
MANTHAN

A General Awareness Weekly

9th November to 15th November, 2020

PREFACE

Dear Students,

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 Week. 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 fulfill aspirations.

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15th Finance Commission submits report for 2021-26 to President Ram Nath Kovind

- **Fifteenth Finance Commission** submitted its report for the period of 2021-26 to President Ram Nath Kovind. The Finance Commission led by its Chairman N.K. Singh called on the President and submitted the report.
- As per the terms of reference (ToR), the Commission was mandated to give its recommendations for five years from 2021-22 to 2025-26 by 30 October, 2020. The report titled 'Finance Commission in Covid Times' has recommendations on a various range of issues such as vertical and horizontal tax devolution, local government grants and disaster management grant. The Commission was also asked to examine and recommend performance incentives for states in many areas like power sector, adoption of direct benefit standard and solid waste management.
- "The Commission was also asked to examine whether a separate mechanism for funding of defence and internal security ought to be set up and if so how such a mechanism could be operationalised. The Commission has sought to address all its ToRs in this Report to the Union government," said Finance Commission in a statement.
- The Finance Commission will also present a copy of the Report to the Prime Minister. The report will be tabled in the Parliament by the Finance Minister along with an Action Taken Report of the government.
- This Report has been organized in four volumes. Volume-I and II contain the main report whereas Volume-III is devoted to the Union Government which examines the medium-term challenges and the roadmap ahead. Volume-IV is entirely devoted to the states. The commission has analysed the finances of each state in great depth and has come up with state specific considerations to address the key challenges that individual states face.

The Finance Commission is a Constitutionally mandated body that is at the centre of fiscal federalism. Set up under Article 280 of the Constitution, its core responsibility is to evaluate the state of finances of the Union and State Governments, recommend the sharing of taxes between them, lay down the principles determining the distribution of these taxes among States. The Fifteenth Finance Commission (XV-FC or 15-FC) is an Indian Finance Commission constituted in November 2017 and is to give recommendations for devolution of taxes and other fiscal matters for five fiscal years, commencing 01-04-2020. The commission's chairman is Nand Kishore Singh, with its full-time members being Ajay Narayan Jha, Ashok Lahiri and Anoop Singh. In addition, the commission also has a part-time member in Ramesh Chand. Shaktikanta Das served as a member of the commission from November 2017 to December 2018.

Famous litchis of Tezpur, Assam got the geographical indication (GI) tags

- The famous litchis of Tezpur, Assam got the geographical indication (GI) tags, making the item an incontrovertible proof of their origins in the state and protecting them from production elsewhere.
- The Tezpur litchi is characterised by its distinct size, color, flavor, taste and juicy pulp. Litchi is known for its quality pleasant flavor, juicy pulp with red colour. Litchi is also a source of vitamin C. The first-ever product from Assam to get the GI tag was 'Muga Silk'.

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.

PM Modi virtually co-chaired 17th ASEAN-India Summit with his Vietnamese counterpart

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi co-chaired the 17th ASEAN-India Summit along with Prime Minister of Vietnam Nguyen Xuan Phuc. The leaders of all ten ASEAN Member States virtually participated in the Summit.
- The Summit reviewed the status of ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership and take stock of progress made in key areas such as connectivity, maritime cooperation, trade and commerce, education and capacity building.
- The leaders also discussed ways to further strengthen ASEAN-India engagement and in this context noted the adoption of ASEAN-India Plan of Action (2021-2025). COVID-19, post-pandemic economic recovery and important regional and international developments will also be discussed at the Summit.

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. It is headquartered in Jakarta (Indonesia).

Triservice exercise 'Bull Strike' conducted at Nicobar Islands

- The armed forces conducted a joint tri-service exercise 'Bull Strike' at the Teresa Island in the Nicobar group of islands located close to the strategic Strait of Malacca.
- The exercise was conducted by the Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC) from November 3 to 5 involving the three Services components of ANC, elements of the Army's Parachute Brigade, Navy commandos MARCOS and Special Forces, the Army said.
- Indian Navy and US Navy regularly participate in maritime exercises such as MALABAR and RIMPAC and have regular interactions at bilateral and multilateral forums. India and US ties have seen significant development in the recent years and India was accorded major defense partner status by the US in 2016.

Jharkhand Assembly passes resolution on 'Sarna Code'

- Jharkhand Assembly passed a resolution for the provision of a separate 'Sarna Code' for tribals. Chief Minister Hemant Soren tabled the proposal, which was passed unanimously with a voice vote by the Assembly.
- The resolution will seek a special column for followers of the 'Sarna' religion in the Census 2021. 'Sarna' followers are nature worshippers who do not consider themselves Hindus and have been fighting for a separate religious identity for decades. At present, they are not classified as a separate religious entity.
- Tribal leaders across the state had been demanding the implementation of the Sarna Code in census surveys, which would allow the tribals to be identified as followers of the Sarna faith during the census of 2021 which is round the corners, tribal outfits were exerting pressure on the government to bring the legislation. So far, the census surveys have included them as "others" in the religion column.

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'.

Tamil Nadu bags 'Best State' award for water management

- **Tamil Nadu has bagged the first place under the 'Best State' category under the National Water Awards (NWAs) 2019**, presented by the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti, Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation.
- **Tamil Nadu was followed by Maharashtra and Rajasthan as the best states under the normal category.**
- **The National Water Awards 2019 are presented in 16 categories** including Best State, Best District, Best Village Panchayat, Best Urban Local Body, Best Research/ Innovation/ New Technology and Best Education among others, and each of the categories has sub-categories in different zones of the country, a press release said.
- **Tamil Nadu also bagged awards under the Best District category in the South. Vellore and Karur districts were awarded first and second spots respectively under the 'Revival of River' sub-category.**
- **Perambalur district came second in the 'Water Conservation' category.** Under the 'Water Conservation' category for South, Sasthavinathur Village Panchayat, Thoothukudi bagged the first place. **Madurai Municipal Corporation was awarded the first place in the 'Best Urban Local Body' category.**

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.

Kerala on Top, Delhi near Bottom in New Migrant Policy Index

- **The states of Kerala, Goa, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh have been most successful in integrating migrant workers**, while crucial migrant receiving states, **including Delhi**, have **done poorly**, shows the Interstate Migrant Policy Index that seeks to measure integration of interstate migrants.
- **India's average IMPEX 2019 score for 28 states and the Union Territory of NCT Delhi is 37 out of 100**, reflecting the limited attention paid to integration efforts in destination states.
- **The index has been developed by Mumbai-based research non-profit India Migration Now**, and it assesses states' performance on eight policy areas spanning more than 60 policy indicators.
- **The index could help bureaucrats and stakeholders in evolving policy for India's 455 million internal migrants** who remain one of the most excluded groups in the country. This figure is from Census 2011, and may have changed between 2011-20.

Nagaland decides to celebrate Hornbill Festival 2020 virtually

- **Nagaland Tourism Department** has informed that the state government **decided to celebrate the Hornbill Festival 2020** in a complete virtual mode only through various audio visual media channels and Social Media platforms. The content for the virtual festival will be sourced from Government archives.
- **Dubbed as the "Festival of Festivals", the Hornbill Festival is celebrated every year from December 1 to 10**, showcasing the rich cultural heritage and tradition of the Nagas in one platform at **Naga Heritage Village Kisama under Kohima District**.

Nagaland is a landlocked state in north-eastern India. Nagaland's capital city is Kohima and its largest city is Dimapur. **Neiphiu Rio** is the current Chief Minister of Nagaland. **Ravindra Narayana Ravi** is currently serving as the Governor of Nagaland. **Retired IPS 1976 batch. Nagalim (Greater Nagaland)** is consisting of all the Naga-inhabited areas of neighbouring Assam, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and some portions Myanmar, which it considers to be the rightful homeland of the Nagas.

New Pamban Bridge: Indian Railways' first Vertical Lift Sea Bridge

- **The construction work of India's first Vertical Lift Railway Sea Bridge is going in full swing**, which will be linking Mandapam in the state of Tamil Nadu to Rameswaram at the Pamban Island. According to the Railway Ministry, the development work on the Vertical Lift Railway Sea Bridge is being fast-tracked.

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.

Kabartal becomes Bihar's first Ramsar site

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

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

India receives 1st shipment from Bangladesh through water connectivity route

- **The first commercial shipment from Bangladesh to Karimganj, Assam** on the Protocol for Inland Water Trade and Transit (PIWTT) route was received.
- **"Harnessing Inland waterway connectivity for India-Bangladesh trade & prosperity! 1st ever commercial shipment from Bangladesh to Karimganj, India** on PIWTT route received on 09 Nov 2020. Earlier, in a bid to strengthen ties between New Delhi and Dhaka, **the Indian Army gifted 20 fully trained military horses and 10 mine detection dogs to Bangladesh Army.**

Maharashtra to distribute 75% of budgetary fund for capital expenditure

- With an aim for generating employment in the state and bringing back the economy on the track, **Maharashtra Government has given a green signal to distribute 75 percent of the budgetary fund for the capital expenditure** to the department which are at the forefront in generating wealth and employment.
- This fund had been **sanction for the year 2020-21 under the head of accounts**. In a release, government said similarly the **approval for distributing 100 percent amount for the local development funds of MLA and MLC's and District Annual Scheme (General/SC/ST/programs)** was also accorded.

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**. **Shri Bhagat Singh Koshyari is currently serving as Governor** of the state of Maharashtra. **Uddhav Bal Thackeray is the current Chief Minister of Maharashtra**. He is the president of Shiv Sena.

Jammu and Kashmir launches e-Auction portal to promote GI tagged 'Kashmir Saffron'

- **Jammu and Kashmir government has launched an e-Auction portal to promote trading of GI tagged 'Kashmir Saffron' across the country.** e-auctioning will provide an efficient platform to the saffron growers for getting optimum returns of their yield and buyers will be assured that the saffron purchased through this platform will be tested certified quality produce.
- **Kashmir saffron, grown at an altitude of 1,600 meters, saw a steep decline in production by around 65%, from 16 metric tonnes to 5.6 metric tonnes, in 2018. In ancient Sanskrit literature, saffron is referred to as 'bahukam'. It is cultivated and harvested in the Karewa (highlands) of Jammu and Kashmir. It is the only saffron that is grown at an altitude of 1,600 m to 1,800 m above mean sea level.**

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.

Govt. expands scope of PM-KUSUM for harnessing solar energy by farmers

- **The renewable energy Ministry has expanded the scope of PM-KUSUM scheme to enable greater solar energy generation in farm sector.** The Ministry has amended the guidelines of the scheme based on the learning from its implementation during the first year.
- **Now, besides barren, fallow and agricultural lands, solar power plants can also be installed on pasture land and marshy land of farmers.** To support small farmers, solar projects smaller than 500 kW may be allowed by states based on techno-commercial feasibility, the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) said.
- **The selected renewable power generator (RPG) shall commission the solar power plant within twelve months from date of issuance of Letter of Award (LoA), it added. Moreover, there shall be no penalty on RPG for shortfall in solar power generation from minimum prescribed Capacity Utilization Factor.**
- **As per the amendments, now MNRE will retain 33% of eligible service charges for nationwide Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities.**

Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) has launched the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthan Mahabhiyan (PM KUSUM) Scheme for farmers for installation of solar pumps and grid connected solar and other renewable power plants in the country. The scheme aims to add solar and other renewable capacity of 25,750 MW by 2022 with total central financial support of Rs. 34,422 Crore including service charges to the implementing agencies.

International Crops Research Institute permitted to use drones

- **Civil Aviation Ministry and Directorate General of Civil Aviation have granted conditional permission to the International Crops Research Institute for the deployment of drones for agricultural research activities.**
- **Drones are poised to play a big role in the agriculture sector in India especially in areas like precision agriculture, locust control and improvement in crop yield. The government is encouraging young entrepreneurs and researchers to look at low-cost drone solutions for more than 6.6 lakh villages in the country.**

International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) is an international organization which conducts agricultural research for rural development, headquartered in Patancheru (Hyderabad, Telangana, India). It was founded in 1972 by a consortium of organisations convened by the Ford and the Rockefeller foundations. Its charter was signed by the FAO and the UNDP. Since its inception, host country India has granted a special status to ICRISAT as a UN Organization operating in the Indian territory making it eligible for special immunities and tax privileges.



Annual SCO summit to be held under chairmanship of Russia

- The annual Heads of State-level meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation will be held under the chairmanship of Russia. The virtual meeting is being held in the backdrop of major regional and global developments.
- The SCO Summit of Heads of State is the main unit of the organisation that sets the agenda and gives political, security, trade, economic and cultural directions to the 8-member body.
- Apart from the members Russia, China, India, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, four Observer States — Iran, Afghanistan, Belarus and Mongolia — will also participate in the summit. According to sources, the summit is expected to adopt the Moscow Declaration under the Chairmanship of the Russian Federation.
- It has been learnt that there will also be statements on issues like the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the World War II, digital economy, COVID-19, countering the spread of terrorism including on the Internet and countering the drug threat.

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.

Luis Arce sworn in as Bolivia's new President

- Luis Arce, winner of the October 18 general elections in Bolivia, took office as the new president of the South American country for the next five years. The solemn swearing-in ceremony began at dawn with ancestral rituals at Plaza Murillo in La Paz, where the executive and legislative branches of government are headquartered.
- The ceremony then continued at the Legislative Assembly, where Arce's vice president, David Choquehuanca, was first sworn in, followed by Arce taking the oath of office as the new president of Bolivia.

Bolivia is a landlocked country located in western-central South America. The capital is Sucre while the seat of government is located in La Paz. Luis Arce has been serving as President of Bolivia since 8 November 2020. Boliviano is the currency of Bolivia.

US: Joe Biden announces 12 member task force to deal with COVID-19; Former Surgeon General Vivek Murthy to co-chair group

- US President-elect Joe Biden has announced a 12-member coronavirus task force to mount an effective response to the pandemic that has infected millions and damaged the US economy.
- In his victory speech in Wilmington, Delaware, Mr Biden said he will spare no effort to turn around this pandemic. He said, the panel will convert his coronavirus-fighting plan into an action blueprint that will be built on bedrock of science. The task force will be co-chaired by former Surgeon General Vivek Murthy, former Food and Drug Administration Commissioner David Kessler and Marcella Nunez-Smith, a professor of public health at Yale University. It will also include Ezekiel Emanuel, a former Obama administration health adviser.

Joseph Robinette Biden is an American politician and the **President-elect of the United States**. Having defeated incumbent Donald Trump in the 2020 United States presidential election, he will be **inaugurated as the 46th president on January 20, 2021**. He served as the **47th vice president of the United States** from 2009 to 2017. In January 2017, **Barak Obama** awarded Biden the **Presidential Medal of Freedom with distinction**.

First flight carrying Israeli tourists to UAE land in Dubai

- **The first flight carrying Israeli tourists to the UAE landed in the city-state of Dubai**, the latest sign of the **normalization deal** reached between the two nations.
- The **Israel–United Arab Emirates normalization agreement**, officially the **Abraham Accords Peace Agreement: Treaty of Peace, Diplomatic Relations and Full Normalization Between the United Arab Emirates and the State of Israel**, was **initially agreed to in a joint statement by the United States, Israel and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)** on August 13, 2020, officially referred to as the **Abraham Accords**.
- The **UAE thus became the third Arab country, after Egypt in 1979 and Jordan in 1994**, to agree to formally normalize its relationship with Israel, as well as the first Persian Gulf country to do so. **Concurrently, Israel agreed to suspend plans for annexing parts of the West Bank.**

Abu 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**.

Nepal President Bidhya Devi Bhandari releases special anthology on Mahatma Gandhi

- **Nepal President Bidhya Devi Bhandari has released a special anthology on Mahatma Gandhi- ‘My understanding about Gandhi’** - during a ceremony at Kathmandu in the presence of Indian Ambassador Vinay Mohan Kwatra. The book has been **brought out by the Embassy of India along with the BP Koirala India-Nepal Foundation** to cherish the values of the Mahatma's universal teachings with Nepali friends.

Armenia, Azerbaijan sign Russia brokered peace deal

- **Armenia, Azerbaijan sign Russia brokered peace deal; Moscow sends troops to enforce ceasefire in Nagorno-Karabakh.** Armenia and Azerbaijan have signed an agreement to end military conflict over the disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh. It follows six weeks of fighting between Azerbaijan and ethnic Armenians.
- **The peace deal, which was signed by Russian President Vladimir Putin, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan came into effect.** Under the deal, Azerbaijan will hold on to areas of Nagorno-Karabakh that it has taken during the conflict.
- Armenia has also agreed to withdraw from several other adjacent areas over the next few weeks. Armenian Prime Minister described the deal incredibly painful for him and the people of the country. The new ceasefire agreement prompted anger in Armenia, as protesters stormed the parliament.

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

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

Bahrain's longest serving PM Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa passes away

- The world's longest serving Prime Minister, Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa of Bahrain, passed away. Prince Khalifa, who took office after Bahrain gained independence in 1971, had been receiving treatment at a hospital in the US. He was an uncle to the Bahraini King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa.

Bahrain is a sovereign state in the Persian Gulf. Manama is the capital and largest city of Bahrain. Prince Salman bin Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa is the heir apparent and first deputy Prime Minister of the Bahrain. The dinar is the currency of Bahrain. The kingdom shares maritime borders with Iran, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia.

15 Asia-Pacific nations sign trade agreement

- The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), a mega trade bloc comprising 15 countries led by China that came into existence on 15 November 2020, said India would have to write expressing "intention" to join the organisation to restart negotiation for membership.
- RCEP aims to create an integrated market with 15 countries, making it easier for products and services of each of these countries to be available across this region. The negotiations are focused on the following: Trade in goods and services, investment, intellectual property, dispute settlement, e-commerce, small and medium enterprises, and economic cooperation.
- On November 4, 2019 India decided against joining the 16-nation Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) trade deal, saying it was not shying away from opening up to global competition across sectors, but it had made a strong case for an outcome which would be favourable to all countries and all sectors. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his speech at the RCEP Summit said "the present form of the RCEP agreement does not fully reflect the basic spirit and the agreed guiding principles of RCEP. It also does not address satisfactorily India's outstanding issues and concerns in such a situation." But a big concern for India was that it would be flooded by goods from China and elsewhere. India already has a massive trade deficit with China, amounting to \$53 billion (€48 billion). It's the biggest deficit India has with any country. India was also worried about keeping 2014 as the base year for tariff reductions.

The RCEP was first proposed at the 19th ASEAN meet in November 2011 with an aim to create a consolidated market for the 10 member countries and their trade partners. It aims to create a "liberal, facilitative and competitive investment environment" in the Asia-Pacific region. The RCEP was later also conceived by the ASEAN members and China as a response to the US-led Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) — later renamed as Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) — after America opted out of this deal in 2017. At present, 11 countries are signatories in CPTPP.

Myanmar: Ruling NLD claims victory

- The ruling National League for Democracy (NLD) in Myanmar has claimed victory in the general elections held on November 8. The NLD secured 396 Union Parliamentary seats, improving upon its 2015 tally of 390 seats.
- The NLD won 258 seats in the Lower house Pyithu Hluttaw and 138 seats in the upper house Amyotha Hluttaw. It required 322 seats for the majority. According to the constitution, 25 percent seats in Myanmar parliament are reserved for candidates nominated by the army.

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



Nirmala Sitharaman announced fresh stimulus measures for the economy worth Rs. 1.19 lakh crore

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced a fresh set of relief and stimulus measures for the economy worth Rs. 1.19 lakh crore, including a scheme to boost re-employment chances of formal sector employees who lost their jobs amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The measures, announced a day after the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said the country had entered into a technical recession in the first half of 2020-21, include a Rs. 65,000 crore additional outlay for providing fertiliser subsidies to farmers.
- Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan 3.0 Nirmala Sitharaman announces 12 schemes to boost economy. Ms. Sitharaman asserted that the economy's rebound as per recent indicators is not just driven by pent-up demand but reflects strong economic growth.
- However, the Minister said, "If you take all the packages announced so far, and the RBI measures announced so far, a total of Rs. 29,87,641 crore has been given so far as stimulus. A total of 15% of GDP. Just the Central government on its own has provided 9% of GDP as stimulus."

The first mention of this came in the form of the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan or 'Self-Reliant India Mission' during the announcement of India's COVID-19 pandemic related economic package on 12 May 2020. The five pillars of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' are stated as economy, infrastructure, technology-driven systems, vibrant demography and demand. Slogans initiated under Atmanirbhar Bharat include 'vocal for local', 'local for global' and 'make for world'. The goal of the stimulus package announced under the —Atmanirbhar India is to help in alleviating the distress of migrants when they return to their villages, help in achieving the goal of a self-sustainable rural economy and to boost the One Nation One Market objective and help India to become the food factory of the world.

India in historic technical recession, signals RBI in it's first-ever nowcast

- India's economy probably shrank for a second straight quarter, according to a team of economists including Michael Patra, the central bank's deputy governor in charge of monetary policy, pushing the country into an unprecedented recession.
- Gross domestic product contracted 8.6% in the quarter ended September, the Reserve Bank of India showed in its first ever published 'nowcast,' which is an estimate based on high-frequency data.

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.

FM Nirmala Sitharaman attends 1st BRICS Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman participated in the 1st BRICS Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors' Meeting under the Russian Chairmanship to discuss the BRICS Economic and Financial Cooperation agenda for 2020.
- Finance Ministry said, Ms. Sitharaman talked about outcomes and initiatives of G-20 Saudi Arabia in 2020 on the Finance Track and highlighted role of BRICS members in reflecting Emerging Market Economies concerns in these initiatives.
- The 12th BRICS Summit was held on 17th November 2020 via video conference. The theme of the Meeting of the Leaders of BRICS countries which includes Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa is "BRICS Partnership for Global Stability, Shared Security and Innovative Growth".

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

Wipro's Premji emerges as most generous Indian in FY20

- With a donation of Rs. 7,904 crore during 2019-20, IT giant Wipro's founder chairman Azim Premji topped the list of "India's most generous" released by Hurun India and EdelGive. This is a jump of 1,645% from Rs 453 crore donated by Mr. Premji in the previous year.
- Shiv Nadar, the founder of another IT major, HCL, who had topped the "EdelGive Hurun India Philanthropy List" last year, was the distant second on the list, with donations of Rs 795 crore during the April 2019 to March 2020 period, as against donations of Rs 826 crore during the previous fiscal.
- The primary cause for which both Mr. Premji and Mr. Nadar donated is education. India's richest man Mukesh Ambani, the chairman and managing director of Reliance Industries Limited, was third on the list, with donations of Rs 458 crore, primarily for disaster relief.
- E-commerce firm Flipkart's co-founder Binny Bansal was the youngest donor at 37 with a commitment of Rs 5.3 crore and the average age of the donors on the list was 66 years, it said.

Azim Hashim Premji is an Indian business tycoon, investor, engineer, and philanthropist, who was the chairman of Wipro Limited. Premji remains a non-executive member of the board and founder chairman. He is informally known as the Czar of the Indian IT Industry. Wipro Limited is an Indian multinational corporation that provides information technology, consulting and business process services. It is headquartered in Bangalore, Karnataka.

Remote North Welsh Island will become first in the world to be powered completely by 'blue energy'

- A remote island in Wales is set to become the first in the world to be powered entirely by 'blue energy' as the nation looks to respond to the challenges posed by climate change.
- The £1.2 million project will see Bardsey Island off North Wales - which has a population of just four- powered entirely by waves and could also generate electricity for mainland Wales.
- Nova Innovation, who secured the investment from the Welsh Government, say the project will switch the area from a dependency on diesel generation to 'the world's first blue energy island'. The island, which was a Christian pilgrimage site in the Middle Ages, is a wildlife haven and home to puffins, seals, and manx shearwaters but currently relies on diesel to power its handful of buildings.

Wales is a country that is part of the United Kingdom. It is bordered by England to the east, the Irish Sea to the north and west, and the Bristol Channel to the south. Cardiff is the capital of Wales. Pound sterling is the official currency of the United Kingdom, Jersey, Guernsey, the Isle of Man, Gibraltar, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, the British Antarctic Territory and Tristan da Cunha. Mark Drakeford is the First Minister of Wales.

India Post Payment Bank launches doorstep service to submit digital life certificate

- **India Post Payments Bank, IPPB** have successfully launched the initiative of doorstep service for submission of Digital Life Certificate through Postman.
- The facility to submit life certificate online through Jeevan Pramaan Portal was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in November, 2014 with the objective to provide a convenient and transparent facility to pensioners for submission of Life Certificate.
- In order to make this facility available across the country, Department of Pension and Pensioners' Welfare roped in the India Post Payments Bank to utilise its huge network of Postmen and Gramin Dak Sevaks in providing doorstep facility to pensioners for submission of life certificate digitally.
- The IPPB is utilising its national network of more than **one lakh 36 thousand access points in Post Offices and more than one lakh 89 thousand Postmen and Gramin Dak Sevaks** with smart phones and biometric devices to provide Doorstep Banking Services.
- As a result a huge number of pensioners across the country shall be able to **avail doorstep service through Postmen and Gramin Dak Sevak, without visiting to bank branch or standing in a queue outside the bank branches.** In order to avail this service, pensioners can get detailed information on ippbonline.com.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) on September 1, 2018. It is an initiative of the government aimed at making banking services available at people's doorstep. IPPB is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Department of Post, with 100 percent Government of India equity. It will be governed by Reserve Bank of India (RBI). It will accept deposits, offer remittance services, mobile banking and third-party fund transfers. The maximum limit on deposits for current and savings account is Rs 1 lakh. The bank offers a 4 per cent interest rate on savings account. They can issue debit cards and ATM cards, but they cannot issue credit cards and cannot loan money.

In a world first, Indian carbon trader to come out with IPO

- **Indore-based Enking International** may become the world's first company that operates in the carbon markets space to go in for an initial public offering (IPO).
- The 12-year-old company operates in the **emerging area of trading in carbon offsets**. These are market-tradeable instruments (like Renewable Energy Certificates) that are issued to entities whose projects reduce carbon dioxide emissions.
- **The company, which claims to be the world's largest carbon credit developer and supplier**, counts several big names in the Indian power sector among its customers: NTPC, NHPC, Indian Railways, GAIL, IOC, ReNew Power, Azure Power, Greenko and many others. Apart from trading in carbon offsets, Enking also helps companies build a 'carbon neutral strategy' and helps them get the offsets.

Finance Ministry moves to set up database of migrant workers

- The Finance Ministry has given its go-ahead for the creation of the first ever national database of migrant labour to provide a platform for workers and employers, and for the government to implement specific programmes for such labourers.
- The Ministry of Labour & Employment has envisaged development of a 'National Database of Unorganised Workers' (NDUW) seeded with Aadhaar.
- The project will enrol all unorganised workers, including migrant workers. "Total cost is expected around Rs. 650 crore. It will help workers to share information about his/her skill which, in turn, will make it easy for employers to find suitable person.

Nirmala Sitharaman is the current Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs of India. She is currently a member of the Rajya Sabha from Karnataka. Sitharaman formerly served as the Defence Minister of India, thereby becoming India's second female defence minister and also the second female finance minister after Indira Gandhi, and first full-time female Finance Minister. Santosh Kumar Gangwar is the Minister of State with independent charge in the Ministry of Labour and Employment in the Government of India.

HDFC Bank launches Mooh Band Rakho campaign to create awareness on cyber frauds

- **HDFC Bank announced the launch of Mooh Band Rakho, a campaign to increase awareness on cyber frauds and preventing them.** The private sector lender will conduct 1,000 workshops in the next 4 months across India.
- “Following simple steps such as **not sharing card details, CVV, expiry date, OTP, net banking/ mobile banking, login ID & password over phone, SMS, email and social media** can help general public keep their money safe.
- **The bank supports the International Fraud Awareness Week 2020**, the global movement to minimise impact of fraud which is being held from November 15-21.

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

Equitas Small Finance Bank launches savings account for women; appoints Smriti Mandhana as brand ambassador

- **Equitas Small Finance Bank has launched a new product aimed at women. ‘Eva’, a unique savings account**, tries to address the well-being of Indian women in every aspect such as health, wealth and prosperity.
- “**Along with 7% interest in savings account**, it also offers free health check-up and unlimited teleconsultation with women doctors, gynecologists and mental health experts”. **It offers PF waiver and discounted gold loan rates for women customers, along-with 25-50% discounts on lockers.**
- **Equitas Small Finance Bank also announced Smriti Mandhana – an Indian Woman cricketer as the new brand ambassador.**

Equitas Small Finance Bank is a small finance bank founded in 2007 by Equitas as a microfinance lender, with headquarters in Chennai, India. **Small finance banks** are a type of niche banks in India. Banks with a small finance bank license can provide basic banking service of acceptance of deposits and lending. The aim behind these to **provide financial inclusion to sections of the economy not being served by other banks**, such as small business units, small and marginal farmers, micro and small industries and unorganised sector entities. They are governed by the provisions of Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934, Banking Regulation Act, 1949 and other relevant statutes. The firms must have a capital of at least Rs. 200 crore. 75% of its net credits should be in priority sector lending and 50% of the loans in its portfolio must in Rs. 25 lakh range.

IFSCA approves draft Banking regulations for banking operations at IFSCs

- **International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA)** has approved draft Banking regulations for banking operations at IFSCs. The IFSC Authority approved the International Financial Services Centres Authority (Banking) Regulations, 2020.
- This will pave the way for putting in place the **rules for the various aspects of banking operations that would be permissible at the IFSC**. The Finance Ministry said, Banking constitutes one of the major focus areas of IFSC and is expected to drive and facilitate the other constituent operations in the IFSC in due course.
- **A self-contained regulation laying down the major principles of banking operations** at IFSCs is thus an important step in the IFSC reaching its desired potential.

The International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) has been established on April 27, 2020 under the International Financial Services Centres Authority Act, 2019. It is headquartered at **GIFT City, Gandhinagar** in Gujarat. The IFSCA is a unified authority for the development and regulation of financial products, financial services and financial institutions in the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) in India. **At present, the GIFT IFSC is the maiden international financial services centre in India.** Prior to the establishment of IFSCA, the domestic financial regulators, namely, **RBI, SEBI, PFRDA and IRDAI** regulated the business in IFSC.



Inventions/Discoveries

ISRO launched Earth Observation Satellite EOS01

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) has successfully launched the earth observation satellite, EOS-01, on board the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV). The EOS-01 satellite was launched from Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.
- The EOS-01 was launched as the primary satellite along with nine international customer satellites on board the PSLV-C49. The launch of EOS-01 was PSLV's 51st mission (PSLV-C49).
- EOS-01 is an earth observation satellite intended for applications in agriculture, forestry, and disaster management support. It was launched along with the customer satellites under a commercial agreement with NewSpace India Limited (NSIL), Department of Space.
- The customer satellites include one from Lithuania for technology demonstration, and four each from Luxembourg and USA for maritime applications and multi-mission remote sensing respectively. This would be the first launch by the ISRO after the Covid-triggered lockdown.

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.

Dr Harsh Vardhan holds first of its kind policy consultations with Indian Diaspora on STIP-2020

- In a first of its kind policy consultation, Science and Technology Minister Harsh Vardhan interacted with the highly-skilled Indian diaspora to facilitate channels for them to contribute to India's Science Technology and Innovation Policy (STIP) 2020.

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

Rajnath Singh unveils model of Anti-Satellite Missile at DRDO Bhawan

- A model of Anti-Satellite Missile installed inside the DRDO Bhawan premises was unveiled by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.
- 'Mission Shakti' was the country's first ever Anti-Satellite (A-SAT) Missile Test successfully conducted on 27th March 2019 from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island in Odisha, where a fast-moving Indian orbiting target satellite in Low Earth Orbit was neutralised with pinpoint accuracy. This was a highly complex mission, conducted at extremely high speed with remarkable precision. The successful conduct of Mission Shakti made India the fourth nation in the world with the capability to defend its assets in outer space.

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.

The first iodine satellite of the world

- A Chinese Long March 6 light launcher launched placed thirteen payloads into low earth orbit.
- Among them was Beihang kongshi 1, a technology demonstrator for automatic aircraft tracking, developed by the Chinese-Luxembourg startup Spacety, which also plans to deploy a Synthetic-Aperture Radar imaging constellation.
- Beihangkongshi 1 is a 12U CubeSat. It is above all the world's first satellite equipped with an electric iodine ion, called NPT30-I2.
- The latter was designed and manufactured by ThrustMe, a company created in 2017 based on research conducted at the Plasma Physics Laboratory shared by the CNRS and the École Polytechnique in Palaiseau, and now based in Verrières-le-Buisson, also in the Essonne region.

CMU team develops world's fastest open-source second line of defense system

- A team of researchers at Carnegie Mellon University in Pennsylvania have developed the world's fastest open-source intrusion detection system.
- The system is said to achieve a speed of 100 gigabits per second using a single server, the team said in a study titled 'Achieving 100 Gbps Intrusion Prevention on a Single Server'.
- Intrusion detection systems are like invisible intelligence agencies within computer networks that scan every packet of data flowing through the network to spot signs of cyberattacks. These systems rely on servers to scan data. Firewalls act as the network's first line of defence, while intrusion detection systems are place after firewalls.
- As Internet speeds continue to increase, the amount of data passing through the computer networks increases as well. To keep up, the detection systems have grown into giant stacks of servers, driving up energy costs incurred by organisations.

Australia is Building the World's First Coral Conservation Facility

- Contreras Earl Architecture has revealed its design for the world-first coral ark. Located at the gateway to the Great Barrier Reef in Port Douglas, North Queensland, Australia, the conservation facility "aims to secure the long-term future and biodiversity of corals worldwide which are under severe threat due to climate change".
- Dedicated to the future of corals worldwide, the Living Coral Biobank, designed by Contreras Earl Architecture, with leading engineering and sustainability consultants Arup and Werner Sobek for the Great Barrier Reef Legacy, is the first facility of its kind.
- Focusing on taking care of 800 species of the world's hard corals, the new building is a "living ark", with next-generation renewable energy design, creating optimal conditions for coral storage while minimizing energy consumption and solar gain.

Team from Odisha selected for NASA Human Exploration Rover Challenge 2021

- The Navonmesh Prasar Student Astronomy Team (NaPSAT), comprising 10 school students, has been selected to participate in the NASA Human Exploration Rover Challenge 2021 scheduled in April.
- NaPSAT, an initiative of Bhubaneswar-based Navonmesh Prasar Foundation, is an interdisciplinary team of space enthusiasts who are engaged in projects ranging from the design of space systems, rovers, rockets, satellites and astronomy to participate in various international events. Anil Pradhan, founder, Navonmesh Prasar Foundation said that it is happening for the first time that a school team from India has been selected for this challenge.

14 scientists from IIT-BHU in world's top 2% scientists' list by Stanford University

- At least 14 scientists from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) - Banaras Hindu University have figured among the top two per cent scientists in a global list compiled by the prestigious Stanford University. The US-based Stanford University has recently released a list that represents the top 2 per cent of the most-cited scientists in various disciplines.
- The exhaustive list has 1, 59,683 persons with nearly 1,500 scientists, doctors and engineers in India. "The list includes the name of 14 professors of Indian Institute of Technology (Banaras Hindu University). All these have been selected on the basis of their research paper's international evaluation.

QRSAM Missile System Achieves Major Milestone

- Quick Reaction Surface to Air Missile (QRSAM) System has achieved a major milestone by a direct hit on to a Banshee Pilotless target aircraft at medium range and medium altitude. Ministry of Defence in a statement said that the missile launch took place from ITR Chandipur off the Odisha Coast.
- The missile is propelled by a single stage solid propellant rocket motor and uses all indigenous subsystems. The Missile is canisterised for transportation and launch using a mobile launcher capable of carrying 6 canisterised missiles.
- All QRSAM weapon system elements like Battery Multifunction Radar, Battery Surveillance Radar, Battery Command Post Vehicle and Mobile Launcher were deployed in the flight test.
- The system is capable of detecting and tracking targets on the move and engaging target with short halts and is designed to give air defence coverage against strike columns of Indian Army.
- Quick Reaction Surface-to-Air Missile (QRSAM) is a missile developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in association with Bharat Electronics Limited and Bharat Dynamics Limited for the Indian Army.

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

Lonar Lake, Sur Sarovar declared as Ramsar sites

- India has 41 wetlands, the highest in South Asia, with two more added to the list of recognised sites of international importance under the treaty of Ramsar Convention.
- The Lonar Lake in Maharashtra and Sur Sarovar, also known as Keetham Lake, in Agra, have been added to the list of recognised Ramsar sites.
- The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat is a treaty for conservation and sustainable use of such sites. It is named after Ramsar, the Iranian city where the treaty was signed in 1971, and places chosen for conservation under it are given the tag 'Ramsar site.'

Lonar Lake, also known as Lonar crater, is a notified National Geo-heritage Monument, saline, soda lake, located at Lonar in Buldhana district, Maharashtra. The lake was created by an asteroid collision with earth impact during the Pleistocene Epoch. It is one of the four known, other three basaltic impact structures are in Brazil.

IIT Guwahati formulates efficient "pincer" catalytic systems that transform biomass wastes into valuable chemicals

- A research team of IIT Guwahati has formulated efficient "pincer" catalytic systems that transform biomass wastes into valuable chemicals. Tiny amounts of these "pincer catalysts" repeatedly convert large amounts of industrial waste such as glycerol into lactic acid and hydrogen.
- Such catalysts also efficiently convert bioethanol, a low-energy density fuel, into high-energy density butanol. The conversion of valuable intermediates such as glycerol and ethanol, produced during the processing of biomass, into industrially useful chemicals has elicited much interest worldwide.

Scientists are developing emergency tools inspired by mysterious glowing rocks

- The mystery of illuminating rocks has intrigued scientists for centuries. The 1800s was the first time when geologists were enlightened about the afterglow of the hackmanite mineral or tenebrescent sodalite that causes bright pink glow when broken or in the dark.
- A new study around the same mystery details how certain hackmanites retain their natural lumination when they move into darker surroundings. The study was published in Chemistry of Materials, a peer-reviewed scientific journal, published by the American Chemical Society. The study is important as it helps understand the illumination of the rock in the dark to develop synthetic materials that can glow without any source of power and be used as emergency signals.
- A lot of research has been done with synthetic hackmanites that has led to the creation of a material, which can emit a light longer than natural hackmanite. However, the conditions affecting the glow are yet to be discovered, said materials chemist Isabella Norrbo from the University of Turku in Finland.

New genus of tree frog discovered in Andaman Islands and Northeast India

- A team of Indian, Chinese, Indonesian and Thai researchers have found a new genus of frogs in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and India's northeast, according to Zootaxa, an international animal taxonomy journal. The genus has been named Rohanixalus after Sri Lankan taxonomist Rohan Pethiyagoda.
- A genus is a category of classification of animals, plants above a species and below a family. It can include one or many similar species.
- Rohanixalus is the 20th recognised genus of the Rhacophoridae family and comprises eight out of the 422 known Old World Tree Frog species in Asia and Africa.
- The researchers studied aspects such as external morphology, calls, breeding biology; etc of tree frog species distributed across South, Southeast, and East Asia and confirmed that they represent a new genus.
- Frogs from the genus are characterised by a small and slender body (about 2 cm to 3 cm long), a pair of contrastingly coloured lateral lines on either side of the body, and other distinct behavioural traits.

Indian Navy's fifth Scorpene class submarine Vagir launched

- Indian Navy's fifth Scorpene class submarine 'Vagir' was launched at Mumbai's Mazagon Dock. Minister of State for Defence Shripad Naik launched the submarine through video conferencing.
- Vagir is part of the six Kalvari-class submarines being built in India. The submarines, designed by French naval defence and energy company DCNS, are being built as part of Indian Navy's Project-75.
- Vagir, ex-Russia, named after the Sand Fish, a deadly deep sea predator of the Indian Ocean, was commissioned into the Indian Navy on December 3, 1973, and was decommissioned on June 7, 2001, after almost three decades of yeoman service to the nation.
- INS Kalvari, the first of the six Scorpene-class submarines, was launched in 2017, followed by Khanderi, Karanj and Vela. These submarines can undertake missions like anti- surface warfare, anti-submarine warfare, intelligence gathering, mine laying, and area surveillance.

Project-75 is a programme by the Indian Navy that entails building six Scorpene-Class attack submarines. The programme has been undertaken with transfer of technology from French company Naval Group (formerly known as DCNS) at the Mazagon Dock Limited (MDL). The submarines in the P75 Scorpene-Class are powered by the conventional diesel-electric propulsion system. The first Scorpene submarine, Kalvari, was commissioned in 2017 and Second Scorpene Khanderi was inducted in September 2019. The remaining submarines (Vela, Vagir, and Vagsheer) in the series are in advanced stages of manufacturing and trials.



Sports Personalities in News

IPL: Mumbai Indians beat Delhi Capitals by 5 wkts to clinch title for record 5th time

- The 2020 Indian Premier League Final was played on 10 November 2020 between the Mumbai Indians and the Delhi Capitals at Dubai International Cricket Stadium, Dubai. It was a Day/Night Twenty20 match, which decided the winner of 2020 season of the Indian Premier League (IPL), an annual Twenty20 tournament in India.
- The defending champions, the Mumbai Indians, retained the title by winning the match by five wickets. This was the fifth IPL title for the Mumbai Indians, having appeared in the finals six times. This was the first IPL final appearance for the Delhi Capitals.
- Rohit Sharma's 68 and Trent Boult's 3 for 30 - including two wickets in his first two overs helped Mumbai Indians clinched their record-extending fifth IPL title after beating Delhi Capitals by five wickets in the final at Dubai.
- Trent Boult was named Player of the Match. With this win, Mumbai added a fifth IPL title to their kitty, more than any other team in the 13-year history of the league.
- Purple Cap winner: Kagiso Rabada, Orange Cap winner: KL Rahul, Most Valuable Player of the tournament: Jofra Archer. The winner of IPL 2020, Mumbai Indians earned INR 20 crores, and the runner-up Delhi Capitals earned INR 12.5 crores.

Manipur's Gyanendro Ningombam emerges as first Hockey India president from Northeast

- Manipur's Gyanendro Ningombam has been elected as the Hockey India president. Ningombam has become the first person from the Northeast to be appointed in the top post of India's national hockey team.

China's Chen Meng claims ITTF Women's World Cup title

- World number one Chen Meng beat Chinese compatriot Sun Yingsha to win her maiden ITTF Women's World Cup title in Weihai as international table tennis returned from an eight-month hiatus due to COVID-19.
- Chen's victory at the bio-secure Weihai Nanhai Olympic Center made her the first winner of the ITTF's #RESTART series and also took her tally of senior singles titles to 19.

Novak Djokovic equals Pete Sampras's record of six year-end No.1 trophies

- Tennis star Novak Djokovic has equalled Pete Sampra's record of winning six year-end number one trophies. The Serbian player achieved the feat as he was given the ATP Tour Number One trophy for finishing as the year-end number one.
- Djokovic has won 17 Grand Slam men's singles titles, the third-most in history behind only Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal. He is the only player to complete the career Golden Masters – that is, winning all nine modern ATP Masters 1000 tournaments, which he has done twice.
- Overall, he has won 81 ATP singles titles, including a record eight Australian Open titles and a record 36 Masters events.

MISCELLANEOUS

Govt approves 21 projects under Scheme for Integrated Cold Chain & Value Addition

- Government has approved 21 projects, leveraging investment worth 443 crore rupees supported with a grant of 189 crore rupees under the Scheme for Integrated Cold Chain and Value Addition. The approval in this regard was given during the inter-Ministerial Approval Committee meeting chaired by Minister for Food Processing Industries Narendra Singh Tomar.
- Mr Tomar said that these projects will benefit farmers and consumers and urged the officers to expedite the implementation of approved projects. He said, 21 projects are likely to generate employment for nearly 12 thousand 600 people and benefit over two lakh farmers.
- These projects are spread across Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Nagaland, Punjab, Telangana, Uttarakhand, and Uttar Pradesh. The Scheme for Integrated Cold Chain and Value addition infrastructure aims at arresting post-harvest losses of horticulture and non-horticulture produce & providing remunerative price to farmers.

PM Modi: Shipping ministry to be renamed

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said the Ministry Of Shipping will be renamed to Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways to bring more “clarity” in the work it does. He was speaking at the inauguration of the RoPax ferry service between Hazira in Surat and Ghogha in Bhavnagar district.
- The ferry service is slated to reduce the distance between Surat and Ghogha from 375 km to 90 km and reduce the travel time of 10-12 hours to four hours. “In a year, around 80,000 passenger vehicles and 20,000 trucks will take benefit of the new service.

Assam government started Aadhaar enrolment drive for 70 lakh students

- In Assam, the Education department started an Aadhaar enrolment drive for nearly 70 lakh students from 9 November, 2020. The drive will cover all government and private school students aged between 6 to 18 years.

Bhavan Chandigarh ranked first in the country in academic reputation

- Bhavan Vidyalaya Chandigarh has once again been ranked first in the country in the Academic Reputation category in the 2020-21 School Rankings by Education World.
- It is notable that the school has also been ranked as Chandigarh’s 2nd best school across categories and the 2nd best co-educational school in the tri-city of Chandigarh, Panchkula and Mohali.

Maharashtra: Tourism Minister, MoS unveil new logo & feedback QR code of MTDC

- Maharashtra Tourism Minister Aditya Thackeray and Minister of State Aditi Tatkare unveiled the new logo and new feedback QR code of Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC).
- They also unveiled the logo of Boat Club in Nashik. During the event, a Memorandum of Understanding was also signed with Airbnb, an online marketplace company, to boost tourism in the state.

PM to dedicate to the nation two Ayurveda institutes at Jamnagar & Jaipur

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated two Ayurveda institutions to the nation on the 5th Ayurveda Day. These are the Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda (ITRA), Jamnagar and the National Institute of Ayurveda (NIA), Jaipur. The ITRA, Jamnagar is recently created through an Act of Parliament.

Home Minister Amit Shah to inaugurate “Sarhad Vistar Vikasotsav 2020” in Gujarat

- Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated “Sarhad Vistar Vikasotsav 2020” at Dhordo village situated in the forward border area in Kutch district of Gujarat. Over 1500 Sanpanch and Gram Panchayat members from 158 border villages from Kutch, Banaskantha and Patan districts are invited to participate in this first of its kind event being organized under Border Area Development Programme (BADP).
- “Sarhad Vistar Vikasotsav 2020” is aimed to address the problems relating to health, education and road connectivity in remote and border villages, so that standard of living in such areas can be improved considerably.

India's First Sandalwood Museum

- **District Minister S.T. Somashekar inspected the country's first Sandalwood Museum, being established at the Sandalwood Depot in Aranya Bhavan premises at Ashokapuram, Mysuru.**
- **Museum is being set up by the Mysuru Regional Forest Department in an area of 17 mts x 8 mts (55.77 ft × 26.24 ft) at a cost of Rs. 18 lakh in Aranya Bhavan. 80 percent of work has been completed and the Museum is likely to be inaugurated by Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa.**

World's First Tramcar for Young Readers in Kolkata

- **This Children's Day is special for Kolkata, as the culturally-rich city gets its first ever children's tram library — also the first in the world of its kind, giving access to children across age groups and segments to pick and read their favourite book while on the move.**

Double Decker Viaduct of Nagpur Metro Inaugurated

- **Central Minister for Road Transport & Highways inaugurated Nagpur's 3.14 km double-decker flyover on Wardha Road to carry vehicles on the first level and Nagpur Metro's Orange Line on the second level.**
- **The design of this structure on Wardha Road – spanning between Sonegaon Police Station and Ajni Square was finalized in September 2015 after which the NMRCL revealed a model to the public. This is the first of three double-decker viaducts planned in Nagpur Metro's Phase 1 project.**
- **The other two are under construction at Gaddigodam (4.375 km) on Kamptee Road also for the Orange Line and at Prajapati Nagar on Bhandara Road for the Aqua Line.**

Tribal Welfare Department to be changed to Tribal Affairs Dept: Madhya Pradesh CM

- **In Madhya Pradesh, the name of the Tribal Welfare Department will be changed to Tribal Affairs Department. This was announced by the Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chauhan at a program organized on the birth anniversary of martyr Birsa Munda at the Madhya Pradesh Tribal Museum in the capital Bhopal. He said that now every year the birth anniversary of Birsamunda will be celebrated as Tribe Pride Day.**

In a first, Mumbai Metro to have vibration-absorbing tracks

- **In a first for India, the Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation Ltd., MMRCL will lay vibration-absorbing tracks on the Colaba-Bandra-SEEPZ Metro Line-3.**
- **The corporation has started trial production of the High Vibration Attenuation Booted Twin Sleeper Blocks, HVABTSB to lay tracks with the help of a machine from Sonneville AG, Switzerland. This type of tracks, being used for the first time in India will absorb vibrations upto 22 Vibration Decibels, Vdb. Estimated to cost a little over Rs. 23,000-crore.**

PERSONS IN NEWS

French Consulate members remember the first Legion d'Honneur from Bengal

- **Legendary Indian actor Soumitra Chatterjee, famed for his work with Oscar-winning director Satyajit Ray, has died from Covid complications.**
- **Chatterjee, who starred in more than 300 movies, was also an accomplished playwright, theatre actor and poet. Chatterjee was perhaps best-known for his work with Ray, one of the world's most influential directors and maker of the much-feted Apu Trilogy.** The series followed the life of a man who grew up in a Bengali village. The films garnered critical acclaim, winning many awards worldwide, and put Indian cinema on the global map. The third movie of the trilogy, **Apur Sansar, which released in 1959, was also Chatterjee's debut film.**
- **Chatterjee was awarded the Dada Saheb Phalke Award, the highest honour in Indian cinema, in 2012 and in 2018, he was given France's highest award, the Legion of Honour.**
- **In 2018, Soumitra Chatterjee became the first Bengali to be conferred the prestigious Legion of Honour, the highest order of merit in France.** Initially it was planned that the stalwart would receive the award from the French culture minister, Francoise Nyssen, who would be accompanied by a delegation of 10 top writers and publishers from her country, but later it was the French ambassador in India Alexander Ziegler, who completed the award ceremony.

Pune engineer is first Indian to ride hyperloop

- **Pune born Tanay Manjrekar was set to be strapped inside a hyperloop pod deep in the Nevada desert, about to become the first Indian to ride the futuristic mode of transport.**
- **A power electronics specialist at Virgin Hyperloop, Manjrekar was part of the team that developed the technology and now one of the first humans to have tested it.**

Joe Biden chooses longtime adviser Ron Klain as chief of staff

- **President-elect Joe Biden has chosen his longtime adviser Ron Klain to reprise his role as his chief of staff, installing an aide with decades of experience in the top role in his White House.**
- **Mr. Klain will lead a White House likely to be consumed by the response to the coronavirus pandemic, which continues to spread unchecked across the nation. Mr. Klain served as the coordinator to the Ebola response during the 2014 outbreak.**

AWARDS

Bangladeshi teen wins International Children's Peace Prize for fighting against cyber bullying

- Bangladeshi teen, 17-year-old Sadat Rahman has won the International Children's Peace Prize 2020 for his fight against cyber bullying.
- Human rights activist and Nobel Peace Prize winner Malala Yousafzai announced the name of Sadat as this year's winner of the prize. Sadat has been awarded for his involvement in setting up his social organization and mobile app "Cyber Teens" to stop cyber bullying.

Kenya-based teacher awarded 2020 Ahimsa Award in UK

- Kenya-based teacher Peter Tabichi, who was awarded the \$1 million Global Teacher Prize last year, has been conferred the 2020 Ahimsa Award by the Trustees of the Institute of Jainology in London.
- The Institute of Jainology (IOJ) represents 32 UK-based Jain organisations in government and inter-religious affairs and this year's award was announced at the 18th Jain All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) Ahimsa Day.

Award for M-Tech student Monika Kumari, first from India

- **Monika Kumari**, a second-year M.Tech student of Indira Gandhi Technical University for Women (IGTUW), became the first woman in India to get the Financial Services Information Sharing Analysis Center (FS-ISAC) Cyber Security scholarship worth USD 10,000.
- The scholarship was launched by FS-ISAC, an industry consortium dedicated to reducing cyber-risk in the global financial system, back in 2016 to support financially and mentor young women in the field of cyber security.
- Every year FS-ISAC selects 14 women throughout the world and mentors them to reach great heights in their career. Monika is the first from the city to bag this illustrious scholarship for budding social security enthusiasts.

Bulgaria's EU Commissioner Mariya Gabriel Awarded with Prestigious Annual Award of Vienna Economic Forum

- Bulgaria's EU Commissioner Mariya Gabriel was presented with the prestigious Annual Award of the Vienna Economic Forum "Partner of the Year 2020" for contribution to the economic development at regional and international level of the Forum countries.
- The high-level event aimed at promoting economic co-operation between the Adriatic and Black Sea countries was attended by prime ministers of countries in the region, including Avdullah Hoti - Prime Minister of Kosovo, Denys Shmyhal - Prime Minister of Ukraine, Fatmir Bitiki - Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of North Macedonia, ministers, economic organizations.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Science Day for Peace and Development, 10 November

- Celebrated every 10 November, World Science Day for Peace and Development highlights the significant role of science in society and the need to engage the wider public in debates on emerging scientific issues. It also underlines the importance and relevance of science in our daily lives.
- With the global COVID-19 pandemic highlighting the critical role of science in addressing global challenges, the 2020 theme of World Science Day is 'Science for and with Society'.

Public Service Broadcasting Day

- Public Service Broadcasting Day is being observed on 12th November. The day is celebrated every year to commemorate the only visit of Mahatma Gandhi to the studio of All India Radio, Delhi in 1947.
- The Father of the Nation addressed the displaced people, who had temporarily settled at Kurukshetra in Haryana after partition. A special programme is organized in the premises of All India Radio, New Delhi every year to mark the occasion.

National Education Day

- Every year since 2008, November 11 is celebrated as education day to commemorate the birth anniversary of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. Azad was independent India's first education minister.

World Pneumonia Day

- World Pneumonia Day, held each year on 12 November, aims to raise awareness about this deadly illness and to advocate for global action to protect against it.
- The theme for World Pneumonia Day 2020 is "Every Breath Counts" which is apt given the added focus on the disease this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

World Diabetes Day 14 November

- World Diabetes Day is the primary global awareness campaign focusing on diabetes mellitus and is held on 14 November each year.
- The theme for World Diabetes Day 2020 is "The Nurse and Diabetes." The campaign aims to raise awareness around the crucial role that nurses play in supporting people living with diabetes.

International Day for Tolerance

- The International Day for Tolerance is an annual observance day declared by UNESCO in 1995 to generate public awareness of the dangers of intolerance. It is observed on 16 November.
- "Tolerance is respect, acceptance, and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human." This is the basic theme of International Tolerance Day.

References:

The Hindu

The Economics Times

Indian Express

Press Information Bureau of India

The Times of India

Business Standard

News on AIR

Hindustan Times

QUESTIONS

1. Who among the following inaugurated a model of the anti-satellite missile system, which is seen as a symbol of national technological advancement?
(a) Defence Minister Rajnath Singh
(b) ISRO Chief K. Sivan
(c) Home Minister Amit Shah
(d) Prime Minister Narendra Modi
2. The armed forces conducted a joint tri-service exercise 'Bull Strike' at the Teressa Island in the Nicobar group of islands located close to the strategic Strait of _____.
(a) Hormuz (b) Gibraltar (c) Bering (d) Malacca
3. Luis Arce took office as the new President of the _____.
(a) Brazil (b) Chile (c) Mexico (d) Bolivia
4. US President-elect Joe Biden has announced a _____ member coronavirus task force to mount an effective response to the pandemic that has infected millions and damaged the US economy.
(a) 7 (b) 10 (c) 12 (d) 15
5. The first flight carrying _____ tourists to the UAE landed in the city-state of Dubai, the latest sign of the normalization deal reached between the two nations.
(a) Israel (b) Bahrain (c) Saudi Arabia (d) Palestine
6. Satish Dhawan Space Centre is located in which of the following states of India?
(a) Telangana (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Kerala (d) Tamil Nadu
7. In a first of its kind policy consultation, Science and Technology Minister _____ interacted with the highly-skilled Indian diaspora to facilitate channels for them to contribute to India's Science Technology and Innovation Policy (STIP) 2020.
(a) Harsh Vardhan (b) Piyush Goyal (c) Jairam Ramesh (d) Ravi Shankar Prasad
8. Manipur's Gyanendro Ningombam has been elected as the _____.
(a) Football India President (b) Hockey India President
(c) Badminton India President (d) Koko India President
9. Which of the following state governments has informed that the state government decided to celebrate the Hornbill Festival 2020 in a complete virtual mode only?
(a) Tripura (b) Assam (c) Goa (d) Nagaland
10. Which of the following state governments has started an Aadhaar enrolment drive for nearly 70 lakh students from 9 November, 2020?
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Assam (c) Goa (d) Maharashtra
11. Which of the following states has bagged the first place under the 'Best State' category under the National Water Awards (NWAs) 2019, presented by the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti, Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation?
(a) Telangana (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Madhya Pradesh (d) Andhra Pradesh
12. According to the Interstate Migrant Policy Index that seeks to measure integration of interstate migrants, Which of the following states has been most successful in integrating migrant workers?
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Karnataka (d) Kerala

13. Recently, Fifteenth Finance Commission submitted its report for the period of 2021-26 to President Ram Nath Kovind. The Finance Commission led by its Chairman _____ called on the President and submitted the report.
(a) Ramesh Chand (b) N.K. Singh (c) Ajay Narayan Jha (d) Prof. Anoop Singh
14. The annual Heads of State-level meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation will be held under the chairmanship of _____.
(a) Russia (b) China (c) India (d) Turkmenistan
15. Which of the following countries has recently released a special anthology on Mahatma Gandhi- 'My understanding about Gandhi'?
(a) Bhutan (b) Nepal (c) Maldives (d) Mauritius
16. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman participated in the 1st BRICS Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors' Meeting under the _____ Chairmanship to discuss the BRICS Economic and Financial Cooperation agenda for 2020.
(a) Russian (b) South African (c) Chinese (d) Brazilian
17. Which of the following is India's first ever Anti-Satellite (A-SAT) Missile Test successfully conducted from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island in Odisha?
(a) 'Mission Shakti' (b) 'Mission Power' (c) 'Mission Taqat' (d) 'Mission Sarthak'
18. In November, World Science Day for Peace and Development was celebrated on:
(a) 5th November (b) 10th November (c) 12th November (d) 15th November
19. Which of the following countries based teacher Peter Tabichi has been conferred the 2020 Ahimsa Award by the Trustees of the Institute of Jainology in London recently?
(a) Sudan (b) Kenya (c) Tanzania (d) Nigeria
19. b Kenya-based teacher Peter Tabichi, who was awarded the \$1 million Global Teacher Prize last year, has been conferred the 2020 Ahimsa Award by the Trustees of the Institute of Jainology in London.
20. The first Indian to ride the futuristic mode of transport "Hyper loop" is
(a) Mrunal Thakur (b) Akshay Viraj (c) Tanay Manjrekar (d) Sai Tendulkar
21. The construction work of India's first Vertical Lift Railway Sea Bridge is going in full swing, which will be linking Mandapam in the state of _____ to Rameswaram at the Pamban Island.
(a) Kerala (b) Maharashtra (c) Karnataka (d) Tamil Nadu
22. Maharashtra Government has given a green signal to distribute _____ of the budgetary fund for the capital expenditure to the department which are at the forefront in generating wealth and employment.
(a) 25 percent (b) 50 percent (c) 75 percent (d) 85 percent
23. Recently, _____ has once again been ranked first in the country in the Academic Reputation category in the 2020-21 School Rankings by Education World.
(a) Bhavan Vidyalaya Chandigarh (b) Delhi Public School, Mathura Road Delhi
(c) Mahogany School, Raipur Chhattisgarh (d) Bristol School, Mumbai
24. Recently, Armenia and _____ have signed an agreement to end military conflict over the disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh.
(a) Azerbaijan (b) Turkmenistan (c) Kazakhstan (d) Kyrgyzstan
25. The famous litchis of _____ got the geographical indication (GI) tags, making the item an incontrovertible proof of their origins in the state and protecting them from production elsewhere.
(a) Pratapgarh, Uttar Pradesh (b) Tezpur, Assam
(c) Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh (d) Mysuru, Karnataka

26. Who among the following topped the list of “India’s most generous” released by Hurun India and EdelGive?
(a) Mukesh Ambani (b) Azim Premji (c) Shiv Nadar (d) Gautam Adani
27. Recently, A team of researchers at _____ in Pennsylvania have developed the world’s fastest open-source intrusion detection system.
(a) Carnegie Mellon University (b) Trinity University
(c) Christ Global University (d) George Mgellon University
28. The world’s first satellite equipped with an electric iodine Ion, called NPT30-I2 is
(a) Beihang Somushi 2 (b) Beihang Kongshi 1 (c) Sihang Juho 3 (d) Xiang Juro 6
29. Who won her maiden ITTF Women’s World Cup title in Weihai in November 2020?
(a) Sun Yingsha (b) Suni Hian (c) Susin Hiangse (d) Chen Meng
30. Which of the following teams clinched their record-extending fifth IPL title at Dubai recently?
(a) Mumbai Indians (b) Rajasthan Royals (c) Delhi Capitals (d) Sunrisers Hyderabad
31. The World’s First Coral Conservation Facility is building up in:
(a) New Zealand (b) Australia (c) Mauritius (d) Maldives
32. Prime Minister Narendra Modi co-chaired the 17th ASEAN-India Summit along with Prime Minister of _____
Nguyen Xuan Phuc.
(a) Vietnam (b) Laos (c) Cambodia (d) Thailand
33. Recently President-elect Joe Biden has chosen his longtime adviser _____ to reprise his role as his chief of staff, installing an aide with decades of experience in the top role in his White House.
(a) Thiman Jack (b) Rob Cinan (c) Ron Klain (d) Sam Johnston
34. Recently, Indian Navy’s fifth Scorpene class submarine _____ was launched at Mumbai’s Mazagon Dock.
(a) ‘Vageor’ (b) ‘Vijay’ (c) ‘Vagir’ (d) ‘Vakiry’
35. Recently, A team from _____ has been selected for NASA Human Exploration Rover Challenge 2021.
(a) Telangana (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Odisha (d) Haryana
36. Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated “Sarhad VistarVikasotsav 2020” in _____ of Gujarat.
(a) Ahmadabad district (b) Kutch district (c) Surat district (d) Navasari district
37. At least 14 scientists from the _____ have figured among the top two per cent scientists in a global list compiled by the prestigious Stanford University.
(a) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras
(b) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay
(c) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) - Banaras Hindu University
(d) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) - Roorkee
38. In a first for India, the _____ will be laid vibration-absorbing tracks.
(a) Kochi Metro Rail Corporation Ltd. (b) Delhi Metro Rail Corporation Ltd.
(c) Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation Ltd. (d) Pune Metro Rail Corporation Ltd.
39. Recently, Public Service Broadcasting Day is observed on _____.
(a) 10th November (b) 11th November (c) 12th November (d) 14th November
40. Recently, Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa passed away. He was the world’s longest serving Prime Minister of:
(a) Oman (b) Saudi Arabia (c) United Arab Emirates (d) Bahrain

41. Recently, which state assembly passed a resolution for the provision of a separate 'Sarna Code' for tribals?
(a) Jharkhand (b) Odisha (c) Madhya Pradesh (d) Chhattisgarh
42. Recently, Jammu and Kashmir government has launched an e-Auction portal to promote trading of GI tagged _____ across the country.
(a) 'Kashmir Saffron' (b) 'Kashmir Willow' (c) 'Kashmir Pashmina' (d) 'Kashmir Kahwa'
43. Recently, _____ have successfully launched the initiative of doorstep service for submission of Digital Life Certificate through Postman.
(a) India Post Payments Bank (b) Reserve Bank of India
(c) NITI Aayog (d) NABARD
44. Recently, The ruling National League for Democracy (NLD) has claimed victory in the general elections held in:
(a) Maldives (b) Myanmar (c) Mauritius (d) Thailand
45. Recently, International Financial Services Centres Authority, IFSCA has approved draft Banking regulations for banking operations at IFSCs with headquarters in :
(a) Mumbai (Maharashtra) (b) Gandhinagar (Gujarat)
(c) Gurugram (Haryana) (d) Jaipur (Rajasthan)
46. Recently, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced _____ key stimulus measures to boost the economy saying that it is emerging strong amid the Covid-19 pandemic as key parameters of the economy are in the positive trajectory.
(a) 5 (b) 8 (c) 10 (d) 12
47. Recently, The first commercial shipment from Bangladesh to _____ on the Protocol for Inland Water Trade and Transit (PIWTT) route was received.
(a) Kandla, West Bengal (b) Shillong, Meghalaya
(c) Karimganj, Assam (d) Dispur, Assam
48. Recently, Kabartal in _____ has been recognised as a wetland of international importance, the first such wetland in the state under the Ramsar Convention, according to the Union Environment Ministry.
(a) Assam's Guwahati district (b) Meghalaya's Shillong district
(c) Bihar's Begusarai district (d) Haryana's Rohtak district
49. Every year since 2008, November 11 is celebrated as education day to commemorate the birth anniversary of _____.
(a) Madan Mohan Malviya (b) Maulana Abul Kalam Azad
(c) Lala Lajpat Rai (d) Bipin Chandra Pal
50. Recently, World Pneumonia Day, held each year on _____ aims to raise awareness about this deadly illness and to advocate for global action to protect against it.
(a) 9th November (b) 10th November (c) 12th November (d) 14th November
51. Which of the following Indian cities gets its first ever children's tram library, also the first in the world of its kind?
(a) Kochi (b) Mumbai (c) Kolkata (d) Chennai
52. Recently, The renewable energy Ministry has expanded the scope of _____ scheme to enable greater solar energy generation in farm sector.
(a) PM-KUMUD (b) PM-KUSUM (c) PM-SURAJ (d) PM-MAUSAM
53. Recently, Central Minister for Road Transport & Highways inaugurated _____ 3.14 km double-decker flyover to carry vehicles on the first level.
(a) Kolkata's (b) Kochi's (c) Nagpur's (d) Jaipur's

54. How many ASEAN member countries signed a free trade pact with China and four other countries while India stayed away?
(a) 5 (b) 10 (c) 12 (d) 20
55. India's first sandalwood museum is to come up in:
(a) Karnataka (b) Kerala (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Maharashtra
56. Recently, Indore-based Enking International may become the world's first company that operates in the _____ markets space to go in for an initial public offering (IPO).
(a) Gold (b) Silver (c) Carbon (d) Platinum
57. Recently, The _____ has given its go-ahead for the creation of the first ever national database of migrant labour to provide a platform for workers and employers, and for the government to implement specific programmes for such labourers.
(a) Labour Ministry (b) Home Ministry (c) Finance Ministry (d) Corporate Affairs Ministry
58. Recently, _____ System has achieved a major milestone by a direct hit on to a Banshee Pilotless target aircraft at medium range and medium altitude.
(a) QRSAM (b) LARSAM (c) NISAR (d) FARCAM
59. Who has been presented with the prestigious Annual Award of the Vienna Economic Forum "Partner of the Year 2020" for contribution to the economic development at regional and international level of the Forum countries?
(a) Bulgaria's EU Commissioner Mariya Gabriel
(b) Austria's EU Commissioner Deemija Burgayal
(c) Finland's UN Commissioner Hinlaj Kurtail
(d) Sweden's EU Commissioner Julbal Mirtly
60. Recently, Civil Aviation Ministry and Directorate General of Civil Aviation have granted conditional permission to the International Crops Research Institute for the deployment of drones. The Headquarters of International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) is at:
(a) Bengaluru (b) Hyderabad (c) Kochi (d) Lucknow
61. Name the site in Uttar Pradesh which has been added recently to the list of recognised Ramsar sites?
(a) Bakhira Lake in Sant Kabir Nagar
(b) Chittaura Jheel in Gonda
(c) Keetham lake in Agra
(d) Keerat Sagar lake in Mahoba
62. A remote island in _____ is set to become the first in the world to be powered entirely by 'blue energy' as the nation looks to respond to the challenges posed by climate change.
(a) Wales (b) Greenland (c) Ireland (d) Canada
63. Name the Bangladeshi teen who won the International Children's Peace Prize 2020 for his fight against cyber bullying.
(a) Mohammad Rizwan (b) Yousuf Khan (c) Anjum Raizada (d) Sadat Rahman
64. The name of Tribal Welfare Department will be changed to Tribal Affairs Department in which of the following Indian states?
(a) Chhattisgarh (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Odisha (d) Gujarat
65. Which of the following banks announced the launch of Mooh Band Rakho, a campaign to increase awareness on cyber frauds and preventing them?
(a) ICICI Bank (b) HDFC Bank (c) Axis Bank (d) State Bank of India

66. Which of the following small finance banks has launched a new product aimed at women 'Eva', a unique savings account, tries to address the well-being of Indian women in every aspect such as health, wealth and prosperity?
(a) Equitas Small Finance Bank (b) Utkarsh Small Finance Bank
(c) A U Small Finance Bank (d) Ujjivan Small Finance Bank
67. Recently, A research team of _____ has formulated efficient "pincer" catalytic systems that transform biomass wastes into valuable chemicals.
(a) IIT Delhi (b) IIT Kharagpur (c) IIT Kanpur (d) IIT Guwahati
68. Which tennis star has equalled Pete Sampras's record of winning six year-end number one trophies?
(a) Andy Murray (b) Rafael Nadal (c) Roger Federer (d) Novak Djokovic
69. Who became the first Bengali to be conferred the prestigious Legion of Honour, the highest order of merit in France in 2018?
(a) Soumitra Chatterjee (b) Mamata Bannerjee (c) Deepankar Bannerjee (d) OM Prakash Dhankar
70. The International Day for Tolerance is an annual day observed every year on:
(a) 12th November (b) 13th November (c) 15th November (d) 16th November



ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

1. **a** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated a model of the anti-satellite missile system, which is seen as a symbol of national technological advancement, at the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) headquarters in the national capital.
2. **d** The armed forces conducted a joint tri-service exercise 'Bull Strike' at the Teresa Island in the Nicobar group of islands located close to the strategic Strait of Malacca.
3. **d** Luis Arce, winner of the October 18 general elections in Bolivia, took office as the new president of the South American country for the next five years. The solemn swearing-in ceremony began at dawn with ancestral rituals at Plaza Murillo in La Paz, where the executive and legislative branches of government are headquartered.
4. **c** US President-elect Joe Biden has announced a 12-member coronavirus task force to mount an effective response to the pandemic that has infected millions and damaged the US economy.
5. **a** The first flight carrying Israeli tourists to the UAE landed in the city-state of Dubai, the latest sign of the normalization deal reached between the two nations.
6. **b** India successfully launched its latest earth observation satellite EOS-01 and nine customer satellites on board its Polar rocket from the spaceport. The Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C49) lifted off from the first launch pad at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Andhra Pradesh at 3:12 PM at the end of a 26-hour countdown and injected the satellites into orbit one after another 20 minutes later.
7. **a** In a first of its kind policy consultation, Science and Technology Minister Harsh Vardhan interacted with the highly-skilled Indian diaspora to facilitate channels for them to contribute to India's Science Technology and Innovation Policy (STIP) 2020.
8. **b** Manipur's Gyanendro Ningombam has been elected as the Hockey India president. Ningombam has become the first person from the Northeast to be appointed in the top post of India's national hockey team.
9. **d** Nagaland Tourism Department has informed that the state government decided to celebrate the Hornbill Festival 2020 in a complete virtual mode only through various audio visual media channels and Social Media platforms.
10. **b** In Assam, the Education department has started an Aadhaar enrolment drive for nearly 70 lakh students from 9 November, 2020. The drive will cover all government and private school students aged between 6 to 18 years.
11. **b** Tamil Nadu has bagged the first place under the 'Best State' category under the National Water Awards (NWAs) 2019, presented by the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti, Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation.
12. **d** The states of Kerala, Goa, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh have been most successful in integrating migrant workers, while crucial migrant receiving states, including Delhi, have done poorly, shows the Interstate Migrant Policy Index that seeks to measure integration of interstate migrants.
13. **b** Fifteenth Finance Commission submitted its report for the period of 2021-26 to President Ram Nath Kovind. The Finance Commission led by its Chairman N.K. Singh called on the President and submitted the report.
14. **a** The annual Heads of State-level meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation will be held under the chairmanship of Russia.
15. **b** Nepal President Bidhya Devi Bhandari has released a special anthology on Mahatma Gandhi- 'My understanding about Gandhi' - during a ceremony at Kathmandu in the presence of Indian Ambassador Vinay Mohan Kwatra.

- 16. a** Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman participated in the 1st BRICS Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors' Meeting under the Russian Chairmanship to discuss the BRICS Economic and Financial Cooperation agenda for 2020.
- 17. a** 'Mission Shakti' was the country's first ever Anti-Satellite (A-SAT) Missile Test successfully conducted on 27th March 2019 from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island in Odisha, where a fast-moving Indian orbiting target satellite in Low Earth Orbit was neutralised with pinpoint accuracy.
- 18. b** Celebrated every 10 November, World Science Day for Peace and Development highlights the significant role of science in society and the need to engage the wider public in debates on emerging scientific issues.
- 20. c** Pune born Tanay Manjrekar was set to be strapped inside a hyperloop pod deep in the Nevada desert, about to become the first Indian to ride the futuristic mode of transport.
- 21. d** The construction work of the country's first Vertical Lift Railway Sea Bridge is going in full swing, which will be linking Mandapam in the state of Tamil Nadu to Rameswaram at the Pamban Island.
- 22. c** Maharashtra Government has given a green signal to distribute 75 percent of the budgetary fund for the capital expenditure to the department which are at the forefront in generating wealth and employment.
- 23. a** Bhavan Vidyalaya Chandigarh has once again been ranked first in the country in the Academic Reputation category in the 2020-21 School Rankings by Education World.
- 24. a** Armenia and Azerbaijan have signed an agreement to end military conflict over the disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh.
- 25. b** The famous litchis of Tezpur, Assam got the geographical indication (GI) tags, making the item an incontrovertible proof of their origins in the state and protecting them from production elsewhere.
- 26. b** -With a donation of Rs. 7,904 crore during 2019-20, IT giant Wipro's founder chairman Azim Premji topped the list of "India's most generous" released by Hurun India and EdelGive. This is a jump of 1,645% from Rs 453 crore donated by Mr. Premji in the previous year.
- 27. a** A team of researchers at Carnegie Mellon University in Pennsylvania have developed the world's fastest open-source intrusion detection system.
- 28. b** Beihangkongshi 1 is a 12U CubeSat. It is above all the world's first satellite equipped with an electric iodine Ion, called NPT30-I2.
- 29. d** World number one Chen Meng beat Chinese compatriot Sun Yingsha to win her maiden ITTF Women's World Cup title in Weihai as international table tennis returned from an eight-month hiatus due to COVID-19.
- 30. a** Mumbai Indians clinched their record-extending fifth IPL title after beating Delhi Capitals by five wickets in the final at Dubai.
- 31. b** Contreras Earl Architecture has revealed its design for the world-first coral ark. Located at the gateway to the Great Barrier Reef in Port Douglas, North Queensland, Australia, the conservation facility "aims to secure the long-term future and biodiversity of corals worldwide which are under severe threat due to climate change".
- 32. a** Prime Minister Narendra Modi co-chaired the 17th ASEAN-India Summit along with Prime Minister of Vietnam Nguyen Xuan Phuc.
- 33. c** President-elect Joe Biden has chosen his longtime adviser Ron Klain to reprise his role as his chief of staff.

- 34. c** Indian Navy's fifth Scorpene class submarine 'Vagir' was launched at Mumbai's Mazagon Dock.
- 35. c** Team from Odisha selected for NASA Human Exploration Rover Challenge 2021
- 36. b** Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated "Sarhad VistarVikasotsav 2020" at Dhordo village situated in the forward border area in Kutch district of Gujarat.
- 37. c** At least 14 scientists from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) - Banaras Hindu University have figured among the top two per cent scientists in a global list compiled by the prestigious Stanford University.
- 38. c** In a first for India, the Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation Ltd., MMRCL will lay vibration-absorbing tracks on the Colaba-Bandra-SEEPZ Metro Line-3.
- 39. c** Public Service Broadcasting Day is being observed on 12th November.
- 40. d** The world's longest serving Prime Minister, Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa of Bahrain, passed away.
- 41. a** Jharkhand Assembly passed a resolution for the provision of a separate 'Sarna Code' for tribals.
- 42. a** Jammu and Kashmir government has launched an e-Auction portal to promote trading of GI tagged 'Kashmir Saffron' across the country.
- 43. a** India Post Payments Bank, IPPB have successfully launched the initiative of doorstep service for submission of Digital Life Certificate through Postman.
- 44. b** The Union Election Commission (UEC) has started to formally announce the results but the final announcement will take some more time as the counting of votes is continuing in some constituencies of Myanmar.
- 45. b** The central government has established International Financial Services Centres Authority to regulate all financial services in International Financial Services Centres (IFSCs) with headquarters in Gandhinagar (Gujarat).
- 46. d** Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced 12 key stimulus measures to boost the economy saying that it is emerging strong amid the Covid-19 pandemic as key parameters of the economy are in the positive trajectory.
- 47. c** The first commercial shipment from Bangladesh to Karimganj, Assam on the Protocol for Inland Water Trade and Transit (PIWTT) route was received.
- 48. c** Kabartal in Bihar's Begusarai district has been recognised as a wetland of international importance — the first such wetland in the state — under the Ramsar Convention, according to the Union Environment Ministry.
- 49. b** Every year since 2008, November 11 is celebrated as education day to commemorate the birth anniversary of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.
- 50. c** World Pneumonia Day, held each year on 12 November, aims to raise awareness about this deadly illness and to advocate for global action to protect against it.
- 51. c** This Children's Day is special for Kolkata, as the culturally-rich city gets its first ever children's tram library — also the first in the world of its kind, giving access to children across age groups and segments to pick and read their favourite book while on the move.
- 52. b** The renewable energy Ministry has expanded the scope of PM-KUSUM scheme to enable greater solar energy generation in farm sector.

- 53. c** Central Minister for Road Transport & Highways inaugurated Nagpur's 3.14 km double-decker flyover on Wardha Road to carry vehicles on the first level and Nagpur Metro's Orange Line on the second level.
- 54. b** External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar sounded the alarm about Chinese expansionism a day before the 10-nation ASEAN signed a free trade pact with China and four other countries while India stayed away.
- 55. a** India is home to many museums, and now it seems it is on its way to receive a sandalwood museum, too. The country's very first, this museum is likely to come up later this month in Mysuru in Karnataka.
- 56. c** Indore-based Enking International may become the world's first company that operates in the carbon markets space to go in for an initial public offering (IPO).
- 57. c** The Finance Ministry has given its go-ahead for the creation of the first ever national database of migrant labour to provide a platform for workers and employers, and for the government to implement specific programmes for such labourers.
- 58. a** Quick Reaction Surface to Air Missile (QRSAM) System has achieved a major milestone by a direct hit on to a Banshee Pilotless target aircraft at medium range and medium altitude.
- 59. a** Bulgaria's EU Commissioner Mariya Gabriel was presented with the prestigious Annual Award of the Vienna Economic Forum "Partner of the Year 2020" for contribution to the economic development at regional and international level of the Forum countries.
- 60. b** The International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) is an international organization which conducts agricultural research for rural development, headquartered in Patancheru (Hyderabad, Telangana, India) with several regional centers (Bamako (Mali), Nairobi (Kenya)).
- 61. c** The Lonar lake in Maharashtra and Sur Sarovar, also known as Keetham lake, in Agra, have been added to the list of recognised Ramsar sites.
- 62. a** A remote island in Wales is set to become the first in the world to be powered entirely by 'blue energy' as the nation looks to respond to the challenges posed by climate change.
- 63. d** Bangladeshi teen, 17-year-old Sadat Rahman has won the International Children's Peace Prize 2020 for his fight against cyber bullying.
- 64. b** In Madhya Pradesh, the name of the Tribal Welfare Department will be changed to Tribal Affairs Department.
- 65. b** HDFC Bank announced the launch of Mooh Band Rakho, a campaign to increase awareness on cyber frauds and preventing them.
- 66. a** Equitas Small Finance Bank has launched a new product aimed at women. 'Eva', a unique savings account, tries to address the well-being of Indian women in every aspect such as health, wealth and prosperity.
- 67. d** A research team of IIT Guwahati has formulated efficient "pincer" catalytic systems that transform biomass wastes into valuable chemicals.
- 68. d** Tennis star Novak Djokovic has equalled Pete Sampras's record of winning six year-end number one trophies.
- 69. a** In 2018, Soumitra Chatterjee became the first Bengali to be conferred the prestigious Legion of Honour, the highest order of merit in France.
- 70. d** The International Day for Tolerance is an annual observance day declared by UNESCO in 1995 to generate public awareness of the dangers of intolerance. It is observed on 16 November.