
MANTHAN

A General Awareness Weekly

28st September to 4th October, 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



India inks first green strategic partnership with Denmark

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

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

Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated Destination North East-2020

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Govt looks to develop Great Nicobar Island using PPP model

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

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

GCTC Energy Security Conference 2020

- **Union Minister Petroleum & Natural Gas and Steel Shri Dharmendra Pradhan** said that the clarion call given by Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for an ‘Aatmanirbhar Bharat’ will drive our efforts in evolving a comprehensive energy security architecture in the country. In his keynote address to **‘GCTC Energy Security Conference 2020’ organized by Global Counter Terrorism Council**, he said that it will be marked by continuity of robust energy policies put in place over the last six years, and a change to address the Covid- 19 unleashed challenges.
- Talking about the Conference’s **theme of Energy Security Towards Atmanirbhar Bharat**, Shri Pradhan said that we have adopted a multi-pronged strategy for achieving sustainable energy growth with reduced oil dependency, and align with Atmanirbhar Bharat. We are well on our way to **meet the target of 20% blending of ethanol in petrol and 5% blending of bio-diesel in diesel by 2030.”**
- Shri Pradhan said that the Government is focused to move towards a gas-based economy which is to **be achieved by promoting free gas markets in synchronization with creation of gas infrastructure for increasing gas share in primary energy mix to 15% by 2030**. He said that the Prime Minister Modi’s Vision to **develop ‘one Nation one Gas Grid’**, is guiding us in expanding gas infrastructure in the country.

The GCTF/GCTC is an informal, a-political, multilateral counterterrorism (CT) platform. It was launched in 2011. India is a founding member of GCTF. To reduce the vulnerability of people worldwide to terrorism by preventing, combating, and prosecuting terrorist acts and countering incitement and recruitment to terrorism.

Dharmendra Debendra Pradhan is currently serving as the Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas and Minister of Steel in the Second Modi Ministry. He was elected to the Rajya Sabha in March 2018 from Madhya Pradesh.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Tribes India E-Marketplace launched for handicrafts, organic products

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

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

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

- **Guntur Municipal Corporation (GMC)** has entered the final lap of establishing what is claimed to be the **world's first 'plastic-to-petrol' making unit**. Trials have been completed at the newly set up plant where young engineers-turned- entrepreneurs converted plastic waste into reusable fuels including diesel, petrol and kerosene. **The GMC expects that the 'plastic-to-petrol' plant would produce fuel required to run its vehicles.**
- **This is considered to be 100% indigenous, zero pollution and zero waste-plastic waste vanishing plant**, which will not only be a one-of-its kind facility in the country but also in the world, said municipal commissioner C Anuradha. She said the plant will become operational shortly.
- **The plastic waste processing facility can transform waste end-of-life plastic into usable automobile fuels like diesel and petrol in a singular process of sublimation, condensation and distillation.**

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

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

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

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

International



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

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

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

SAARC must deal with terrorism: External Affairs Minister Jaishankar

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

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

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

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

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

Singapore in world first for facial verification

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

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

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

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

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

World’s first hydrogen-powered yacht unveiled in Monaco

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

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

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

- **Samba schools that organise the event in Rio de Janeiro**, made the announcement. **This is the first time in more than a century that the carnival has been postponed**. The carnival is **celebrated for its colours, the samba dancing and music, the drummers, among other such things**.
- The outlet reports that it can attract a whopping crowd of up to two million people every day, and as such, maintaining a distance and following other safety norms amid the pandemic may be impossible. **The celebration is believed to date back to the 1600s, when it was originally a food festival**.

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

Amsterdam, Helsinki first cities to introduce open AI registers

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

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

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

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

The World's First Happiness Museum Opens in Denmark

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

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

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

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

Dubai to unveil world's largest fountain on Oct 22

- **In a bid to make a Guinness World Record, Dubai is all set to unveil the world's largest fountain on October 22.** The fountain will be located at the Pointe, a lifestyle and dining destination, and will be spread over 14,000 sq ft of sea water while its super shooter will be 105-metre tall and have over 3,000 LED lights.
- **The Palm Fountain will have 20 bespoke shows with five different shows running daily between sunset and midnight (7 pm to 12 am)** while swaying to an array of popular songs including Khaleeji, pop, classic, international and more. Each show will last three minutes and will be performed every 30 minutes.

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

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

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

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

New Caledonia votes on becoming independent from France

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

BSE joins hands with Yes Bank to empower SMEs

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

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

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

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

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

RBI excludes 6 PSBs from Second Schedule of RBI Act

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

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

Goldman Sachs to open office in Hyderabad, second in India

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

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

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

- The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) receives its first public credit rating. This sets the stage for increased investments in food security, employment, and rural economic growth, and is an important step towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- IFAD is the first fund in the United Nations system to receive a public credit rating. The AA+ (stable) rating was announced by Fitch Ratings, which also assigned IFAD a short-term rating of F1+.
- As the only global development organization exclusively dedicated to transforming agriculture, rural economies and food systems by making them more inclusive, productive, resilient and sustainable, IFAD plays a central role in the fight against extreme poverty and food insecurity.

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

Nabard launches sanitation literacy campaign in Karnataka

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

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

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

- **The government has constituted five task forces to make India’s micro, small and medium enterprises future-ready and formulate a concrete strategy towards making the country a leading exporter. MSME Secretary A K Sharma expressed confidence that it would be on the path of implementing the futuristic initiatives by the start of next year.**
- **“We have formed five ministerial task forces which will be headed by our key officers. These five task forces would work for a month in five key areas where we feel that the industry of the country and particularly the MSME sector should head towards,” Sharma said at a virtual session organised by FICCI. He added that one of the five areas identified is Industry 4.0, including elements like artificial intelligence, 3D and virtual reality, and this task force has been formed with the objective of making India a global leader in Industry 4.0.**

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

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

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



Inventions/Discoveries

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

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

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

'World first' floating green hydrogen project coming to Aberdeen

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

Scientists discover new damselfly species in Kannur

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

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

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

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

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

- **ISRO is scheduled to launch its Venus mission in 2025 and France will participate in it. The VIRAL (Venus Infrared Atmospheric Gases Linker) instrument co-developed with the Russian federal space agency Roscosmos and the LATMOS atmospheres, environments and space observations laboratory attached to the French national scientific research centre CNRS has been selected by the ISRO after a request for proposals, it said in a statement.**
- **ISRO chairman K Sivan and CNES president Jean-Yves Le Gall held talks and reviewed the areas driving cooperation between France and India in space. "In the domain of space exploration, France will be taking part in ISRO's mission to Venus, scheduled to launch in 2025. CNES will coordinate and prepare the French contribution, the first time a French payload will be flown on an Indian exploration mission," CNES said in a statement.**

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

IIT Kharagpur launches telemedicine software

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

IIT Jodhpur receives first 'NVIDIA DGX A100' AI Supercomputers in India

- **India Indian Institute of Technology, Jodhpur (IITJ) announced the receipt of NVIDIA DGX A100 to be installed at the Central Computing Facility systems for students, from all departments, including the School of AI and Data Science.**
- **With this, IITJ becomes the first Indian customer & recipient of this industry-leading AI Supercomputer. The DGX A100 infrastructure will be combined with every department and curriculum at IIT Jodhpur, with Machine Learning as a major part of it.**
- **NVIDIA DGX A100 is the universal system for all AI workloads, offering unprecedented compute density, performance, and flexibility in the world's first 5 petaFLOPS AI system.**

- **NVIDIA DGX A100 features the world's most advanced accelerator**, the NVIDIA A100 Tensor Core GPU, enabling enterprises to consolidate training, inference, and analytics into a unified, easy-to-deploy AI infrastructure that includes direct access to NVIDIA AI experts.

NASA lifts off SS Kalpana Chawla cargo spacecraft

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

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

IIT-M team develops sutures with nanofiber yarns

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

India successfully test-fires BrahMos supersonic cruise missile

- **India successfully test-fired BrahMos supersonic cruise missile with a strike range of more than 400 km with several indigenous features. The test firing of the missile was carried out by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) from Balasore in Odisha.**
- **BrahMos surface-to-surface supersonic cruise missile features indigenous Booster and Airframe Section along with many other 'Made in India' sub-systems. Defence Ministry said, the BrahMos Land-Attack Cruise Missile was cruising at a top speed of Mach 2.8. It is one more major step in enhancing the indigenous content.**
- **Jointly developed by the DRDO and NPOM, a leading aerospace enterprise of Russia, the BrahMos missile is a medium-range ramjet supersonic cruise missile capable of being launched from submarines, warships, fighter jets or land. The missile, already operational with the Indian Army, Navy and Air Force, is regarded as the fastest supersonic cruise missile in the world**

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

SPORTS



Sports Personalities in News

South Africa to host World Table Tennis Championships for first time

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

Kiren Rijiju launches new logo of Sports Authority of India

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

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

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

MISCELLANEOUS

Andhra Pradesh's 'YSR Jalakala' scheme to bring more land under cultivation

- Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy launched YSR Jalakala, a scheme to dig borewells free of cost for farmers, and bring an additional five lakh acres under cultivation through groundwater irrigation. With this, the YSRC government has fulfilled another election promise made under Navaratnalu.
- In the next four years, the government plans to spend Rs 2,340 crore on drilling two lakh borewells to benefit upland farmers, who are predominantly dependent on rains. Jagan also promised to set up motors free of cost for all small and marginal farmers, which will require an additional expenditure of Rs 1,600 crore.

Assam govt to start 'Kritagyata' scheme

- Assam chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal directed the Pension and Public Grievances department to ensure the receipt of pension by the state government employees on the same day of retirement. The employees to receive pension on the day of retirement through a web based scheme named 'Kritagyata'.

UP becomes first state in India to conduct 1 crore Covid-19 tests

- Uttar Pradesh became the first state in the country to be undertaking over 1 crore tests to screen coronavirus. Uttar Pradesh's share in the total tests conducted in the country now stands at 13.6%. Data from Indian Council of Medical Research stated that 7,41,96,729 Covid tests have been conducted in the country. Also, nearest contenders Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu are several lakh tests away.

Harijan Sevak Sangh Foundation Day

- The Harijan Sevak Sangh was established on September 30, 1932. It was founded by Gandhiji. He founded it when he was in Yervada Jail, Pune.
- The legend was fasting when he founded the Sangh. It was founded to eliminate untouchability in India. It is headquartered in Kingsway Camp, Delhi. The Sangh helped depressed classes in the Indian society to access public places such as schools, temples, roads and water resources. It also conducted inter caste marriages. Kingsway Camp is one of Gandhian Heritage Sites. These sites are maintained by the Ministry of Culture, GoI.

Akshay's Bellbottom First in the World to start and finish Shoot in Pandemic

- Akshay Kumar's 'Bell bottom' becomes the first film in the world to start and finish shooting during the pandemic. Bell Bottom is a movie directed by Ranjit M Tewari featuring Akshay Kumar, Vaani Kapoor.

The revised guidelines on 'ideal' weight and diet

- The National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), the Hyderabad-based premier research body of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), has released a new set of guidelines, updating norms on recommended dietary allowances (RDA), which is the average daily intake needed for a nutritious diet. Besides several other recommendations, a salient point in the report released this week is the upward revision of the 'ideal' weight of Indian men and women.
- For the latest report, NIN looked at nationally representative data from the National Family Health Survey-4 (NFHS-4, 2015-16), the National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau (2015-16), the World Health Organization (2006-07) and the Indian Academy of Paediatrics (IAP, 2016) to "derive acceptable reference body weight values through the lifespan." The definition for a reference Indian adult man and woman were modified with regard to age (19-39 years) instead of (20-39 years) and a body weight of 65 kg and 55 kg respectively were fixed for a normal Body Mass Index (BMI). Though termed 'ideal', it is more appropriately a measure of the average weight of Indians.
- For children, the requirement is over 60 ml per kg body mass, and for adolescent boys it ranges from 47-60 ml per kg body mass, while for girls, it is 39-49 ml per kg body mass. For a pregnant woman, based on the working intensity, the water required from beverages ranges from 2.1 litres to 3.2 litres per day.
- National Nutrition Month (previously called National Nutrition Week) is celebrated in India every year during September to spread awareness about nutritional needs, deficiencies and malnutrition.

Extinct tree found after 180 years in Kollam grove

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

Strong Tropical Storm Gamma drenches Cancun area of Mexico

- Tropical Storm Gamma hit the resort-dotted coast of Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula at near-hurricane force, flooding streets, knocking down vulnerable buildings and stranding people trying to return from outlying islands.
- The storm came ashore near Tulum with maximum sustained winds of nearly 70 mph (110 kph)" 4 mph (9 kph short of hurricane force), according to the US National Hurricane Centre in Miami. By night, winds had dipped to 60 mph (95 kph), and it was centred about 85 miles (135 km) north-northwest of Tulum, moving to the northwest at 7 mph (11 kph).

PERSONS IN NEWS

Former Union Minister Jaswant Singh passes away

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Senior IAS PD Vaghela appointed as new TRAI chairman

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

AWARDS

Jal Shakti Minister gives away Swachh Bharat Awards-2020

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

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

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

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

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

Kerala Tourism bags PATA Grand Award

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

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Day for Universal Access to Information 28 September

- On 17 November 2015, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) **declared 28 September as International Day for Universal Access to Information.**
- **The theme** for International Day for Universal Access to Information (IDUAI) 2020 is **“Saving lives, Building Trust, Bringing Hope”.**

First International Day of Food Loss and Waste Awareness

- **On 29th September marks the first observance of the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste across the globe.** In the US, though food is lost and wasted at every stage of the food supply chain, food waste has become an overlooked part of our normal lives and business as usual.
- **The first theme for the new Observance will be “Stop food loss and waste. For the people. For the planet.”**

World Heart Day being observed

- **World Heart Day**, aimed at drawing people’s attention to heart ailments and the whole range of associated health issues. **This initiative was launched in 2000 by the World Heart Federation as an annual event and gets celebrated on 29th day of September ever since.**
- In 2020, in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, the World Heart Federation urges people around the world to **‘Use Heart to Beat CVD’**, saying that, **“In the time of Covid-19, taking care of your heart is more important than ever before”.**

International Day of Older Persons: 1 October

- **The year 2020 marks the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations and the 30th Anniversary of the International Day of Older Persons.** This year has also seen an emergence of COVID-19, that has caused an upheaval across the world.

International Day of Non-Violence: 2 October

- **The International Day of Non-Violence is observed on 2 October, the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi,** leader of the Indian independence movement and pioneer of the philosophy and strategy of non-violence.
- According to **General Assembly resolution International Day is an occasion to “disseminate the message of non-violence, including through education and public awareness”. The resolution reaffirms “the universal relevance of the principle of non-violence” and the desire “to secure a culture of peace, tolerance, understanding and non-violence”.**

World Teachers’ Day

- **Held annually on 5 October since 1994, World Teachers’ Day commemorates the anniversary of the adoption of the 1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers.**

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. Recently, Union Government unveiled the first look of India's first Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) train which can attain a top speed of 180 kilometres per hour and whose design is inspired by _____.
(a) Delhi's iconic Red Fort (b) Delhi's iconic Lotus Temple
(c) Mumbai's iconic Victoria terminus (d) Jaipur's iconic Hawa Mahal
2. Recently, the fourth edition of India-Japan Maritime bilateral exercise (JIMEX) begins in _____.
(a) North Arabian Sea (b) North Japan Sea (c) Bay of Bengal (d) South China Sea
3. Which of the following countries will be the first country in the world to use facial verification in its national identity scheme?
(a) Singapore (b) France (c) Saudi Arabia (d) Russia
4. Recently, One of the founding members of BJP Jaswant Singh passed away in New Delhi following a prolonged illness. He never held the post of _____.
(a) Minister of Defence (b) Minister of External Affairs
(c) Vice President of India (d) Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission
5. According to the Nature Index rankings based on output in 82 top journals and chosen by 58 natural-sciences researchers, which of the following cities is world top science city?
(a) Beijing (b) Kolkata (c) Tokyo (d) New York
6. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) declared _____ as International Day for Universal Access to Information.
(a) 25th September (b) 26th September (c) 27th September (d) 28th September
7. The Reserve Bank came out with a five-pillared strategic approach _____ to deal with cyber security threats being faced by Urban Cooperative Banks (UCBs).
(a) 'GUARD' (b) 'HELPER' (c) 'SOLDIER' (d) 'PROTECTOR'
8. The world first' floating green hydrogen project is coming up in:
(a) Abuja (b) Aberdeen (c) Digboi (d) Calgary
9. The world's first shipment of blue ammonia is on its way from Saudi Arabia to _____ where it will be used in power stations to produce electricity without carbon emissions.
(a) China (b) USA (c) Japan (d) South Korea
10. In tennis, which of the following Grand Slams is generally held at the last in a year?
(a) Australian Open (b) French Open (c) Wimbledon (d) US Open
11. For the first time in its over ten-year history, the G20 summit this year will take place virtually amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Which of the following countries will hold the 17th summit in 2022?
(a) Italy (b) France (c) Germany (d) India
12. The Prime Minister will inaugurate "Ganga Avalokan", the first museum on Ganga dedicated to showcase the culture, biodiversity and rejuvenation activities done in Ganga River located at:
(a) Haridwar (b) Varanasi (c) Prayagraj (d) Patna
13. The world's first hydrogen-powered yacht unveiled in:
(a) Monaco (b) Mexico (c) Brazil (d) Argentina

14. Recently, India and _____ decided to elevate their bilateral ties to a “green strategic partnership”, the first of its kind, during a virtual summit.
(a) Norway (b) Denmark (c) Finland (d) Sweden
15. Which of the following countries has now declared that the world-famous samba carnival parade will be postponed due to Covid-19?
(a) Argentina (b) Brazil (c) Mexico (d) Chile
16. Which of the following countries is all set to send out the world’s first mining robot NEO-1 into space by November 2020?
(a) Japan (b) Russia (c) China (d) Israel
17. Which of the following countries is set to host World Table Tennis Championships for first time in 2023?
(a) Nigeria (b) Zimbabwe (c) South Africa (d) Egypt
18. Who has been appointed as the Chairman of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI)?
(a) Krishna Kant Jha (b) Dr P. D. Vaghela (c) Dr. A.K. Sachan (d) Dr. V.K. Makhija
19. Recently, which of the following Indian state’s first and only woman chief minister Syeda Anwara Taimur passed away in Australia?
(a) West Bengal (b) Tripura (c) Assam (d) Meghalaya
20. Recently, Maharashtra government announced the Gan Samragini Lata Mangeshkar award for the year 2020-21 to veteran female playback singer _____.
(a) Sunidhi Chauhan (b) Usha Mangeshkar (c) Neha Kakkar (d) Shreya Ghosal
21. Which of the following states has launched YSR Jalakala, a scheme to dig borewells free of cost for farmers, and bring an additional five lakh acres under cultivation through groundwater irrigation?
(a) Telangana (b) Karnataka (c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Kerala
22. Which of the following are the first two cities in the world to introduce an open Artificial Intelligence (AI) register that updates its residents about the city’s use of AI in public services?
(a) Amsterdam and Helsinki (b) Seoul and Hong Kong
(c) Munich and Madrid (d) Lisbon and Ottawa
23. Which of the following banks has become the first lender to enable document embedding feature on a structured financial messaging system managed by Indian Financial Technology and Allied Services?
(a) UCO Bank (b) Union Bank of India (c) IDBI Bank (d) HDFC Bank
24. Recently, Leading stock exchange BSE has signed a pact with private sector lender _____ to empower the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) listed on the platform.
(a) Yes Bank (b) RBL Bank (c) Federal Bank (d) ICICI Bank
25. Recently, Scientists from the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) have identified a new damselfly species, Platylestes kirani, in the wetlands of _____ district.
(a) Kannur (b) Vijayawada (c) Kurnool (d) Amravati
26. Who has been named as the President of Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) Society and Chairman of Governing Council of FTII?
(a) Pahlaj Nihlani (b) Ramesh Sippi (c) Shatrughan Sinha (d) Shekhar Kapur
27. The Harijan Sevak Sangh was established on September 30 in year _____.
(a) 1905 (b) 1907 (c) 1919 (d) 1932

28. Recently, the first observance of the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste across the globe was on:
 (a) 25th September (b) 26th September (c) 29th September (d) 30th September
29. Which of the following state's tourism's internationally acclaimed 'Human by Nature' campaign has bagged the prestigious PATA Grand Award 2020 for marketing?
 (a) Kerala (b) Karnataka (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Andhra Pradesh
30. World Heart Day, aimed at drawing people's attention to heart ailments and the whole range of associated health issues is celebrated every year on:
 (a) 11th September (b) 17th September (c) 25th September (d) 29th September
31. Which of the following states got its first pine needle power generation plant?
 (a) Uttarakhand (b) Punjab (c) Rajasthan (d) Himachal Pradesh
32. The first movie in the world to start and finish its shoot in pandemic is
 (a) Tiger Exist-3 (b) Jugnoo (c) Bellbottom (d) Sahar-Ek Subah
33. ISRO is scheduled to launch its Venus mission in 2025 and _____ will participate in it.
 (a) Germany (b) France (c) Portugal (d) Mexico
34. Which of the following states became the first state in the country to be undertaking over 1 crore tests to screen coronavirus?
 (a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Maharashtra (c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Gujarat
35. Who among the following has launched CSIR technologies for rural development?
 (a) Narendra Modi (b) Dr. Harsh Vardhan
 (c) Amit Shah (d) Narendra Singh Tomar
36. The BrahMos Land-Attack Cruise Missile cruised at a top speed of _____.
 (a) Mach 1.5 (b) Mach 2.0 (c) Mach 2.5 (d) Mach 2.8
37. Recently, Punjab-based start-up SeguraMAX Global (SeguraMAX) has announced the launch of _____ a pathbreaking, first-of-its-kind technology in the world, which will aid in achieving significant reduction of viruses on surfaces of their products.
 (a) 'Keep-U-Safe' (b) 'Keep-U-Secured' (c) 'Secured & Safe' (d) 'Controlled and Safe'
38. Recently, Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al Ahmad Al Sabah became new ruling emir of:
 (a) Saudi Arabia (b) Oman (c) Kuwait (d) Jordan
39. India plans to restore 26 million hectares of degraded land by year _____.
 (a) 2022 (b) 2025 (c) 2030 (d) 2035
40. The 30th Anniversary of the International Day of Older Persons is/ was held on:
 (a) 25th September (b) 28th September (c) 30th September (d) 1st October
41. Indian embassy in _____ to become the first Indian mission globally to become clean and green with this installation.
 (a) Suriname (b) Mexico (c) South Sudan (d) Madagascar
42. Recently, Indian Railways' electric locomotive manufacturing unit Chittaranjan Locomotive Works (CLW) has turned out first batch of Tejas Express locomotives. The Tejas locomotive is capable to run at _____.
 (a) 80 kmph (b) 110 kmph (c) 130 kmph (d) 160 kmph

43. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) announced that it would hold a day-long webinar with speakers from 12 countries on textile traditions. The present President of ICCR is:
 (a) Amit Mudgal (b) Vijay Anand
 (c) Vinay Sahasrabudhe (d) Deepak Malhotra
44. Which of the following states employees to receive pension on the day of retirement through a web based scheme named 'Kritagyata'?
 (a) Meghalaya (b) Assam (c) Madhya Pradesh (d) Uttar Pradesh
45. Which of the following countries is on track to become the first country in the world to have its own hospitality loyalty program?
 (a) Malaysia (b) Maldives (c) Indonesia (d) Singapore
46. Recently, Reserve Bank of India has approved a three-member panel till the new managing director and chief executive officer take charge of which of the following banks?
 (a) Dhanlaxmi Bank (b) Federal Bank (c) Yes Bank (d) IDFC Bank
47. Recently, RBI has excluded six public sector banks, including OBC and Allahabad Bank, from the Second Schedule of the RBI Act following their merger with other banks. Which of the following is not among the six?
 (a) Corporation Bank (b) Canara Bank (c) United Bank of India (d) Andhra Bank
48. Which of the following IIT's launched telemedicine software which facilitates critical health care support to patients at their doorsteps through remote consultation by a physician?
 (a) IIT Kharagpur (b) IIT Kanpur (c) IIT Hyderabad (d) IIT Kanpur
49. International Day of Non-Violence is observed every year on:
 (a) 25th September (b) 27th September (c) 1st October (d) 2nd October
50. A commercial cargo spacecraft bound for the International Space Station (ISS) launched carrying the name of deceased NASA astronaut _____ the first Indian-born woman to enter space, for her key contributions to human spaceflight.
 (a) Gupreet Dhillon (b) Kalpana Chawla (c) Sunita Williams (d) Amita Nangia
51. Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the world's longest highway tunnel, Atal tunnel at Rohtang in Himachal Pradesh. The _____ long tunnel connects Manali to Lahaul-Spiti valley throughout the year.
 (a) 7.05 Km (b) 8.10 Km (c) 9.02 Km (d) 9.60 Km
52. The Happiness Research Institute has opened the world's first museum dedicated to that now-fleeting feeling in:
 (a) Finland (b) Sweden (c) Denmark (d) Switzerland
53. The 2nd edition of _____ Navy Bilateral Exercise Bongosagar is scheduled to commence in Northern Bay of Bengal.
 (a) India and China (b) India and Bangladesh
 (c) Bhutan and Bangladesh (d) India and Nepal
54. Name the Indian who has made history as the first woman of Indian heritage to take over as the Head of the Sociology Department of the prestigious UK varsity in its over 800-year history?
 (a) Dr. Anamika Duggal (b) Dr. Kritika Kapoor
 (c) Dr. Alankrita Srivastava (d) Dr Manali Desai
55. IFAD is the first fund in the United Nations system to receive a public credit rating. The _____ rating was announced by Fitch Ratings, which also assigned IFAD a short-term rating of F1+.
 (a) AA+ (stable) (b) AB+(less stable) (c) BB+(less stable) (d) CC-(unstable)

56. In India, Investment banking firm Goldman Sachs has opened its second office in:
(a) New Delhi (b) Lucknow (c) Mumbai (d) Hyderabad
57. Recently, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development, NABARD regional office in _____ launched the Sanitation Literacy Campaign to promote literacy on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, (WASH) under Swachh Bharath Mission.
(a) Karnataka (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Kerala (d) Tamil Nadu
58. A team of researchers at _____ is ready with a prototype of suture thread made of nanofiber yarns that is bio-absorbable and can deliver a higher load of antibiotics and/or therapeutics at the site itself.
(a) IIT Madras (b) IIT Bombay (c) IIT Roorkee (d) IIT Delhi
59. Which of the following IIT's announced the receipt of NVIDIA DGX A100 to be installed at the Central Computing Facility systems for students, from all departments, including the School of AI and Data Science?
(a) India Indian Institute of Technology, Jodhpur (b) India Indian Institute of Technology, Mumbai
(c) India Indian Institute of Technology, Varanasi (d) India Indian Institute of Technology, Mandi
60. World Teachers' Day is celebrated on:
(a) 1st October (b) 3rd October (c) 5th October (d) 8th October
61. The world's first 'plastic-to-petrol' making unit established in:
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Gujarat (d) Tamil Nadu
62. Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat gave away the Swachh Bharat Awards-2020 to States, Districts, Blocks and Village Panchayats. Under the Swachh Sundar Samudayik Shouchalaya category, _____ bagged the first position at state level.
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Gujarat (d) Tamil Nadu
63. In a bid to make a Guinness World Record, which of the following cities is all set to unveil the world's largest fountain on October 22, 2020?
(a) Singapore (b) Mali (c) Dubai (d) New York
64. Voters in New Caledonia turned out in large numbers to decide whether the archipelago in the South Pacific should get independence from _____ and break ties that were first established in the mid-19th century.
(a) UK (b) Germany (c) France (d) Portugal
65. The Ministry of Defence has decided to altogether scrap the offset clause from inter-government and single vendor deals for procurement of defence platforms. Under the offset clause, the manufacturer is mandated to invest _____ per cent of the contract amount in the Indian defence sector.
(a) 25 (b) 30 (c) 50 (d) 75
66. The magnetic field of the Sun is unique in that, unlike many other celestial bodies, it reverses its polarity roughly every _____ years.
(a) 11 (b) 16 (c) 20 (d) 25
67. India and _____, in a formal submission to the World Trade Organization (WTO) on October 2, sought a waiver on certain provisions of the international agreements that regulate intellectual property rights to speed up efforts to prevent, treat and contain the COVID-19 pandemic.
(a) South Africa (b) South Korea (c) Australia (d) Austria

68. The Nagorno-Karabakh is a disputed region between which of the following two countries?
(a) India and China (b) Azerbaijan and Armenia
(c) Russia and China (d) China and Japan
69. National Nutrition Month (previously called National Nutrition Week) is celebrated in India every year during _____ to spread awareness about nutritional needs, deficiencies and malnutrition.
(a) July (b) August (c) September (d) October
70. A tree species, long believed extinct, has been rediscovered after a gap of more than 180 years from a sacred grove in:
(a) Kerala (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Uttarakhand



Career
Launcher

ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

1. **b** The government unveiled the first look of India's first Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) train which can attain a top speed of 180 kilometres per hour and whose design is inspired by Delhi's iconic Lotus Temple.
2. **a** The fourth edition of India-Japan Maritime bilateral exercise (JIMEX) begins in North Arabian Sea.
3. **a** Singapore will be the first country in the world to use facial verification in its national identity scheme.
4. **c** One of the founding members of BJP Jaswant Singh served as Minister of Defence, External Affairs and Finance and also Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission.
5. **a** At the top of the rankings is Beijing, followed by New York Boston, San Francisco and Shanghai.
6. **d** The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) declared 28 September as International Day for Universal Access to Information.
7. **a** The Reserve Bank came out with a five-pillared strategic approach 'GUARD' to deal with cyber security threats being faced by Urban Cooperative Banks (UCBs).
8. **b** The "pioneering" Dolphyn project in Aberdeen will sit 15 km off the coast, allowing the UK to harness the power of the superfuel using floating wind turbines.
9. **c** The world's first shipment of blue ammonia is on its way from Saudi Arabia to Japan, where it will be used in power stations to produce electricity without carbon emissions.
10. **d** The Grand Slam itinerary consists of the Australian Open in mid January, the French Open (also known as Roland Garros) from around late May to early June, Wimbledon in June-July, and the US Open in August-September.
11. **d** India will hold the 17th summit in 2022.
12. **a** The Prime Minister will also inaugurate "Ganga Avalokan", the first museum on Ganga dedicated to showcase the culture, biodiversity and rejuvenation activities done in Ganga river. The museum is located at Chandi Ghat, Haridwar.
13. **a** World's first hydrogen-powered yacht unveiled in Monaco.
14. **b** India and Denmark decided to elevate their bilateral ties to a "green strategic partnership", the first of its kind, during a virtual summit.
15. **b** Brazil has now declared that the world-famous samba carnival parade will be postponed.
16. **c** China is all set to send out the world's first mining robot into space by November this year.
17. **c** Durban will become the first South African city to host the event after it enjoyed a commanding 90 votes to 39 victory over its German opponent.
18. **b** Senior Indian Administrative Service Officer Dr P. D. Vaghela has been appointed as the Chairman of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India- TRAI.
19. **c** Assam's first and only woman chief minister Syeda Anwara Taimur passed away in Australia.

- 20. b** The Maharashtra government announced the Gan Samragini Lata Mangeshkar award for the year 2020-21 to veteran female playback singer Usha Mangeshkar.
- 21. c** Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy launched YSR Jalakala, a scheme to dig borewells free of cost for farmers, and bring an additional five lakh acres under cultivation through groundwater irrigation.
- 22. a** Amsterdam and Helsinki became the first two cities in the world to introduce an open Artificial Intelligence (AI) register that updates its residents about the city's use of AI in public services.
- 23. c** IDBI Bank has become the first lender to enable document embedding feature on a structured financial messaging system managed by Indian Financial Technology and Allied Services.
- 24. a** Leading stock exchange BSE has signed a pact with private sector lender Yes Bank to empower the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) listed on the platform.
- 25. a** Scientists from the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) have identified a new damselfly species, *Platylestes kirani*, in the wetlands of Kannur district.
- 26. d** Noted Filmmaker Shekhar Kapur has been named as the President of Film and Television Institute of India, FTII Society and Chairman of Governing Council of FTII.
- 27. d** The Harijan Sevak Sangh was established on September 30, 1932. It was founded by Gandhiji. He founded it when he was in Yervada Jail, Pune.
- 28. *** On 29th September marks the first observance of the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste across the globe.
- 29. a** Kerala Tourism's internationally acclaimed 'Human by Nature' campaign has bagged the prestigious PATA Grand Award 2020 for marketing.
- 30. d** This initiative was launched in 2000 by the World Heart Federation as an annual event and gets celebrated on 29th day of September ever since.
- 31. a** Chief minister Trivendra Singh Rawat inaugurated Uttarakhand's first project for generating power through pine needles with 25 KW capacity made at a cost of Rs 25 lakh in Dunda block of Uttarkashi district.
- 32. c** Bellbottom starring Akshay Kumar is the first movie in the world to start and finish shoot in pandemic.
- 33. b** ISRO is scheduled to launch its Venus mission in 2025 and France will participate in it.
- 34. a** UP became the first state in the country to be undertaking over 1 crore tests to screen coronavirus.
- 35. b** Science and Technology Minister Harsh Vardhan has launched CSIR technologies for rural development.
- 36. d** The BrahMos Land-Attack Cruise Missile was cruising at a top speed of Mach 2.8. It is one more major step in enhancing the indigenous content.
- 37. a** Punjab-based start-up SeguraMAX Global (SeguraMAX) has announced the launch of 'Keep-U-Safe', a pathbreaking, first-of-its-kind technology in the world, which will aid in achieving significant reduction of viruses on surfaces of their products.
- 38. c** Kuwait's Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al Ahmad Al Sabah became the oil-rich nation's new ruling emir, reaching the highest post in the country after decades in its security services.

- 39. c** India plans to restore 26 million hectares of degraded land by 2030.
- 40. d** The year 2020 marks the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations and the 30th Anniversary of the International Day of Older Persons.
- 41. d** The Indian embassy in Madagascar will go solar on October 2, on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, becoming the first Indian mission globally to become clean and green with this installation.
- 42. d** The Tejas locomotive is capable to run at 160 kmph.
- 43. c** Mr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe has been appointed as President of Indian Council for Cultural Relations by President of India.
- 44. b** Assam chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal directed the Pension and Public Grievances department to ensure the receipt of pension by the state government employees on the same day of retirement.
- 45. b** Maldives is on track to become the first country in the world to have its own hospitality loyalty program.
- 46. a** Dhanlaxmi Bank said that the Reserve Bank of India has approved a three-member panel till the new managing director and chief executive officer take charge.
- 47. b** The six banks are Syndicate Bank, Oriental Bank of Commerce (OBC), United Bank of India, Andhra Bank, Corporation Bank, and Allahabad Bank.
- 48. a** IIT Kharagpur launched telemedicine software which facilitates critical health care support to patients at their doorsteps through remote consultation by a physician.
- 49. d** The International Day of Non-Violence is observed on 2 October, the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, leader of the Indian independence movement and pioneer of the philosophy and strategy of non-violence.
- 50. b** A commercial cargo spacecraft bound for the International Space Station (ISS) launched carrying the name of deceased NASA astronaut Kalpana "K.C." Chawla, the first Indian-born woman to enter space, for her key contributions to human spaceflight.
- 51. c** The 9.02 Km long tunnel connects Manali to Lahaul-Spiti valley throughout the year.
- 52. c** The Copenhagen-based Happiness Research Institute has opened the world's first museum dedicated to that now-fleeting feeling.
- 53. b** The 2nd edition of Indian and Bangladesh Navy Bilateral Exercise Bongosagar is scheduled to commence in Northern Bay of Bengal.
- 54. d** An academic from Newnham College at the University of Cambridge, Dr Manali Desai, has made history as the first woman of Indian heritage to take over as the Head of the Sociology Department of the prestigious UK varsity in its over 800-year history.
- 55. a** IFAD is the first fund in the United Nations system to receive a public credit rating. The AA+ (stable) rating was announced by Fitch Ratings, which also assigned IFAD a short-term rating of F1+.
- 56. d** "The new Hyderabad office will be the second location for Goldman Sachs Services in India, and will complement the Bengaluru office footprint in terms of both execution and support that it will provide to the firm's businesses globally."

- 57. a** National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development, NABARD regional office in Karnataka launched the Sanitation Literacy Campaign to promote literacy on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, (WASH) under Swachh Bharath Mission.
- 58. a** A team of researchers at IIT Madras is ready with a prototype of suture thread made of nanofiber yarns that is bio-absorbable and can deliver a higher load of antibiotics and/or therapeutics at the site itself.
- 59. a** India Indian Institute of Technology, Jodhpur (IITJ) announced the receipt of NVIDIA DGX A100 to be installed at the Central Computing Facility systems for students, from all departments, including the School of AI and Data Science.
- 60. c** Held annually on 5 October since 1994, World Teachers' Day commemorates the anniversary of the adoption of the 1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers.
- 61. a** Guntur Municipal Corporation (GMC) has entered the final lap of establishing what is claimed to be the world's first 'plastic-to-petrol' making unit. Trials have been completed at the newly set up plant where young engineers-turned- entrepreneurs converted plastic waste into reusable fuels including diesel, petrol and kerosene. The GMC expects that the 'plastic-to-petrol' plant would produce fuel required to run its vehicles.
- 62. c** Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat gave away the Swachh Bharat Awards-2020 to States, Districts, Blocks and Village Panchayats. The awards were given particularly under the drinking water and cleanliness categories. The Union Government had earlier launched three missions under Swachh Sundar Samudayik Shouchalaya, Samudayik Shouchalaya Abhiyan and Gandagi Mukth Bharat. Under the Swachh Sundar Samudayik Shouchalaya category Gujarat bagged the first position at state level whereas Tirunelveli in Tamil Nadu got the Award for cleanliness at District Level.
- 63. c** In a bid to make a Guinness World Record, Dubai is all set to unveil the world's largest fountain on October 22. The fountain will be located at the Pointe, a lifestyle and dining destination, and will be spread over 14,000 sq ft of sea water while its super shooter will be 105-metre tall and have over 3,000 LED lights.
- 64. c** Voters in New Caledonia turned out in large numbers on Sunday to decide whether the archipelago in the South Pacific should get independence from France and break ties that were first established in the mid-19th century.
- 65. b** CAG, in its recent defence offset report tabled in Parliament, made stern observations about foreign firms such as Dassault Aviation not meeting obligations of domestic investment undertaken at the time of securing procurement contracts. The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has now decided to altogether scrap the offset clause from inter-government and single vendor deals for procurement of defence platforms. With the offset clause, like in the case of procurement of 36 Rafale jets from France, the manufacturer Dassault Aviation and MBDA were mandated to invest 30 per cent of the contract amount in the Indian defence sector.
- 66. a** The magnetic field of the Sun is unique in that, unlike many other celestial bodies, it reverses its polarity roughly every 11 years. Regular observations of the Sun's magnetic field begin in 1967, and, so far, we have data for the period from 1967 almost to the present, spanning the solar cycles 20-24.
- 67. a** India and South Africa, in a formal submission to the World Trade Organization (WTO) on October 2, sought a waiver on certain provisions of the international agreements that regulate intellectual property rights to speed up efforts to prevent, treat and contain the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 68. b** The Azerbaijani Army has lost more than 3,000 servicemen since the eruption of hostilities in conflict-torn Nagorno-Karabakh, the press secretary of the president of the self-proclaimed Republic of Artsakh.

- 69. c** The National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), the Hyderabad-based premier research body of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), has released a new set of guidelines, updating norms on recommended dietary allowances (RDA), which is the average daily intake needed for a nutritious diet. The definition for a reference Indian adult man and woman were modified with regard to age (19-39 years) instead of (20-39 years) and a body weight of 65 kg and 55 kg respectively were fixed for a normal Body Mass Index (BMI). Though termed 'ideal', it is more appropriately a measure of the average weight of Indians. National Nutrition Month (previously called National Nutrition Week) is celebrated in India every year during September to spread awareness about nutritional needs, deficiencies and malnutrition.
- 70. a** A tree species, long believed extinct, has been rediscovered after a gap of more than 180 years from a sacred grove in Kollam district, Kerala. Scientists at the Jawaharlal Nehru Tropical Botanic Garden and Research Institute (JNTBGRI) at Palode here have identified the tree as *Madhuca diplostemon* (family Sapotaceae), a threatened species of the Western Ghats whose specimen was first collected in 1835.

