
MANTHAN

A General Awareness Weekly

24th August to 30th August, 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.

Happy Reading

Team CL



Career
Launcher

National



NITI Aayog releases first ever Export Preparedness Index 2020

- **Gujarat has topped the Niti Aayog's Export Preparedness Index 2020 followed by Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu in the second and third place respectively**, according to the government think tank's report released. According to the report, **six of eight coastal states feature in the top ten rankings**, indicating the presence of strong enabling and facilitating factors to promote exports.
- **Among the landlocked states, Rajasthan has performed the best, followed by Telangana and Haryana. Among the Himalayan states, Uttarakhand topped the chart**, followed by Tripura and Himachal Pradesh; the report said adding that **across Union Territories, Delhi has performed the best**, followed by Goa and Chandigarh.
- **The Niti Aayog Vice Chairman pointed out that India's per capita exports are USD 241, compared to South Korea's USD 11,900 and China's USD 18,000**, so there is a huge potential for growth of India's exports, he said adding "states must look at creating a separate department for exports promotion".
- **Niti Aayog in partnership with the Institute of Competitiveness released the first Export Preparedness Index (EPI) 2020. The index ranked states on four key parameter - Policy; Business Ecosystem; Export Ecosystem; Export Performance. The index also took into consideration 11 sub-pillars – Export Promotion Policy; Institutional Framework; Business Environment; Infrastructure; Transport Connectivity; Access to Finance; Export Infrastructure; Trade Support; R&D Infrastru.**

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

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

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

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

Centre sets up council for Transgender Persons

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

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

PM Modi greets nation on 'Nuakhai' harvest festival

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- **The Road Transport and Highways Ministry** has decided to **extend the validity of fitness, permits, licenses, registration or other documents under Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 and Central Motor Vehicle Rules, 1989 till of Dec. 31, 2020.**
- **The Ministry** had earlier issued advisories on 30th March and 9th June this year regarding **extension of validity of the documents related to Motor Vehicles Act and Central Motor Vehicle Rules**. It was advised that the validity of Fitness, Permit, License, Registration or any other concerned documents may be valid till 30th of September.

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

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

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

Social Justice Ministry launched mental health rehabilitation helpline

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

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

Manipur Health Minister launches Teleconsultation using eSanjeevaniOPD platform in Imphal

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

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

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

- **The Supreme Court will re-examine its 2004 judgment that held that Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (SC/STs) cannot be further sub-classified for the purpose of reservation.**
- **A five-judge Constitution Bench headed by Justice Arun Mishra ruled that states are empowered to make such sub-classifications** in view of India's federal structure, which allows them to enable reservation for backward classes.
- **However, since another five-judge bench of the top court in 2004 ruled that such sub-classification is not permissible,** the bench said that the matter will have to be heard by a bench of seven judges or more.
- **"Once states have the power to make reservations, it can make sub-classification. The judgment of this court in E V Chinnaiah has been wrongly decided.**
- **Since E V Chinnaiah v. State of Andhra Pradesh has also been decided by a bench of five judges, let the matter be placed before the Chief Justice of India for the constitution of a bench of seven judges or more for hearing the matter,"** said Justice Mishra-led bench which also included Indira Banerjee, MR Shah, Vineet Saran and Aniruddha Bose.

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

Ministry of Culture announces seven new circles of ASI

- **The Ministry of Culture has announced 7 new circles of Archaeological Survey of India, ASI.** Culture and Tourism Minister Prahlad Singh Patel said, Ministry of Culture has taken the step in accordance with the Prime Minister's call to facilitate and strengthen the **process of preservation and registration of archaeological monuments along with registration of artefacts with self-declaration.**

- He informed that **new circles** have been **created in Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, West Bengal and Gujarat**. Trichy, Raiganj, Rajkot, Jabalpur, Jhansi and Meerut have been announced as new circles.
- **In a large state like Tamil Nadu** which has thousands of temples and glorious memories of the **Chola kings**, **Trichy has been made a new circle along with the circle of Chennai**.
- **Hampi city in Karnataka** is a place of international importance from the point of view of archaeological heritage therefore the **Hampi Sub-Circle now has been made a new full-fledged circle**.
- **In West Bengal, Raiganj** has been made a **new circle along with Kolkata**, which will eliminate geographical inconvenience in a big state like West Bengal.
- **In Gujarat, Rajkot** has been **announced a new circle along with Vadodara**. Mr Patel said, **Jabalpur** has been **announced a new circle along with Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh**. This will include the monuments from Jabalpur, Rewa, Shahdol and Sagar divisions.
- The Minister also informed that **Jhansi in Bundelkhand and Meerut in western Uttar Pradesh** have been **announced two new circles along with Lucknow and Agra in Uttar Pradesh**. The Minister said, earlier there were 29 ASI circles across the country.

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

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

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

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

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

Kerala CM inaugurated first marine ambulance

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

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

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

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

Police, Central cadre under Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor

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

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

Rajnath to attend SCO Defence Ministers’ meet in Russia

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

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



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

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

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

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

- Sri Lankan government has granted approval to abolish the 19th amendment to the constitution and replace it with the 20th amendment. Minister of Mass Media Keheliya Rambukwella said the decision was taken at the first cabinet meeting of new government held.
- President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa had made the abolition of 19th amendment as the main election plank during the presidential and parliamentary elections.
- The amendment brought by previous government had put a two-term limit on Presidency and curtailed the executive powers of President and transferred it to parliament and independent commissions. The 19A adopted in 2015 by the then reformist government was subject to much criticism by the Rajapaksa clan as it prevented dual citizens from contesting elections. At the time, two of the Rajapaksa family members including the current president were dual citizens of the US and Sri Lanka.
- The 13th Amendment to Sri Lanka's constitution is the amendment which created provincial councils in Sri Lanka, called for the merging of the Northern and Eastern Province and made Tamil as well as Sinhala an official language. It was enacted after the signing of the Indo-Lanka Accord between then Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Sri Lankan President J.R. Jayewardene.

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

Pakistan says Dawood name on list is as per UN

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

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

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

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

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

India co-sponsors UN Security Council resolution on women peacekeepers

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

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

- Putting the belief to rest that recovered covid-19 patients have immunity against re-infection because most developed a serum neutralizing antibody response, **The University of Hong Kong (HKU) documented the world's first case of covid-19 re-infection.**
- **Researchers from Department of Microbiology, Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine, The University of Hong Kong (HKU), said that they have proven the first instance of human re-infection by SARS-CoV-2 by using the next generation sequencing.**
- The team showed that the genome sequence of the virus strain in the **first episode of covid-19 infection is clearly different from the genome sequence of the virus strain** found during second episode of infection. **The scientists have cautioned that patients with previous covid-19 infection** should also comply with epidemiological control measures such as universal masking and social distancing.

World Health Organization declares Africa free of polio

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

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

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

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

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

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

- **A parachutist completed the world's first jump from a solar-powered aircraft** after the plane soared to a height of 1,520 metres (nearly 5,000 ft) over western Switzerland. The two-seater prototype plane made the test flight in good weather and to promote renewable energy.
- **Parachutist Raphael Domjan reached a speed of 150 kilometres per hour during his jump, landing near the project base in Payerne.**

Maldives launches India backed infrastructure projects

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

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

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

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

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

Shinzo Abe resigns on health grounds

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

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



Government activates Aadhaar authentication for new GST registration

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

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

MCX launches Bulldex, India's first bullion index

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

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

World's first floating Apple store to open in Singapore

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

National Fertilizers Limited to set up an Organic Waste Converter Plant

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

TN women top the list of MUDRA loan scheme beneficiaries

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

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

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

- The country's largest lender State Bank of India has got global recognition for its HR initiative 'Nayi Disha' which over the course of 1.5 years has touched more than 2.40 lakh employees.
- The bank has won three Brandon Hall Excellence Awards, also known as the Academy Awards of Learning & Development. It recognizes the best organizations that have successfully deployed programs, strategies, modalities, processes, systems, and tools to achieve measurable results, it said. Through Nayi Disha, SBI appreciated the workforce for its commitment towards customer service excellence while serving with the same rigour in even the remotest corners of the country.

Banks Board Bureau recommends Dinesh Khara as next SBI chairman

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sustainable Finance Collaborative for promotion of sustainable finance launched in India

- The Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Government of India and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) India launched the Sustainable Finance Collaborative (SFC). The three-day Consultation was held with the objective of bringing together leading experts and organizations to work together to boost the country's efforts on mobilizing sustainable and green finance.
- Before COVID, it was estimated that India needs over USD 2.6 trillion to meet the SDG targets by 2030. But public spending cannot bridge this gap alone. Mobilizing such a huge capital will require the collective efforts of both the public and private sectors.

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



Inventions/Discoveries

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

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

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

China launches fifth Gaofen-9 series Earth observation satellite

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

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

- **AstroSat, India's first multi-wavelength satellite**, has detected an extreme ultraviolet (UV) light from a galaxy which is **9.3 billion light-years** away from Earth. A release from the Pune-based Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics said global teams led by IUCAA scientists have achieved the major breakthrough.
- **"India's first multi-wavelength satellite, which has five unique X-ray and ultraviolet telescopes working in tandem**, AstroSat, has detected extreme-UV light from a galaxy, called AUDFs01, 9.3 billion light-years away from Earth,".
- Earlier, **NASA's Hubble Space Telescope (HST)**, a significantly larger than UVIT (UV imaging telescope), did not detect any UV emission (with energy greater than 13.6 eV) from this galaxy because it is too faint.

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

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

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

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

DRDO expert panel to review charter of labs to cut overlap

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

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

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

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

- **In a major development Atomic Minerals Directorate (sole explorer of Uranium in India), under the Department of Atomic Energy is collaborating with National Institute of Technology (NIT), Durgapur for world's first commercial helium gas exploration plant from hot spring site using non-cryogenic PSA technique from Bakreswar in Birbhum, about 230 kilometres from Kolkata as part of Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative and stop dependency on costly import from the USA.**
 - **USA, Russia recovers helium found in natural petroleum gas and concentration is up to 7 per cent, in India 0.05 per cent and can't produce helium from petroleum gases. Out of 340 hot springs in India, fifty per cent have a concentration of about 3.5 per cent helium gas. India's annual consumption of He is 0.15 billion cubic feet, about 2.3 per cent of global consumption, import cost price has increased fourfolds.**
 - **Helium, best known as a party gas for filling balloons and making the voice squeaky, widely used in India as rocket fuel in atomic research (ISRO) and missiles, aerostat (high altitude spy balloon) in defence sectors (DRDO), nuclear power plants, as well as in Medical Resonance Imaging (MRI) etc.**
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SPORTS



Sports Personalities in News

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- Neelkantha Bhanu Prakash, a student of Mathematics at Delhi's St Stephen's College, holds the world record for being the 'fastest human calculator.'
- Neelkantha Bhanu Prakash, 20, from Hyderabad has won the first gold medal for India at the Mental Calculation World Championship at Mind Sports Olympiad held in London recently.
- "Beating 29 competitors, up to 57 years of age, from 13 countries, I won the gold medal with a clear margin of 65 points. The Mind Sport Olympiad was held virtually with 30 participants from the UK, Germany, UAE, France, Greece and Lebanon.
- The Mental Calculation World Championship, or Mind Sports Olympiad, is a multidisciplinary annual competition with numerous mind games which test mental skills. The competition has been held every year since its inauguration in 1997. However, this year, owing to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the competition was held online.
- By winning gold at the championship, Bhanu has broken the records held previously by prominent faces like Scott Flansburg and Shakuntala Devi. Shakuntala Devi set the record of the Fastest Human Computation by multiplying two randomly selected 13-digit numbers in just 28 seconds, at Imperial College London on June 18, 1980.
- Scott Flansburg, an American, is popularly known as The Human Calculator and has a Guinness Record for his speed in mental calculation. He is also the host for The National Counting Bee held every year.

India's first virtual sports festival for children launched

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

Pravin Tambe Becomes First Indian to Play CPL

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

Dwayne Bravo becomes first bowler to take 500 wickets in T20s

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

India and Russia announced as joint winners of FIDE Chess Olympiad

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

MISCELLANEOUS

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

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

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

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

Ahmedabad Railway Division successfully introduces unique concept of Baggage Sanitization

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

Defence ministry to host Aero-India in Bengaluru

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

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

- Railways has said that the **new tender document for 44 semi-high speed Vande Bharat trains** will include **provision for more than 50 percent local components.** Addressing a virtual press conference yesterday, Railway Board chairman VK Yadav said, the new tender document will include provision for local components of more than 50 in line with the government's Aatma Nirbhar Bharat initiative.
- Earlier on Friday, **Railways had cancelled the tender for manufacturing 44 Vande Bharat Express trains,** which was floated last year. Mr Yadav said, while evaluating the technical bids of tenders, the tender committee had noticed that some of the details of financial offers have been revealed in the technical bids.
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi had flagged off the maiden run of a Vande Bharat train on the New Delhi-Varanasi route on February 15, 2019.** The second such train service between New Delhi and Shri Mata Vaishnodevi Katra was flagged off by home minister Amit Shah on October 3, 2019.

Odisha introduces Biofloc fish farming technology

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

Indian Railways set to meet all it's energy needs of over 33 billion units by 2030

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

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

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

PERSONS IN NEWS

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

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

Satheesh Reddy gets two-year extension as DRDO Chief

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

Jeff Bezos becomes world's first \$200 billionaire

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

Former IOC Chairman Sanjiv Singh joins Reliance as group president

- Former Indian Oil Corp (IOC) chairman Sanjiv Singh has joined Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL) as group president for billionaire Mukesh Ambani-run firm's oil-to-chemicals business.
- A communication by RIL Executive Director Hital R. Meswani to the company employees said Mr. Singh, who superannuated from India's largest oil firm on June 30, will be a member of the oil-to-chemicals (O2C) business leadership team.

AWARDS

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

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

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

Para swimmer Satyendra Singh gets prestigious Adventure Award

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

Dutch book 'The Discomfort of Evening' wins 2020 International Booker Prize

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

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

Subedar Sawant gets Arjuna Award for tent pegging

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

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

IMPORTANT DAYS

Women's Equality Day

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

National Sports Day

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

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. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has greeted the nation on the occasion of Nuakhai a harvest festival celebrated in parts of the country, especially in which of the following states of India?
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Odisha (c) Jharkhand (d) Maharashtra
2. In August 2020, Saudi Arabia's state oil company Aramco has suspended a deal to build a 10 billion dollar refining and petrochemicals complex in _____.
(a) China (b) Pakistan (c) Iran (d) UAE
3. Which of the following countries has granted approval to abolish the 19th amendment to the constitution and replace it with the 20th amendment in August 2020?
(a) USA (b) Bhutan (c) Nepal (d) Sri Lanka
4. Dawood Ibrahim, one of the most wanted men in India, who is accused of the _____ serial blasts in Mumbai among other terrorist attacks, has long been on India's most wanted list, but governments in Pakistan have repeatedly denied his presence in that country.
(a) 1993 (b) 2003 (c) 2008 (d) 2009
5. Government of India has activated Aadhaar authentication for new goods and services tax (GST) registration to enhance ease of doing business. For those opting for Aadhaar authentication, new GST registration will be issued within _____ working days and will not need to wait for physical verification.
(a) Three (b) Five (c) Seven (d) Ten
6. According to the Center for Near Objects Studies at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, an asteroid has been spotted on a collision course with Earth and is projected to come very close to the planet on November 2, 2020. What is the name of the asteroid?
(a) 2017VP (b) 2018VP (c) 2019VP (d) 2020VP
7. Which of the following has been identified and awarded with "Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puraskar 2020" by Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Government of India?
(a) Army Sports Institute, Mumbai (b) Army Sports Institute, Kolkata
(c) Army Sports Institute, Hyderabad (d) Army Sports Institute, Pune
8. European Champions League is associated with which of the following sports?
(a) Badminton (b) Hockey (c) Football (d) Tennis
9. Sophia Popov became the first female golfer from _____ to capture a major title after winning the Women's British Open by two strokes at Royal Troon in Scotland.
(a) Netherland (b) France (c) Italy (d) Germany
10. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had flagged off the first run of a Vande Bharat train on the _____ route on February 15, 2019.
(a) Mumbai-Varanasi (b) New Delhi-Varanasi (c) New Delhi-Lucknow (d) New Delhi-Chennai
11. Recently, the longest river ropeway of India is inaugurated in _____.
(a) Jammu & Kashmir (b) Himachal Pradesh (c) Uttarakhand (d) Assam
12. Recently, National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has developed a mobile App, _____ to facilitate creation of Green Highways across the country.
(a) Green Way (b) Harit Path (c) Harit Marg (d) Hariyali Marg

13. Recently, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has constituted the National Council for Transgender Persons, a requirement under the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019. Who will be chairperson of this council?
 (a) Social Justice Minister (b) HRD Minister
 (c) Home Minister (d) Prime Minister
14. Putting the belief to rest that recovered covid-19 patients have immunity against re-infection because most developed a serum neutralizing antibody response _____ documented the world's first case of covid-19 re-infection.
 (a) University of Hong Kong (b) University of Cambridge
 (c) University of Oxford (d) University of Singapore
15. Recently, India's largest commodity exchange the Multi-Commodity Exchange of India Ltd (MCX) launched the country's first bullion index _____.
 (a) Bulldex (b) BullionMX (c) CurrencyMK (d) MetalOS
16. Apple is set to open the world's first floating retail store in _____.
 (a) USA (b) Canada (c) Singapore (d) India
17. Who among the following got two-year extension as DRDO Chief?
 (a) Dr. K Sivan (b) Dr. G. Satheesh Reddy
 (c) Dr. L B Singh (d) Dr Tessa Thomas
18. Recently, three international cricketers were inducted into the International Cricket Council's Hall of Fame in a virtual ceremony. Who is not among the three?
 (a) Jaques Kallis (b) Sana Mir (c) Lisa Sthalekar (d) Zaheer Abbas
19. Which of the following countries launched its latest Gaofen-9 Earth observation satellite and two smaller payloads?
 (a) Japan (b) South Korea (c) China (d) USA
20. Which of the following states has launched a new scheme for promoting intensive aquaculture through Biofloc technology in fisheries recently?
 (a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Karnataka (c) Kerala (d) Odisha
21. Which of the following Indian railway stations has successfully introduced a unique concept of Baggage Sanitization and Wrapping, a first of its kind across the Indian Railways?
 (a) Ahmedabad Railway Division (b) Bikaner Railway Division
 (c) Surat Railway Division (d) Pune Railway Division
22. The Republican National Convention (RNC) has formally nominated _____ as the party's Presidential candidate for the November 3 election in America.
 (a) Joe Biden (b) Donald Trump (c) Mike Pence (d) Kamala Harris
23. The Road Transport and Highways Ministry has decided to extend the validity of Motor Vehicle documents till the _____.
 (a) 31st of August (b) 31st of October (c) 31st of December (d) 31st of January
24. Recently, World Health Organization has declared _____ free of polio.
 (a) Africa (b) Asia (c) Australia (d) South America
25. SBI General Insurance announced the launch of first-of-its-kind offering _____ a unique gift of Personal Accident policy.
 (a) "Shagun - Gift an Insurance" (b) "Saubhagya- Gift an Insurance"
 (c) "Sahayata - Gift an Insurance" (d) "Suvidha - Gift an Insurance"

26. Name the first bank of India which has announced the introduction of usage of satellite data imagery from earth observation satellites to assess credit worthiness of its customers belonging to the farm sector.
(a) HDFC Bank (b) ICICI Bank (c) RBL Bank (d) Axis Bank
27. In its annual report released, Reserve Bank has projected India's growth rate at _____ percent for 2020-21.
(a) (-) 1.5 (b) (-) 4.5 (c) (+) 0.5 (d) (+) 2.5
28. AstroSat, India's first multi-wavelength satellite, has detected an extreme _____ light from a galaxy which is 9.3 billion light-years away from Earth.
(a) Visible (b) Infrared (c) Ultraviolet (d) Radio Frequency
29. Name the first fast bowler to take 600 International test wickets recently?
(a) Stuart Broad (b) James Anderson (c) Trent Boult (d) Mashrafe Mortaza
30. Who won the first gold medal for India at the Mental Calculation World Championship at Mind Sports Olympiad recently?
(a) Byomkesh Ghosh (b) Aravind Mohan
(c) G V Sadananda Gowda (d) Neelkantha Bhanu Prakash
31. Uttar Pradesh's first 'Medical Device Park' is set to be built in:
(a) Lucknow (b) Agra (c) Gorakhpur (d) Noida
32. Recently, Citing the prevalence of mental health issues the Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry has launched a toll-free helpline _____ to enable access to mental health resources.
(a) Asha (b) Kiran (c) Himmat (d) Prakash
33. Recently, Manipur State Health and Family Welfare Minister L. Jayantakumar Singh launched Teleconsultation using eSanjeevani OPD platform in _____.
(a) Bishnupur (b) Imphal (c) Churachandpur (d) Tamenglong
34. Which of the following recently released the Export Preparedness Index (EPI) 2020?
(a) Finance Ministry (b) Corporate Affairs Ministry
(c) NITI Aayog (d) Home Ministry
35. Recently, A parachutist completed the world's first jump from a solar-powered aircraft after the plane soared to a height of 1,520 metres (nearly 5,000 ft) over _____.
(a) Switzerland (b) France (c) Germany (d) Poland
36. Which of the following has become the first country in the world to be awarded the recommended status of the Safer Tourism Resilience Seal by global body Rebuilding Travels?
(a) Mexico (b) Kenya (c) Portugal (d) Ghana
37. Which of the following states has been ranked first in the first ever Export Preparedness index 2020 released by NITI Aayog?
(a) Assam (b) Gujarat (c) Maharashtra (d) Uttar Pradesh
38. Who has been announced as the winner of the 2020 International Booker Prize, making the writer the youngest winner of the prize?
(a) Deeklesh Rectiser (b) Marieke Lucas Rijneveld
(c) Butchile Johnson (d) Centric Decktise
39. Who has been conferred the Arjuna award for the equestrian sport of tent pegging?
(a) Subedar Vikrant Makheeja (b) Subedar Deepesh Goyal
(c) Subedar Ajay Anant Sawant (d) Subedar Virendra Sharma

40. Who has become the first Indian player to play in the Caribbean Premier League (CPL)?
(a) Yuzvendra Chahal (b) Pravin Tambe (c) Sairaj Bahutule (d) Jasprit Bumrah
41. Recently, Piyush Goyal e-launched the National GIS-enabled Land Bank system for _____ states.
(a) 2 (b) 4 (c) 6 (d) 10
42. The Ministry of Culture has announced _____ new circles of Archaeological Survey of India, ASI.
(a) 3 (b) 4 (c) 7 (d) 10
43. The _____ will re-examine its 2004 judgment that held that Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (SC/STs) cannot be further sub-classified for the purpose of reservation.
(a) High Court of Karnataka (b) Supreme Court
(c) High Court of Madhya Pradesh (d) Central Administrative Tribunal
44. Recently, who became the world's first-ever \$200 billionaire?
(a) Jeff Bezos (b) Warren Buffet (c) Bill Gates (d) Mukesh Ambani
45. Which of the following states women top the list of MUDRA loan scheme beneficiaries?
(a) Kerala (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Karnataka (d) Andhra Pradesh
46. Recently, Indian Institute of Technology's Alumni Council has signed an agreement with Russoft to access and transfer key technologies from _____ to build the world's largest and fastest hybrid quantum computer in India.
(a) Siberia (b) Russia (c) Finland (d) Netherlands
47. The _____ has set up an expert panel to review the charter of its laboratories and minimise the overlap of technologies they are working on at a time when self-reliance in the defence sector is a top priority for the government.
(a) Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)
(b) Indian Space & Research Centre (ISRO)
(c) Indian Space Ministry
(d) Bhabha Atomic Research Centre
48. In a major development Atomic Minerals Directorate under the Department of Atomic Energy is collaborating with _____ for world's first commercial helium gas exploration plant.
(a) National Institute of Technology (NIT), Durgapur
(b) National Institute of Technology (NIT), Warangal
(c) National Institute of Technology (NIT), Jammu
(d) National Institute of Technology (NIT), Guwahati
49. Who among the following became the first bowler to take 500 T20 wickets?
(a) Andre Russell (b) Dwayne Bravo (c) Trent Boult (d) Yasir Shah
50. National Sports Day is celebrated every year On 29 August 2020 to mark the birth anniversary of:
(a) Kapil Dev (b) Major Dhyan Chand (c) Dhanraj Pillai (d) Nawab Pataudi
51. The Defence Ministry has taken an in-principle decision to host the next edition of Aero India considered Asia's largest aerospace exhibition in _____.
(a) Chennai (b) Bengaluru (c) Lucknow (d) Pune
52. Recently, Commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal India-ASEAN trade can reach \$300 billion and the two can resolve their differences by addressing concerns of all nations and businesses. Presently, how many member nations are there in ASEAN?
(a) 6 (b) 8 (c) 10 (d) 15

53. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurated _____ the first marine ambulance acquired by the state fisheries department, through videoconference.
(a) Prateeksha (b) Patralekha (c) Pareeneeti (d) Prayas
54. Recently, Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Ravi Shankar Prasad launched _____ Next Generation Startup Challenge Contest to further boost startups and software products with special focus on Tier-II towns of the country.
(a) Saraahna (b) Chunauti (c) Lakshya (d) Prabhaaw
55. Which of the following countries has retained its dominant place in the global offshore wind market in the first half of 2020?
(a) France (b) Germany (c) United Kingdom (d) United States of America
56. Recently, Shinzo Abe resigned from the post of Prime Minister of:
(a) South Korea (b) North Korea (c) Japan (d) China
57. The Banks Board Bureau (BBB) recommended SBI's senior-most managing director _____ as the next chairman of the State Bank of India.
(a) Dinesh Kumar Khara (b) Vedmurthy Krishnaih
(c) Amarnath Dhingra (d) Mayakant Tripathi
58. Which of the following Indian states will set up India's first international women's trade centre (WTC), in consonance with the United Nations sustainable development goals (SDGs)?
(a) Karnataka (b) Kerala (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Andhra Pradesh
59. Indian Railways is set to meet all its energy needs of more than _____ billion units by 2030.
(a) 11 (b) 22 (c) 33 (d) 44
60. Name Britain's World War II spy who became the first Indian-origin woman to be honoured with a memorial Blue Plaque at her former family home in central London.
(a) Amrita Shergill (b) Deepika Bharadwaj (c) Noor Inayat Khan (d) Sana Mir Khan
61. Which of the following banks has got global recognition for its HR initiative 'Nayi Disha' which over the course of 1.5 years has touched more than 2.40 lakh employees?
(a) Union Bank of India (b) Canara Bank
(c) Punjab National Bank (d) State Bank of India
62. According to the notified new rules for administration in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir by Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) the transaction of business rules, "police, public order, All India Services and anti-corruption," will fall under:
(a) Lieutenant Governor (b) Chief Minister
(c) Central Home Minister (d) President of India
63. In June, India was elected non-permanent member of the Security Council for a two-year term beginning _____.
(a) October 1, 2020 (b) January 1, 2021 (c) April 1, 2021 (d) June 30, 2021
64. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh is scheduled to visit _____ for the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Defence Ministers meeting.
(a) Turkmenistan (b) Uzbekistan (c) Russia (d) China
65. According to a global ranking of average wages prepared by Picodi.com, India has been ranked a lowly _____ among 106 countries in terms of the average wage per month.
(a) 54th (b) 63rd (c) 72nd (d) 87th

66. The Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Government of India and _____ launched the Sustainable Finance Collaborative (SFC).
(a) Ministry of Environment and Forests
(b) NITI Aayog
(c) United Nations Development Programme India
(d) UNICEF
67. In the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the Administrative Council, which met under the chairmanship of _____, gave approval to establishment of State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) by merging the State Institutes of Education?
(a) Home Minister Amit Shah
(b) Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha
(c) Prime Minister Narendra Modi
(d) Niti Aayog Vice Chairperson Rajiv Kumar
68. Which of the following places doctors recently performed Asia's first lung transplant on Covid-19 patient?
(a) Bengaluru
(b) New Delhi
(c) Chennai
(d) Chandigarh
69. Name the first Divyanga Indian sportsperson of the country, who has been awarded with the Tenzing Norgay Adventure Award.
(a) Amit Nandan
(b) Satyendra Singh Lohia
(c) Deepak Parashar
(d) Vibhuti Pathak
70. Which of the following two countries have been announced as joint winners of FIDE Chess Olympiad?
(a) India and China
(b) Portugal and South Africa
(c) India and Russia
(d) Russia and Japan

ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

1. **b** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has greeted the nation on the occasion of Nuakhai a harvest festival celebrated in parts of the country, especially Odisha.
2. **a** Saudi Arabia's state oil company Aramco has suspended a deal to build a 10 billion dollar refining and petrochemicals complex in China.
3. **d** Sri Lankan government has granted approval to abolish the 19th amendment to the constitution and replace it with the 20th amendment.
4. **a** Dawood Ibrahim, one of the most wanted men in India, figured in a list of 88 individuals published as a Statutory Regulatory Order (SRO) by Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to escape blacklisting by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).
5. **a** Government has activated Aadhaar authentication for new goods and services tax (GST) registration to enhance ease of doing business. For those opting for Aadhaar authentication, new GST registration will be issued within three working days and will not need to wait for physical verification.
6. **b** An asteroid has been spotted on a collision course with Earth and is projected to come very close to the planet on November 2, according to the Center for Near Objects Studies at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory. The asteroid, dubbed 2018VP, was first discovered at the Palomar Observatory in California's San Diego County two years ago. A 13-day observational arc followed, after which the asteroid was not detected again.
7. **d** Army Sports Institute, Pune has been identified and awarded with "Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puraskar 2020" by Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Govt of India.
8. **c** In Football, German giants Bayern Munich have won the European Champions League for the sixth time after beating French side Paris Saint-Germain 1-0 at the final in Portugal's capital, Lisbon.
9. **d** World number 304 Sophia Popov became the first female golfer from Germany to capture a major title after winning the Women's British Open by two strokes at Royal Troon in Scotland.
10. **b** Railways has said that the new tender document for 44 semi-high speed Vande Bharat trains will include provision for more than 50 percent local components. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had flagged off the maiden run of a Vande Bharat train on the New Delhi-Varanasi route on February 15, 2019.
11. **d** In Assam, the longest river ropeway of the country is inaugurated connecting Guwahati and North Guwahati.
12. **b** The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), a PSU under the Ministry of Road and Transport, has developed a mobile App, 'Harit Path' to facilitate creation of Green Highways across the country.
13. **a** The Social Justice Minister would be the chairperson of the Council and members would include officials of the Ministries of Health and Family Welfare, Home Affairs, Housing and Urban Affairs, Minority Affairs, Human Resources Development, Rural Development and Labour and Employment, the Department of Legal Affairs, the Department of Pensions and Pensioners Welfare and the NITI Aayog.
14. **a** Putting the belief to rest that recovered covid-19 patients have immunity against re-infection because most developed a serum neutralizing antibody response, The University of Hong Kong (HKU) documented the world's first case of covid-19 re-infection.
15. **a** India's largest commodity exchange the Multi-Commodity Exchange of India Ltd (MCX) launched the country's first bullion index, MCX iCOMDEX Bullion, or Bulldex.

- 16. c** Apple is set to open its third outlet in Singapore and this time, it will be the world's first floating retail store at Marina Bay Sands.
- 17. b** Dr. G. Satheesh Reddy, Head of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), has been given a two-year extension as the Secretary, Department of Defence Research and Development and Chairman DRDO beyond his tenure of August 26, 2020.
- 18. b** Legendary South African all-rounder Jaques Kallis, Pakistan batting great Zaheer Abbas and Pune-born former Australian captain Lisa Sthalekar were inducted into the International Cricket Council's Hall of Fame in a virtual ceremony.
- 19. c** China launched its latest Gaofen-9 Earth observation satellite and two smaller payloads from the Jiuquan launch center.
- 20. d** To provide employment to people during the pandemic period, the Odisha government has launched a new scheme for promoting intensive aquaculture through Biofloc technology in fisheries.
- 21. a** In Gujarat, Ahmedabad Railway Division has successfully introduced a unique concept of Baggage Sanitization and Wrapping at Ahmedabad Railway Station. It is a first of its kind across the Indian Railways.
- 22. b** The Republican National Convention (RNC) has formally re-nominated President Donald Trump as the party's Presidential candidate for the November 3 election.
- 23. c** The Road Transport and Highways Ministry has decided to extend the validity of Motor Vehicle documents till the 31st of December.
- 24. a** World Health Organization has declared Africa free of polio, a landmark in a decades-long campaign to eradicate the notorious disease around the world.
- 25. a** SBI General Insurance, one of the leading general insurance companies in India, announced the launch of first-of-its-kind offering, "Shagun - Gift an Insurance", a unique gift of Personal Accident policy.
- 26. b** ICICI Bank has announced the introduction of usage of satellite data—imagery from earth observation satellites—to assess credit worthiness of its customers belonging to the farm sector.
- 27. b** The Reserve Bank has projected India's growth rate at (-) 4.5 percent for 2020-21. In its annual report released RBI projected global growth rate between (-) 6.0 per cent and (-) 7.6 per cent.
- 28. c** AstroSat, India's first multi-wavelength satellite, has detected an extreme ultraviolet (UV) light from a galaxy which is 9.3 billion light-years away from Earth.
- 29. b** James Anderson creates history as he registered his 600th Test wicket in the series-deciding third and final Test match against Pakistan at the Ageas Rose Bowl in Southampton.
- 30. d** Neelkantha Bhanu Prakash, a student of Mathematics at Delhi's St Stephen's College, holds the world record for being the 'fastest human calculator.'
- 31. d** Uttar Pradesh's first 'Medical Device Park' is set to be built in Noida's YEDA City by the Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority.
- 32. b** The "Kiran" mental health rehabilitation helpline number, 1800-599-0019, will provide callers "support for early screening, first-aid, psychological support, distress management, mental well-being, preventing deviant behaviours, psychological crisis management etc.

- 33. b** Manipur State Health and Family Welfare Minister L. Jayantakumar Singh launched Teleconsultation using eSanjeevani OPD platform in Imphal.
- 34. c** NITI Aayog released the Export Preparedness Index (EPI) 2020. EPI intends to identify challenges and opportunities; enhance the effectiveness of government policies and encourage a facilitative regulatory framework.
- 35. a** A parachutist completed the world's first jump from a solar-powered aircraft after the plane soared to a height of 1,520 metres (nearly 5,000 ft) over western Switzerland.
- 36. b** Kenya has become the first country in the world to be awarded the recommended status of the Safer Tourism Resilience Seal by global body Rebuilding Travels.
- 37. b** Gujarat has been ranked first in the first ever Export Preparedness index 2020 released by NITI Ayog.
- 38. b** 'The Discomfort of Evening', written by Marieke Lucas Rijneveld and translated from Dutch by Michele Hutchison, was announced as the winner of the 2020 International Booker Prize, making the writer the youngest winner of the prize at 29.
- 39. c** Subedar Ajay Anant Sawant from the Army's 61 Cavalry has been conferred the Arjuna award for the equestrian sport of tent pegging. Subedar Sawant joined the Army in 1993 and had no prior background in equestrian sports. Subedar Sawant has won several medals over the years. He won his first international participation in 2002 and won the team silver in the 2018 World Cup in Abu Dhabi.
- 40. b** Spinner Pravin Tambe became the first Indian to play in the Caribbean Premier League (CPL).
- 41. c** Piyush Goyal e-launched the National GIS-enabled Land Bank system (<https://iis.ncog.gov.in/parks>) for 6 states. The system is being developed by the integration of the Industrial Information System (IIS) with state GIS systems.
- 42. c** The Ministry of Culture has announced 7 new circles of Archaeological Survey of India, ASI.
- 43. b** The Supreme Court will re-examine its 2004 judgment that held that Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (SC/STs) cannot be further sub-classified for the purpose of reservation.
- 44. a** Amazon founder Jeff Bezos has become the world's first-ever \$200 billionaire. Around \$82 billion of his net worth was added this year after e-commerce and contactless purchasing got a push during the pandemic.
- 45. b** Over 15 crore loans amounting to Rs. 4.78-lakh-crore have been disbursed to women borrowers since the inception of the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) with Tamil Nadu topping the list in availing the loan followed by women in West Bengal and Karnataka.
- 46. b** The Indian Institute of Technology's Alumni Council has signed an agreement with Lomonosov Moscow State University and Russoft to access and transfer key technologies from Russia to build the world's largest and fastest hybrid quantum computer in India.
- 47. a** The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has set up an expert panel to review the charter of its laboratories and minimise the overlap of technologies they are working on at a time when self-reliance in the defence sector is a top priority for the government.
- 48. a** In a major development Atomic Minerals Directorate (sole explorer of Uranium in India), under the Department of Atomic Energy is collaborating with National Institute of Technology (NIT), Durgapur for world's first commercial helium gas exploration plant from hot spring site using non-cryogenic PSA technique from Bakreswar in Birbhum, about 230 kilometres from Kolkata as part of Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative and stop dependency on costly import from the USA.

- 49. b** West Indies all-rounder Dwayne Bravo became the first bowler to take 500 T20 wickets. Bravo achieved the feat during the CPL match.
- 50. b** On 29 August 2020, the National Sports Day is celebrated nation-wide to mark the birth anniversary of hockey legend Major Dhyan Chand and raise awareness about staying fit and healthy.
- 51. b** The defence ministry has taken an in-principle decision to host the next edition of Aero India considered Asia's largest aerospace exhibition in its traditional venue of Bengaluru from February 3-5 next year notwithstanding the coronavirus pandemic.
- 52. c** Member Nations are: Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia.
- 53. a** Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurated Pratheeksha, the first marine ambulance acquired by the state fisheries department, through videoconference.
- 54. b** Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Ravi Shankar Prasad launched "Chunauti"- Next Generation Startup Challenge Contest to further boost startups and software products with special focus on Tier-II towns of the country.
- 55. c** The UK has retained its dominant place in the global offshore wind market in the first half of 2020.
- 56. c** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that he is pained to hear about the ill health of his dear friend Shinzo Abe. Mr Abe resigned from the post of Prime Minister of Japan.
- 57. a** The Banks Board Bureau (BBB) recommended SBI's senior-most managing director Dinesh Kumar Khara as the next chairman of the country's largest lender.
- 58. b** Kerala will set up India's first international women's trade centre (WTC), in consonance with the United Nations sustainable development goals (SDGs), at Angamaly.
- 59. c** Indian Railways is set to meet all its energy needs of more than 33 billion units by 2030. The current annual requirement is about 21 billion units.
- 60. c** Britain's World War II spy, Noor Inayat Khan, became the first Indian-origin woman to be honoured with a memorial Blue Plaque at her former family home in central London.
- 61. d** The country's largest lender State Bank of India has got global recognition for its HR initiative 'Nayi Disha' which over the course of 1.5 years has touched more than 2.40 lakh employees.
- 62. a** The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) notified new rules for administration in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir that specify the functions of the Lieutenant Governor (LG) and the Council of Ministers. According to the transaction of business rules, "police, public order, All India Services and anti-corruption," will fall under the executive functions of the LG, implying that the Chief Minister or the Council of Ministers will have no say in their functioning.
- 63. b** India was elected non-permanent member of the Security Council for a two-year term beginning January 1, 2021.
- 64. c** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh is scheduled to visit Russia next week for the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Defence Ministers meeting.
- 65. c** India has been ranked a lowly 72nd among 106 countries in terms of the average wage per month, while Switzerland topped the chart, according to a global ranking of average wages prepared by Picodi.com.

- 66. c** The Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Government of India and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) India launched the Sustainable Finance Collaborative (SFC).
- 67. b** In the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the Administrative Council, which met under the chairmanship of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, gave approval to establishment of State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) by merging the State Institutes of Education.
- 68. c** Chennai doctors perform Asia's first lung transplant on Covid-19 patient.
- 69. b** Para-swimmer Satyendra Singh Lohia of Madhya Pradesh is the first Divyanga Indian sportsperson of the country, who has been awarded with the Tenzing Norgay Adventure Award.
- 70. c** India and Russia were announced as joint winners of the FIDE Chess Olympiad as Nihal Sarin and Divya Deshmukh lost connection to their games in the second round and had to forfeit.



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