official communique.
- 128. a** Singapore-based fintech Bond Evalve, founded by an Indian launched the world’s first block chain-based exchange christened as BondbloX Bond Exchange (BBX)
- 129. b** Under his captaincy, India won the 2007 ICC World Twenty-Twenty, the 2010 and 2016 Asia Cups, the 2011 ICC Cricket World Cup and the 2013 ICC Champions Trophy.
- 130. d** On World Humanitarian Day (WHD) August 19, the world commemorates humanitarian workers killed and injured in the course of their work, and we honour all aid and health workers who continue, despite the odds, to provide life-saving support and protection to people most in need.
- 131. c** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on August 15 announced that the task to connect India’s over six-lakh villages with optical fibre network will be completed in the next 1,000 days.
- 132. b** Jamia Millia University scored a total of 90% in a self-assessment exercise, based on annual targets set by each university under performance parameters determined by the Centre.
- 133. a** The Prime Minister announced that the Centre will soon launch Project Lion and Project Dolphin for the biodiversity conservation of these species to replicate the successes of Project Tiger.
- 134. b** Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the launch of National Digital Health Mission. He said the National Digital Health Mission will bring a new revolution in India’s health sector and all Indians will get health IDs.
- 135. a** The Sri Lankan government appointed ex-commander of the Navy Admiral Jayanath Colombage as the new Foreign Secretary, days after the new Cabinet took the oath with President Gotabaya Rajapaksa retaining the key defence ministry.
- 136. a** The Central Board of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) approved the transfer of Rs 57,128 crore as surplus — or dividend — to the central government for accounting year 2019-20, sharply lower by 67.5 per cent from Rs 1.76 lakh last year.

- 137. a** India ranks first in the number of organic farmers and ninth in terms of area under organic farming.
- 138. a** Lewis Hamilton had no problems with his tires this time as he coasted to victory at the Spanish Grand Prix, extending his championship lead to 37 points and clinching an 88th career victory to move within three of Michael Schumacher's Formula One record.
- 139. d** The General Assembly established 21 August as the International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism in order to honor and support the victims and survivors of terrorism and to promote and protect the full enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms.
- 140. b** Former Indian cricketer and Uttar Pradesh minister Chetan Chauhan passed away following multiple organ failure.
- 141. c** Multi Commodity Exchange of India (MCX) India has launched India's first bullion index, Bulldex, on August 24. The bullion index, Bulldex, being launched by MCX is the sixth product in bullion complex with 1-kg gold, 100-gm goldmini, 8-gm gold guinea and 1-gm gold peta, while the Options on Futures on 1-kg gold is already in place.
- 142. c** The logo accommodates 'Palash flower' (Butea monosperma), which is the State flower of Jharkhand.
- 143. b** Indian Railways is constructing the world's tallest pier bridge in Manipur. The bridge which is being constructed across river Ijai near Noney is an engineering marvel because the tallest pier height will be 141 meter.
- 144. c** Odisha has retained its top position in implementation of the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) scheme
- 145. b** India announced a slew of new connectivity measures for the Maldives, including air, sea, intra-island and telecommunications in an effort to help the Indian Ocean Islands deal with the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 146. a** A 7500 MW solar park is being built in Ladakh for electricity and infrastructure development in the region. The Ladakh, Leh and Kargil region will be developed and declared to be a carbon neutral region, PM Modi said in his Independence Day speech.
- 147. a** The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) have launched a Flood Early Warning System (FEWS) for Guwahati to alert local authorities about flash floods and/or heavy rainfall.
- 148. c** Top seed Simona Halep claimed her second successive title, albeit six months apart, as she comfortably beat Elise Mertens to win the Prague Open.
- 149. a** The Union Territory of Puducherry celebrated its 59th anniversary of the "De-Jure" day. Puducherry became independent by virtue of a referendum on October 18, 1954.
- 150. b** Aligarh Municipal Corporation (AMC) has recently roped in Indian Idol Season 11 Finalist and Oscar Nominated Playback Singer Shahzan Mujeeb as its First Ever National Brand Ambassador for Swachh Bharat Abhiyan Campaign at National and International level.
- 151. b** The state of art quality control laboratory for Sea food export set up at Porbandar in Gujarat. Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) has opened a Quality Control Laboratory in the coastal city of Porbandar facilitating tests for seafood processors and exporters.
- 152. a** Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda inaugurated the e-portal on tribal health and nutrition named 'Swasthya'.
- 153. c** Hamed Bakayoko, has been named Prime Minister of Ivory Coast.

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- 154. a** The UK government has launched a 3-million pound innovation challenge fund in India to support scientists in academia and industry to tackle the most acute global challenges like Covid-19 and the threat to the environment.
- 155. b** State-owned Punjab National Bank launched a campaign to encourage customers to use digital banking channels.
- 156. a** Gujarat cadre IPS officer Rakesh Asthana has been appointed as the Director General of Border Security Force, BSF.
- 157. b** FC Girls Football Academy, India's first full-fledged girls residential football training facility was launched by Rebels FC in Bengaluru.
- 158. b** Malaysia has detected a strain of the new coronavirus that has been found to be 10 times more infectious.
- 159. c** Legendary Indian classical vocalist Pandit Jasraj passed away at his home in New Jersey, USA.
- 160. d** Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has launched India's biggest United Payments Interface (UPI) based payment system.
- 161. d** The Governor of Goa, Satya Pal Malik has been transferred and appointed as Governor of Meghalaya.
- 162. c** President of the ISA Assembly and New and Renewable Energy Minister R. K. Singh said Prime Minister Narendra Modi will deliver the inaugural address of the First World Solar Technology Summit and it will be graced by Ministers from member countries from across all ISA regions.
- 163. a** Electronics and IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad launched Swadeshi Microprocessor Challenge - Innovate Solutions for Aatmanirbhar Bharat. IIT Madras and Center for Development of Advance Computing have developed two microprocessors named SHAKTI (32 bit) and VEGA (64 bit) respectively using Open Source Architecture.
- 164. c** Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel announced to launch a special scheme under which school students will be able to learn in their respective localities in view of the suspension of classes due to the coronavirus outbreak.
- 165. b** Walmart-owned Flipkart has inked an agreement with IIT-Patna to help create industry-focused applied research in the areas of artificial intelligence (AI), natural language processing (NLP) and machine learning (ML).
- 166. a** Indian Institute of Technology, Madras has retained its number-one position in the list of top innovative educational institutes in India for the second consecutive year.
- 167. b** On August 13, 2020, the Israel-United Arab Emirates Peace Agreement or the Abraham Accord was agreed to by UAE and Israel.
- 168. c** Election Commissioner Ashok Lavasa resigned from his post to join the Philippines-based Asian Development Bank (ADB) as vice-president next month.
- 169. c** Fantasy gaming platform Dream11 has won the IPL title sponsorship rights with a bid of 222 crore rupees.
- 170. b** Cricketer Rohit Sharma is among the 4 athletes who have been recommended for India's highest sporting honour, the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award.
- 171. a** Chhattisgarh government has signed an MoU for establishing the first manufacturing unit of a Defense Category Industry in the state.

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- 172. c** The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a USD 1 billion (about Rupees 7,485 crore) loan to support the construction of the modern, high-speed Delhi-Meerut regional rapid transit system, a first of its kind in India.
- 173. b** Chrystia Freeland named Canada's first female finance minister.
- 174. a** In the United States, Democratic Party has formally nominated Joe Biden as its presidential nominee for the 2020 elections.
- 175. b** Malian President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita has announced his resignation amid a military coup.
- 176. b** Cambodian central bank implements first retail payments system in the world using blockchain technology.
- 177. c** Reserve Bank of India has unveiled the framework for setting up of pan-India Umbrella Entity for Retail Payments. As per the framework, the companies with a net worth of over 500 crore rupees will be eligible to set up an umbrella entity.
- 178. b** Indian Energy Exchange (IEX) will commence trading of green energy on its power trading platform, the first such for the country.
- 179. a** Chandryaan-2 has captured images of the Moon and one of the craters has been named after Vikram Sarabhai, the father of the Indian space programme.
- 180. b** India pacer Ishant Sharma was named in a 29-strong list of athletes recommended for this year's Arjuna award by the sports ministry's selection committee.
- 181. c** Indore of Madhya Pradesh has become the cleanest city in the country for the fourth consecutive time, leaving behind 4,242 cities of the country.
- 182. a** NRA will have representatives of Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Finance, SSC, RRB and IBPS.
- 183. b** The Union Home Ministry has approved the renaming of Manduadih railway station in Uttar Pradesh as 'Banaras'.
- 184. a** President Ram Nath Kovind gave assent to the change in name of the ministry of human resource development (MHRD) as ministry of education.
- 185. a** Indian Railways has introduced an innovative system to ensure passenger security in the country. Recently, the national transporter introduced a novel mechanism, Rail Bicycle to quickly travel on rail tracks for inspections, monitoring, and urgent repairs.
- 186. d** Poland's Foreign Minister announced his resignation on August 20 in the fourth high-level departure this week from the country's right-wing government.
- 187. c** In a global index on digital quality of life in 85 countries, India ranked 9th on the internet affordability indicator, and 15th on e-government.
- 188. a** Reliance Industries Ltd has acquired a majority stake in online pharmacy Netmeds for about 6.2 billion rupees (\$83.08 million) in cash, days after e-commerce giant Amazon.com Inc launched an online drug sales service in India.
- 189. b** Apple Inc became the first publicly listed US company with a \$2 trillion stock market value
- 190. c** The General Assembly, in its resolution designated 22 August as the International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief

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- 191. d** The metro trains in the country will now run on the indigenously manufactured rails built in Raigarh district of Chhattisgarh.
- 192. a** The lowest sex ratio of 899 is expected to be in NCT of Delhi in 2036
- 193. c** The Pakistan government has declared former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, currently in London for treatment, an absconder and approached the U.K. government for his extradition.
- 194. a** Dr. Sneha Rakesh wins Best Emerging Women Entrepreneur award from Business Mint.
- 195. d** ICICI Lombard And Bharti AXA Sign Definitive Agreements To Combine Their Non-Life Insurance Businesses.
- 196. a** Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay and Shiv Nadar University claim to have developed a technology for production of environment friendly Lithium-Sulfur (Li-S) batteries which will be three times more energy efficient and cost effective than Lithium-ion batteries commonly used at present.
- 197. b** IIT Madras-incubated Start-up, Modulus Housing has developed a portable hospital unit that can be installed anywhere within two hours by four people. 'MediCAB' is a decentralized approach to detect, screen, identify, isolate and treat COVID-19 patients in their local communities through these portable microstructures. 'MediCAB' was launched recently in Wayanad District of Kerala where the units are being deployed to treat COVID-19 Patients.
- 198. a** Professor Biman Bagchi. An Honorary Professor at Indian Institute of Science (IISc) has been selected as the 2021 recipient of the Joel Henry Hildebrand Award in the Theoretical and Experimental Chemistry of Liquids.
- 199. b** Chief Scientist of World Health Organisation, Soumya Swaminathan was conferred with the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's special award, in recognition of her advisory role in combating the COVID-19 pandemic in the state.
- 200. c** Wing Commander Gajanand Yadava is awarded the 'Tenzing Norgay National Adventure Award 2019' in 'air adventure' category. Gajanand Yadava is a Parachute Jump Instructor and member of IAF Skydiving Team 'AkashGanga'. He has undertaken more than 2900 jumps till date.
- 201. a** Former finance secretary Rajiv Kumar has been appointed new election commissioner. He will replace Ashok Lavasa, who resigned.
- 202. b** Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan announced the discovery of a large natural gas reserve off the Black Sea coast that will help ease the country's dependence on imports.
- 203. b** The Ministry of External Affairs in partnership with the Foreign Ministry of Thailand has organized the 6th Round Table of ASEAN-India Network of Think Tanks (AINTT).
- 204. a** The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has apprised the appointment of Ashwani Bhatia as the new Managing Director of State Bank of India.
- 205. c** Consumer Affairs Minister Ram Vilas Paswan has said that hallmarking of precious metals will be mandatory from 1st June next year.
- 206. b** WWF-India Kerala State Office is joining hands with the Society for Odonate Studies (SOS) and Thumbipuranam for the first-ever state Dragonfly Festival in Kerala, christened 'Thumbi Maholsavam 2020'.
- 207. d** International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition, is an international day celebrated August 23 of each year.
- 208. c** Mr Satpal Singh Satti has been appointed the chairman of sixth State Finance Commission of Himachal Pradesh.

- 209. a** A top US-based India-centric business advocacy group will honour Mahindra group Chairman Anand Mahindra and Adobe Chairman and CEO Shantanu Narayen with its 2020 Leadership Awards in recognition of their exemplary vision towards promoting US-India bilateral ties.
- 210. a** Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology Madras have discovered a new material to split hydrogen and water, using solar power. The research is expected to bring the conversion and storage part in a single system, which would reduce the cost per kWh of solar energy.
- 211. b** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has greeted the nation on the occasion of Nuakhai a harvest festival celebrated in parts of the country, especially Odisha.
- 212. a** Saudi Arabia's state oil company Aramco has suspended a deal to build a 10 billion dollar refining and petrochemicals complex in China.
- 213. d** Sri Lankan government has granted approval to abolish the 19th amendment to the constitution and replace it with the 20th amendment.
- 214. a** Dawood Ibrahim, one of the most wanted men in India, figured in a list of 88 individuals published as a Statutory Regulatory Order (SRO) by Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to escape blacklisting by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).
- 215. a** Government has activated Aadhaar authentication for new goods and services tax (GST) registration to enhance ease of doing business. For those opting for Aadhaar authentication, new GST registration will be issued within three working days and will not need to wait for physical verification.
- 216. b** An asteroid has been spotted on a collision course with Earth and is projected to come very close to the planet on November 2, according to the Center for Near Objects Studies at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory. The asteroid, dubbed 2018VP, was first discovered at the Palomar Observatory in California's San Diego County two years ago. A 13-day observational arc followed, after which the asteroid was not detected again.
- 217. d** Army Sports Institute, Pune has been identified and awarded with "Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puraskar 2020" by Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Govt of India.
- 218. c** In Football, German giants Bayern Munich have won the European Champions League for the sixth time after beating French side Paris Saint-Germain 1-0 at the final in Portugal's capital, Lisbon.
- 219. d** World number 304 Sophia Popov became the first female golfer from Germany to capture a major title after winning the Women's British Open by two strokes at Royal Troon in Scotland.
- 220. b** Railways has said that the new tender document for 44 semi-high speed Vande Bharat trains will include provision for more than 50 percent local components. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had flagged off the maiden run of a Vande Bharat train on the New Delhi-Varanasi route on February 15, 2019.
- 221. d** In Assam, the longest river ropeway of the country is inaugurated connecting Guwahati and North Guwahati.
- 222. b** The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), a PSU under the Ministry of Road and Transport, has developed a mobile App, 'Harit Path' to facilitate creation of Green Highways across the country.
- 223. a** The Social Justice Minister would be the chairperson of the Council and members would include officials of the Ministries of Health and Family Welfare, Home Affairs, Housing and Urban Affairs, Minority Affairs, Human Resources Development, Rural Development and Labour and Employment, the Department of Legal Affairs, the Department of Pensions and Pensioners Welfare and the NITI Aayog.

- 224. a** Putting the belief to rest that recovered covid-19 patients have immunity against re-infection because most developed a serum neutralizing antibody response, The University of Hong Kong (HKU) documented the world's first case of covid-19 re-infection.
- 225. a** India's largest commodity exchange the Multi-Commodity Exchange of India Ltd (MCX) launched the country's first bullion index, MCX iCOMDEX Bullion, or Bulldex.
- 226. c** Apple is set to open its third outlet in Singapore and this time, it will be the world's first floating retail store at Marina Bay Sands.
- 227. b** Dr. G. Satheesh Reddy, Head of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), has been given a two-year extension as the Secretary, Department of Defence Research and Development and Chairman DRDO beyond his tenure of August 26, 2020.
- 228. b** Legendary South African all-rounder Jaques Kallis, Pakistan batting great Zaheer Abbas and Pune-born former Australian captain Lisa Sthalekar were inducted into the International Cricket Council's Hall of Fame in a virtual ceremony.
- 229. c** China launched its latest Gaofen-9 Earth observation satellite and two smaller payloads from the Jiuquan launch center.
- 230. d** To provide employment to people during the pandemic period, the Odisha government has launched a new scheme for promoting intensive aquaculture through Biofloc technology in fisheries.
- 231. a** In Gujarat, Ahmedabad Railway Division has successfully introduced a unique concept of Baggage Sanitization and Wrapping at Ahmedabad Railway Station. It is a first of its kind across the Indian Railways.
- 232. b** The Republican National Convention (RNC) has formally re-nominated President Donald Trump as the party's Presidential candidate for the November 3 election.
- 233. c** The Road Transport and Highways Ministry has decided to extend the validity of Motor Vehicle documents till the 31st of December.
- 234. a** World Health Organization has declared Africa free of polio, a landmark in a decades-long campaign to eradicate the notorious disease around the world.
- 235. a** SBI General Insurance, one of the leading general insurance companies in India, announced the launch of first-of-its-kind offering, "Shagun - Gift an Insurance", a unique gift of Personal Accident policy.
- 236. b** ICICI Bank has announced the introduction of usage of satellite data—imagery from earth observation satellites—to assess credit worthiness of its customers belonging to the farm sector.
- 237. b** The Reserve Bank has projected India's growth rate at (-) 4.5 percent for 2020-21. In its annual report released RBI projected global growth rate between (-) 6.0 per cent and (-) 7.6 per cent.
- 238. c** AstroSat, India's first multi-wavelength satellite, has detected an extreme ultraviolet (UV) light from a galaxy which is 9.3 billion light-years away from Earth.
- 239. b** James Anderson creates history as he registered his 600th Test wicket in the series-deciding third and final Test match against Pakistan at the Ageas Rose Bowl in Southampton.
- 240. d** Neelkantha Bhanu Prakash, a student of Mathematics at Delhi's St Stephen's College, holds the world record for being the 'fastest human calculator.'

- 241. d** Uttar Pradesh's first 'Medical Device Park' is set to be built in Noida's YEDA City by the Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority.
- 242. b** The "Kiran" mental health rehabilitation helpline number, 1800-599-0019, will provide callers "support for early screening, first-aid, psychological support, distress management, mental well-being, preventing deviant behaviours, psychological crisis management etc.
- 243. b** Manipur State Health and Family Welfare Minister L. Jayantakumar Singh launched Teleconsultation using eSanjeevani OPD platform in Imphal.
- 244. c** NITI Aayog released the Export Preparedness Index (EPI) 2020. EPI intends to identify challenges and opportunities; enhance the effectiveness of government policies and encourage a facilitative regulatory framework.
- 245. a** A parachutist completed the world's first jump from a solar-powered aircraft after the plane soared to a height of 1,520 metres (nearly 5,000 ft) over western Switzerland.
- 246. b** Kenya has become the first country in the world to be awarded the recommended status of the Safer Tourism Resilience Seal by global body Rebuilding Travels.
- 247. b** Gujarat has been ranked first in the first ever Export Preparedness index 2020 released by NITI Ayog.
- 248. b** 'The Discomfort of Evening', written by Marieke Lucas Rijneveld and translated from Dutch by Michele Hutchison, was announced as the winner of the 2020 International Booker Prize, making the writer the youngest winner of the prize at 29.
- 249. c** Subedar Ajay Anant Sawant from the Army's 61 Cavalry has been conferred the Arjuna award for the equestrian sport of tent pegging. Subedar Sawant joined the Army in 1993 and had no prior background in equestrian sports. Subedar Sawant has won several medals over the years. He won his first international participation in 2002 and won the team silver in the 2018 World Cup in Abu Dhabi.
- 250. b** Spinner Pravin Tambe became the first Indian to play in the Caribbean Premier League (CPL).
- 251. c** Piyush Goyal e-launched the National GIS-enabled Land Bank system (<https://iis.ncog.gov.in/parks>) for 6 states. The system is being developed by the integration of the Industrial Information System (IIS) with state GIS systems.
- 252. c** The Ministry of Culture has announced 7 new circles of Archaeological Survey of India, ASI.
- 253. b** The Supreme Court will re-examine its 2004 judgment that held that Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (SC/STs) cannot be further sub-classified for the purpose of reservation.
- 254. a** Amazon founder Jeff Bezos has become the world's first-ever \$200 billionaire. Around \$82 billion of his net worth was added this year after e-commerce and contactless purchasing got a push during the pandemic.
- 255. b** Over 15 crore loans amounting to Rs. 4.78-lakh-crore have been disbursed to women borrowers since the inception of the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) with Tamil Nadu topping the list in availing the loan followed by women in West Bengal and Karnataka.
- 256. b** The Indian Institute of Technology's Alumni Council has signed an agreement with Lomonosov Moscow State University and Russoft to access and transfer key technologies from Russia to build the world's largest and fastest hybrid quantum computer in India.
- 257. a** The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has set up an expert panel to review the charter of its laboratories and minimise the overlap of technologies they are working on at a time when self-reliance in the defence sector is a top priority for the government.

- 258. a** In a major development Atomic Minerals Directorate (sole explorer of Uranium in India), under the Department of Atomic Energy is collaborating with National Institute of Technology (NIT), Durgapur for world's first commercial helium gas exploration plant from hot spring site using non-cryogenic PSA technique from Bakreswar in Birbhum, about 230 kilometres from Kolkata as part of Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative and stop dependency on costly import from the USA.
- 259. b** West Indies all-rounder Dwayne Bravo became the first bowler to take 500 T20 wickets. Bravo achieved the feat during the CPL match.
- 260. b** On 29 August 2020, the National Sports Day is celebrated nation-wide to mark the birth anniversary of hockey legend Major Dhyan Chand and raise awareness about staying fit and healthy.
- 261. b** The defence ministry has taken an in-principle decision to host the next edition of Aero India considered Asia's largest aerospace exhibition in its traditional venue of Bengaluru from February 3-5 next year notwithstanding the coronavirus pandemic.
- 262. c** Member Nations are: Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia.
- 263. a** Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurated Pratheeksha, the first marine ambulance acquired by the state fisheries department, through videoconference.
- 264. b** Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Ravi Shankar Prasad launched "Chunauti"- Next Generation Startup Challenge Contest to further boost startups and software products with special focus on Tier-II towns of the country.
- 265. c** The UK has retained its dominant place in the global offshore wind market in the first half of 2020.
- 266. c** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that he is pained to hear about the ill health of his dear friend Shinzo Abe. Mr Abe resigned from the post of Prime Minister of Japan.
- 267. a** The Banks Board Bureau (BBB) recommended SBI's senior-most managing director Dinesh Kumar Khara as the next chairman of the country's largest lender.
- 268. b** Kerala will set up India's first international women's trade centre (WTC), in consonance with the United Nations sustainable development goals (SDGs), at Angamaly.
- 269. c** Indian Railways is set to meet all its energy needs of more than 33 billion units by 2030. The current annual requirement is about 21 billion units.
- 270. c** Britain's World War II spy, Noor Inayat Khan, became the first Indian-origin woman to be honoured with a memorial Blue Plaque at her former family home in central London.
- 271. d** The country's largest lender State Bank of India has got global recognition for its HR initiative 'Nayi Disha' which over the course of 1.5 years has touched more than 2.40 lakh employees.
- 272. a** The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) notified new rules for administration in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir that specify the functions of the Lieutenant Governor (LG) and the Council of Ministers. According to the transaction of business rules, "police, public order, All India Services and anti-corruption," will fall under the executive functions of the LG, implying that the Chief Minister or the Council of Ministers will have no say in their functioning.
- 273. b** India was elected non-permanent member of the Security Council for a two-year term beginning January 1, 2021.

- 274. c** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh is scheduled to visit Russia next week for the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Defence Ministers meeting.
- 275. c** India has been ranked a lowly 72nd among 106 countries in terms of the average wage per month, while Switzerland topped the chart, according to a global ranking of average wages prepared by Picodi.com.
- 276. c** The Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Government of India and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) India launched the Sustainable Finance Collaborative (SFC).
- 277. b** In the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the Administrative Council, which met under the chairmanship of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, gave approval to establishment of State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) by merging the State Institutes of Education.
- 278. c** Chennai doctors perform Asia's first lung transplant on Covid-19 patient.
- 279. b** Para-swimmer Satyendra Singh Lohia of Madhya Pradesh is the first Divyanga Indian sportsperson of the country, who has been awarded with the Tenzing Norgay Adventure Award.
- 280. c** India and Russia were announced as joint winners of the FIDE Chess Olympiad as Nihal Sarin and Divya Deshmukh lost connection to their games in the second round and had to forfeit.

