
MANTHAN

A General Awareness Weekly

31st August to 6th September, 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
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National



Kesavananda Bharati, petitioner in landmark SC judgement on Constitution, is no more

- **Kesavananda Bharati**, the head of Edneer Mutt at Kasaragod in Kerala whose petition in the Supreme Court led to the landmark verdict of 1973 that outlined the basic structure doctrine of the Constitution, died on 6th September 2020.
- **Kesavananda Bharati** was the head of Jagadguru Shankaracharya Samsthanam mutt, which belongs to the Shankaracharya tradition. The mutt is believed to have been established by Totakacharya, one of the first four disciples of Adi Shankaracharya.
- He was the petitioner in the **His Holiness Kesavananda Bharati Sripadagalvaru and Ors. Vs. State of Kerala and others** case in which the Supreme Court ruled that the basic structure of the Constitution is inviolable, and cannot be amended by Parliament.
- It was on March 21, 1970 that Bharati moved the apex court, challenging the Kerala government's takeover of land owned by the mutt as per the land reforms Act of 1969.
- The Kerala Land Reforms Act, 1963 (Act 1 of 1964), in the principal land reform law in the State of Kerala and was included in the Ninth Schedule to the Constitution. Following enactment of the law, the mutt had lost its property and was struggling for financial resources for its functioning and charitable activities.
- However, when the 29th Constitutional Amendment was adopted by Parliament giving protection to Kerala laws, the seer moved the Supreme Court challenging it. Veteran barrister M K Nambiar, the father of K K Venugopal, currently Attorney General of India, had introduced Bharati to jurist Nani Palkhivala and he had helped Bharati file the petition in Supreme Court.
- In his petition, Bharati had sought enforcement of rights guaranteed under Article 25 (Right to practice and propagate religion), Article 26 (Right to manage religious affairs), Article 14 (Right to equality), Article 19(1) (f) (freedom to acquire property), Article 31 (Compulsory Acquisition of Property).
- The petition was heard by a 13-member bench, the largest-ever bench in the history of the Supreme Court. The court heard the petition for 68 working days, from October 31, 1972 to March 23, 1973. The 13-judge Constitution bench of the Supreme Court deliberated on the limitations, if any, of the powers of the elected representatives of the people and the nature of fundamental rights of an individual.
- In a verdict divided 7-6, the court held that while the Parliament has 'wide' powers, it did not have the power to destroy or emasculate the basic elements or fundamental features of the constitution.
- The apex court ruled that the 29th Amendment is valid and held that the two Kerala land Acts that were included in the Ninth Schedule are entitled to the protection of Article 31B of the (validation of certain acts and regulations) Constitution. The verdict had held that though Parliament has power to amend under Article 368 of the Constitution, it did not have the power to emasculate its basic features.

Sarv Mittra Sikri was the 13th Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India from 22 January 1971 until his retirement on 25 April 1973. Kesavananda Bharati vs. The State of Kerala is a major decision during his tenure as chief justice. He is credited with outlining the Basic Structure doctrine of the Constitution. The basic structure doctrine is an Indian judicial principle, most notably propounded by Justice Hans Raj Khanna, that the Constitution of India has certain basic features that cannot be altered or destroyed through amendments by the Parliament of India. Key among these “basic features”, as expounded by Justice Khanna, are the fundamental rights guaranteed to individuals by the constitution. The doctrine thus forms the basis of the power of the Supreme Court of India to review and strike down constitutional amendments and acts enacted by the Parliament which conflict with or seek to alter this “basic structure” of the Constitution.

Former President Pranab Mukherjee passed away

- **Former President of India and Congress party veteran Pranab Mukherjee passed away.** The veteran politician, who spent five decades in politics, had undergone brain surgery at Delhi’s Army Research and Referral hospital.
- **Fondly called ‘Pranab Da’ by his peers and friends, Mukherjee was born on December 11, 1935 in Birbhum district, West Bengal.** He completed Masters in Political Science and History and LLB degree from University of Calcutta. Impressed with his political acumen, **Indira Gandhi brought Mukherjee into the Congress and initiated his parliamentary journey through the Rajya Sabha in 1969.**
- **Mukherjee first became the general secretary of the Congress in 1998.** He was a member of the Congress Working Committee for 23 years. It’s a mixed bag legacy for the politician who won his first election in 2004 from Jangipur in West Bengal. **Mr Mukherjee was also Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission.** He was **elected to Rajya Sabha five times and twice to Lok Sabha.** Mr Mukherjee served as Leader of both houses of Parliament.
- **Mukherjee became India’s youngest finance minister in 1982 at the age of 47.** From 2004, he went on to head three crucial ministries — external affairs, defence and finance — and became the first occupant of the Rashtrapati Bhavan to have this distinction. The Union Budget of India for 2012–2013 was presented by Pranab Mukherjee, on 16 March 2012, which was the 7th budget of his career.
- **Mukherjee was the 13th President of India from 2012 to 2017.** A tough taskmaster, avid reader and history aficionado, Mukherjee ensured that he leaves his mark on the presidency. He made it easier for common people to visit the Rashtrapati Bhavan. **Pranab Mukherjee was honored with Bharat Ratna, India’s highest civilian award in 2019.**

Bharat Ratna is the highest civilian award of the Republic of India. Instituted on 2 January 1954, the award is conferred in recognition of exceptional service/performance of the highest order, without distinction of race, occupation, position, or sex. The first recipients of the Bharat Ratna were: the last Governor-General of the Dominion of India – C. Rajagopalachari, second President and the first Vice President of India – Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, and Nobel Prize Laureate, Physicist C. V. Raman; who were honoured in 1954. Since then, the award has been bestowed upon 48 individuals, including 16 who were awarded posthumously. On 25 January 2019, the government announced the award to social activist Nanaji Deshmukh (posthumously), singer-music director Bhupen Hazarika (posthumously) and to the former President of India, Pranab Mukherjee. In 2014, cricketer Sachin Tendulkar, then aged 40, became the youngest recipient; while social reformer Dhondo Keshav Karve was awarded on his 100th birthday. The first singer to be awarded Bharat Ratna was M. S. Subbulakshmi.

India’s First Regional Voters’ Awareness Centre to come up in Jaipur

- **The Election Commission will set up the country’s first regional voters’ awareness centre in Jaipur, which will cater to four states Rajasthan, Haryana, Punjab and Madhya Pradesh.**
- **The centre will carry out various awareness activities under the Systematic Voters’ Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) programme.** “Jaipur is set to be distinguished as being the first SVEEP Regional Centre of the ECI in the country, Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora said. He re-emphasised the need for ensuring maximum utilisation of digital media platforms for organising meetings, webinars, video conferences and training, a statement said.

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

India to host summit of SCO council of heads of government

- India will host a summit of the council of heads of government of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) on November 30 with a focus on contributing to the trade and economic agenda of the influential grouping.
- India has been focussing on expanding its cooperation with the SCO, an eight-nation regional grouping that represents around 42% of the world's population and 20% of the global GDP.
- India's chairmanship of the SCO council of heads of government during 2020 culminating in the summit in India on November 30, affords us an opportunity to contribute in a substantive way on the trade and economic agenda of SCO that will be the main mandate of the summit.

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

GI tag on Sikkim's red chilli

- "Dalle khursani" or the red cherry pepper chilli, which is grown in Sikkim and considered as one among hottest varieties in the world, has earned a geographical indication (GI) tag from the Union department of industry promotion and internal trade.
- Although the plant is cultivated in the neighbouring Darjeeling hills also, it was included in the Geographical Indications Registry of the Government of India on the basis of an application filed by the Guwahati-headquartered North Eastern Regional Agricultural Marketing Corporation Limited (Neramac) on behalf of Sikkim.

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

India, Australia and Japan to launch resilient supply chains for Indo-Pacific

- India, Australia and Japan agreed to launch an initiative to ensure the resilience of supply chains in the Indo-Pacific, with the move coming against the backdrop of tensions created by China's aggressive actions across the region.
- The creation of the "Supply Chain Resilience Initiative" was mooted by Japan amid the Covid-19 crisis, which has played havoc with supply and manufacturing chains, and the three countries held preliminary discussions on the issue over the past few weeks, people familiar with developments said.

Tripura-Bangladesh inland waterways route made operational

- **The Sonamura-Daudkandi inland waterways protocol route connecting Tripura to Bangladesh made operational in presence of Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb** and Chairman of the Land Ports Authority of India (LPAI), Aditya Mishra, Secretary of Tripura's Industry and Commerce Department, Kiran Gitte said.
- **The 90 km long Sonamura-Daudkandi route, included in the list of Indo-Bangla protocol (IBP) routes** in May this year, is expected to boost trade, Gitte, who visited the spot. Director of Land Port Authority of India (LPAI) Ajit Kumar Singh, said that a barge carrying goods would arrive at Sonamura on September 5.

Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) was created by Government of India on 27 October 1986 for development and regulation of Inland waterways for shipping and navigation. There are 111 officially notified Inland National Waterways (NWs) in India identified for the purposes of inland water transport, as per The National Waterways Act, 2016. Out of the 111 NWs, 106 were created in 2016. The NW network covers around 20,275.5 km. NW-1, 2, & 3 are already operational. National Waterway 1 or NW-1 or Ganga-Bhagirathi-Hooghly river system is located in India and runs from Haldia (Sagar) to Prayagraj across the Ganges, Bhagirathi and Hooghly river systems. National Waterway 2 (NW-2) is a section of the Brahmaputra River having a length of 891 km between the Bangladesh border near Dhubri and Sadiya in Assam.

PM SVANidhi scheme is helping street vendors and small traders become self-reliant

- **Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas and Steel Dharmendra Pradhan said Odisha has been among the top 10 States to benefit from the PM SVANidhi scheme.** He added that collateral-free loans up to Rs 10,000 have been provided to street vendors in Sambalpur, Cuttack, Berhampur, Baleswar and other towns of Odisha.
- Union Minister has said that the PM SVANidhi scheme is helping street vendors and small traders become self-reliant. He said, more than 1 lakh loans have been sanctioned under this scheme since its launch in June 2020.

The PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) was launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs on June 01, 2020 for providing affordable Working Capital loan to street vendors to resume their livelihoods that have been adversely affected due to Covid-19 lockdown. The duration of the scheme is until March 2022. Vendors can avail a working capital loan of up to Rs. 10,000, which is repayable in monthly instalments in the tenure of one year. On timely/ early repayment of the loan, an interest subsidy @ 7% per annum will be credited to the bank accounts of beneficiaries through Direct Benefit Transfer on quarterly basis. There will be no penalty on early repayment of loan. The scheme promotes digital transactions through cash back incentives up to an amount of Rs. 100 per month. The vendors can avail the facility of escalation of the credit limit on timely/ early repayment of loan.

September to be observed as 'Nutrition Month,' schools must introduce nutrition

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that **September will be observed as "Nutrition Month"**. "For our children and our students to display their optimum potential, show their mettle; nutrition and proper nourishment play a very big role."
- **The month of September will be observed as 'Nutrition Month' in the entire nation," said the Prime Minister during his monthly "Mann ki Baat" radio programme.** "During nutrition month, a food and nutrition quiz will be organized on MyGov portal and there will be a meme competition. You should participate in it and motivate others to take part," he added.
- **Prime Minister said that we have a maxim 'Yatha Annam Tatha Mannam' which means our mental and intellectual development is directly related to the quality of our food intake.** The schools must introduce 'nutrition monitor' like the class monitor to raise awareness"

17th ASEAN-India Economic Ministers' consultations held

- Minister of Commerce and Industry & Railways **Piyush Goyal** and **Minister of Industry and Trade of Vietnam Tran Tuan Anh** co-chaired the 17th ASEAN-India Economic Ministers Consultations held virtually.
- The meeting was **attended by the Trade Ministers of all the 10 ASEAN countries Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.**
- The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to take collective actions in mitigating the economic impact of the pandemic and **resolved to ensure macroeconomic and financial stability and resilient supply chain connectivity**, particularly the unimpeded flow of essential goods and medicines in the region in compliance with the WTO rules. The Ministers' discussion **centred on the review of the ASEAN India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA).**
- **The ASEAN India Business Council (AIBC) Report** has recommended that the AITIGA be reviewed **for mutual benefit.** The Ministers instructed the senior officials to **start the discussions to determine the scope of the review at the earliest to, inter-alia, make the Free Trade Agreement more user-friendly, simple, and trade facilitative for businesses.**

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

Cabinet approves introduction of Jammu & Kashmir Official Languages Bill 2020 in Parliament

- The Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister has **approved the introduction in Parliament of the Jammu and Kashmir Official Languages Bill 2020** in which five languages will be **official languages.**
- These are Urdu, Kashmiri, Dogri, Hindi and English. Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh said **inclusion of Dogri, Hindi and Kashmiri as official languages in Jammu and Kashmir** is not only a fulfillment of a long-pending public demand but is also in keeping with the spirit of equality.

The Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India lists the official languages of the Republic of India. At the time when the Constitution was enacted, **inclusion in this list meant that the language was entitled to representation on the Official Languages Commission**, and that the language would be one of the bases that would be drawn upon to enrich Hindi, the official language of the Union. **As per Articles 344(1) and 351 of the Indian Constitution, the eighth schedule includes the recognition of the 22 languages. Of these 22 languages, 14 were initially included in the Constitution.** Subsequently, Sindhi was added in 1967 by 21st constitutional amendment act; Konkani, Manipuri (Meitei) and Nepali were added in 1992 by 71st Constitutional Amendment Act; and Bodo, Dogri, Maithili and Santali were added in 2004 by 92nd Constitutional Amendment Act.

Uttarakhand, Karnataka paired under Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat programme

- **Uttarakhand and Karnataka are paired under Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat programme to promote national integration** through mutual understanding. Both the states have established relations through sports, trade and culture. **Uttarakhand had inspired people in Karnataka in forest conservation.**
- The famous Chipko Andolan or hug the trees movement of Uttarakhand had inspired Appiko Andolan in Uttara Kannada district of Karnataka. Appiko is the Kannada word for Chipko. It was Sunderlal Bahuguna, one of the leaders of Chipko movement who visited the state in 1983 to inspire villagers in Gubbigadde in Uttara Kannada on the non-violent struggle to save trees.

Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat was announced by Hon'ble Prime Minister on 31st October, 2015 on the occasion of the 140th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Subsequently, the Finance Minister announced the initiative in his Budget Speech for 2016-17. The Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat programme, aims to actively enhance interaction between people of diverse cultures living in different States and UTs in India, with the objective of promoting greater mutual understanding amongst them. As per the programme, each year, every State/UT would be paired with another State/UT in India for reciprocal interaction between the people. Ministry of Education is the nodal ministry for the EBSB programme.

Naveen Patnaik launches citizen-centric apps

- Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik dedicated 100 functional micro composite centres and 50 functional material recovery facilities in various urban local bodies of the State. He also laid the foundation stone for establishment of 51 fecal sludge treatment plants to ensure larger coverage of this facility across all cities and towns, to mark the State-level Local Self Government Day.
- As a part of 5T mandate, Naveen also launched mobile App 'AMA SAHAR' and 'SWACHHA SAHAR ODISHA' web app to provide citizen centric services. With launching of the web app, the ULBs will be able to submit utilisation certificate online which will bring better fiscal management.

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

Union Cabinet approves Mission Karmayogi

- The Union Cabinet gave its approval for Mission Karmayogi, a new national capacity building and performance evaluation programme for civil servants.
- The scheme will cover 46 lakh Central government employees at all levels, and involve an outlay of Rs. 510 crore over a five-year period. An annual subscription of Rs. 431 will be charged per civil servant.
- The programme will support a transition from "rules-based to roles-based" HR management, so that work allocations can be done by matching an official's competencies to the requirements of the post.
- The capacity building programme will be delivered through an Integrated Government Online Training or iGOTKarmayogi digital platform, with content drawn from global best practices rooted in Indian national ethos.
- The Prime Minister's Public Human Resource Council will be set up as the apex body to direct the reforms, with an autonomous Capacity Building Commission to be established to manage the reformed system and harmonise training standards across the country, so that there is a common understanding of India's aspirations and development goals

During the British raj, Warren Hastings laid the foundation of civil service and Charles Cornwallis reformed, modernised, and rationalised it. Hence, Charles Cornwallis is known as 'the Father of civil service in India'. The Constitution, under Article 312 gives authority to the Rajya Sabha (the upper house of Parliament) to set up new branches of the All India Services with a two-thirds majority vote. The Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Police Service (IPS), and Indian Forest Service (IFoS) have been established under this constitutional provision. The present modern civil service was formed after the partition of India in 1947. It was Sardar Patel's vision that the civil service should strengthen cohesion and national unity who called civil servants the 'steel frame' of independent India. The values of integrity, impartiality, and merit remain the guiding principles of the Indian civil services. The highest ranking civil servant is the Cabinet Secretary. He is ex-officio Chairman of the Civil Services Board. Satyendranath Tagore was the first Indian to join the Indian Civil Service.

Assam re-launches SVAYEM scheme to provide self-employment to around 2 lakh youths

- The Assam government re-launched a scheme to provide self-employment to around 2 lakh youths of the state. Known as Swami Vivekananda Assam Youth Empowerment (SVAYEM), it would provide 50 thousand rupees each as seed money to selected youths to start business ventures.

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

Uttar Pradesh to allocate outlets under Public Distribution System to women SHGs

- In a major step towards self-reliance of the women in the state, **Uttar Pradesh Government has decided to allocate outlets under Public Distribution System to women self-help groups**. These are the outlets which are lying unattended in state. The move will expedite the food distribution to the needy hit by the pandemic.
- The State Government has decided to give women self-help groups priority during reallocation of **PDS shops in rural and urban areas**. Currently, there are more than **2,000 PDS shops ready for reallocation in the state** whose licences have been cancelled earlier due to different reasons. Rural Development Ministry has been asked to provide the details of those self-help groups who are functioning effectively and are able to run the PDS outlets.
- With a network of more than **400,000 Fair Price Shops (FPS)**, the **Public Distribution System (PDS) in India** is perhaps the **largest distribution machinery of its type in the world**. PDS is said to distribute each year commodities worth more than **Rs 15,000 crore** to about **16 crore families**.

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

Karnataka to take up Rupees 600-cr. watershed project with World Bank assistance

- **Karnataka is set to implement a Rupees 600-crore project for brining 10 lakh hectares of parched land in 10 districts under watershed development with World Bank assistance.**
- The project titled '**Rejuvenating watershed for agriculture resilience through innovative development**' would be **implemented for the next six years**. Under the project, the State government would provide **Rupees 180 crore** while the World Bank would extend an assistance of **Rupees 420 crore**, the Minister said.

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

J-K LG Launches SPARROW System for J-K Administrative Service Officers

- **Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha launched Smart Performance Appraisal Report Recording Online Window (SPARROW) system for Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Service officers**, at **Raj Bhavan**.
- The **SPARROW system is aimed at bringing more transparency, avoiding loss of Appraisal Reports during the transition**, ensuring better monitoring and timely completion of performance appraisals.

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

Indian Railways develops remote-controlled medical trolley 'MEDBOT' to deliver food, medicines to COVID-19 patients

- During Corona crisis, apart from providing transport facilities and essential items like foodgrains to people, Indian Railways has also provided facilities for COVID-19 patients.
- Indian Railways has developed a remote-controlled medical trolley named 'MEDBOT' to help deliver food and medicines to COVID-19 patients. It is providing service in the Central Hospital of the Diesel Rail Engine Factory of Indian Railways.

Indian Railways (IR) is the fourth-largest railway network in the world by size. There are a total of 18 Railway zones. South Coast Railway Zone is the newest and 18th railway zone, headquartered at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. Piyush Vedprakash Goyal is currently serving as the Minister of Railways and Commerce in the Government of India. He was elected as the BJP candidate from Maharashtra for the Rajya Sabha on 3 June 2016.

Kerala tops in care for children

- Kerala, Goa, Tripura, Tamil Nadu and Mizoram are among the top five States for well-being of children, according to a report brought out by non-governmental organisation Mobile Creches and launched by Vice-President Venkaiah Naidu.
- The young child outcomes index measures health, nutrition and cognitive growth with the help of indicators such as infant mortality rate, stunting and net attendance at the primary school level.
- It identifies eight States that have scores below the country's average: they are Assam, Meghalaya, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.
- The index is part of the 'State of the Young Child' in India report released the 50-year-old NGO, which works in the field of early childhood care and development by ensuring creche services at construction sites and slum settlements across several cities.
- The index has been constructed for two time periods (2005–2006 and 2015–2016) to enable inter-State comparisons as well as provide an idea of change over time. The report has also developed another index called the young child environment index to understand the policy and environment enablers that influence a child's well-being.
- According to the environment index, Kerala, Goa, Sikkim, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh secured the top five positions. It uses five policy enablers that influence child well-being outcomes, including poverty alleviation, strengthening primary healthcare, improving education levels, safe water supply and promotion of gender equity. According to the environment index, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh are the worst performing states.

Social Justice Ministry launched mental health rehabilitation helpline

- Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Thaawarchand Gehlot has launched the 24x7 Toll-Free Mental Health Rehabilitation Helpline "KIRAN".
- The "Kiran" mental health rehabilitation helpline number, 1800-599-0019, will provide callers "support for early screening, first-aid, psychological support, distress management, mental well-being, preventing deviant behaviours, psychological crisis management etc.

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



Diplomat Mustapha Adib on course to be designated new Lebanon PM

- Lebanon's ambassador to Germany Mustapha Adib is on course to become the country's next prime minister after securing major political backing. Mr. Adib was named by four former Prime Ministers on the eve of binding consultations between the President and parliamentary blocs on their choice for the post.
- The announcement came a day before French President Emmanuel Macron is due to arrive for a two day-visit, during which he is expected to press Lebanese officials to formulate a new political pact to lift the country out of its multiple crises. Lebanon's Prime Minister Hassan Diab has resigned from his post in the wake of major blast in Beirut that has triggered public outrage.

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

Ghani names council for peace deal with Taliban

- Afghanistan's President has appointed a council for national reconciliation, which will have final say on whether the government will sign a peace deal with the Taliban after what are expected to be protracted and uncertain negotiations with the insurgents.
- The negotiations were envisaged under a U.S.-Taliban peace agreement signed in February as intra-Afghan talks to decide the war-torn country's future. However, their start has been hampered by a series of delays that have frustrated Washington. Some had expected the negotiations to begin earlier this month.
- Afghan President Ashraf Ghani issued a decree late establishing the 46-member council, led by his former rival in last year's presidential election, Abdullah Abdullah, who is now in the government.

Afghanistan is a landlocked country located within south-central Asia. Kabul is the capital of Afghanistan and its largest city. Mohammad Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai is the current President of Afghanistan. The afghani is the currency of Afghanistan, issued by the central bank Da Afghanistan Bank. Abdullah Abdullah leads the High Council for National Reconciliation (HCNR), which is expected to lead the intra-Afghan peace talks with the Taliban. He served as Chief Executive Officer of the Unity Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan from September 2014 until March 2020.

Incheon International Airport first in Asia-Pacific to get ACI World health accreditation

- Airports Council International (ACI) Asia-Pacific announced that Incheon International Airport in Seoul is the first airport in the Asia-Pacific region to be accredited under the ACI Airport Health Accreditation programme.
- Areas of assessment for accreditation include cleaning and disinfection, physical distancing (where feasible and practical), staff protection, physical layout, passenger communications and passenger facilities.

Indian-origin Pritam Singh formally takes charge as first Leader of the Opposition in Singapore

- **Pritam Singh, Singapore's Indian-origin politician scripted history when Parliament conferred the duties and privileges to him as the city-state's first Leader of the Opposition.**
- **Singh's Workers' Party won 10 parliamentary seats out of the 93 it contested in the July 10 General Election, making it the biggest opposition presence in Singapore's parliamentary history. Singh is the Secretary-General of Workers' Party.**

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.

India, Russia to hold Naval drills in Andaman Sea

- Amid high operational alert by the Indian Navy in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) **due to the ongoing standoff with China in Ladakh, India and Russia are scheduled to hold the bilateral naval exercise, Indra 2020, in the Andaman Sea, close to the strategic Strait of Malacca.** "Three Russian navy ships will take part in the exercise on September 4 and 5 along with an equal number from the Indian Navy, along with some aircraft".
- The timing of the exercise **coincides with Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's visit to Russia for the Shanghai Cooperation organisation (SCO) defence ministers meet and also comes just after India withdrew from the Kavkaz-2020 multinational exercise in Russia** scheduled for later this month. While the stated reason for the withdrawal was the COVID-19 pandemic, defence sources had said that it due to the participation of Chinese troops.

The **Andaman Sea (also known as the Burma Sea) is a marginal sea of northeastern Indian Ocean bounded by the coastlines of Myanmar and Thailand along the Gulf of Martaban** and west side of the Malay Peninsula, and separated from the Bay of Bengal to its west by the Andaman Islands and the Nicobar Islands. **Its southernmost end is defined by Breueh Island, an island just north of Sumatra, and communicates with the Malacca Strait.** The fishery and tourist infrastructure was severely damaged by the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami.

World's first fossil-free steelmaking starts in northern Sweden

- **The unique pilot plant in Luleå is a first step in decarbonizing the steel industry, which counts for 7% of global man-made greenhouse gas emissions.**
- The opening of unique pilot plant in Northern Sweden is a first step in decarbonizing the steel industry, which today counts for 7 percent of global human-made greenhouse gas emissions.
- "Today, you are laying the foundations that will **enable the Swedish steel industry to be entirely fossil- and carbon dioxide-free in 20 years,**" said Prime Minister Stefan Lofven, **attending the launch of HYBRIT (Hydrogen Breakthrough Ironmaking Technology) plant in Lulea.**
- **The plant is a jointly owned company formed by the steel manufacturer SSAB, the mining company LKAB and the energy company Vattenfall.** All three are based in northern Sweden with the mining, electricity production, and the iron-steel factory.
- **"Together we can rebuild Sweden as the world's first fossil-free welfare nation," Lovfen added.** HYBRIT aims at replacing coking coal, traditionally needed for ore-based steelmaking, with fossil-free electricity and hydrogen. The result will be the world's first fossil-free steelmaking technology, with virtually no carbon footprint.

Tunisian Prime Minister wins confidence vote amid crisis

- **Tunisian lawmakers approved Hichem Mechichi as the country's new Prime Minister** after pressing him for 11 hours over how he will bring the country out of an economic and social crisis that has driven a rise in migration to Europe and been worsened by the virus pandemic. **Mr. Mechichi and his proposed government won a confidence vote with 134 votes in favour and 67 against.**

Tunisia is a country in the Maghreb region of North Africa, Tunisia is bordered by Algeria to the west and southwest, Libya to the southeast, and the Mediterranean Sea to the north and east. Tunisia's population was 11.7 million in 2019. Tunisia's name is derived from its capital city Tunis. The dinar is the currency of Tunisia.

Germany joins Indo-Pacific club aimed at securing trade routes from aggressive China

- **Germany has joined the Indo-Pacific club.** The move is aimed at securing the trade routes from aggressive China. Germany has drafted 40-page guidelines as it formally adopts a strategy for the Indo-Pacific region.
- **The move makes it the second European nation after France to formally adopt a strategy for the Indo-Pacific region.** The strategy is designed to allow Germany to make an active contribution to shaping the international order in the Indo-Pacific. **The move by Germany augurs well for the Quad which is constituted by the United States, Japan, Australia, and India.**

The Indo-Pacific, sometimes known as the Indo - West Pacific or Indo-Pacific Asia, is a biogeographic region of Earth's seas, comprising the tropical waters of the Indian Ocean, the western and central Pacific Ocean, and the seas connecting the two in the general area of Indonesia. Since 2011, the term 'Indo-Pacific' is being used increasingly in geopolitical discourse. The concept is not new to the geopolitical discourse. **The German geopolitician Karl Haushofer first used it in the 1920s in his academic work called "Indopazifischen Raum".** The term's profile was raised when it found mention in the joint statement issued by the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and United States President Donald Trump after the former's state visit to the White House on 26 June 2017.

UNEP launches "Green Nudges" programme for universities

- **The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) launched a new publication, "The Little Book of Green Nudges",** which aims to inspire up to 200 million students around the globe to adopt environmentally friendly habits and greener lifestyles.
- **The book is UNEP's first on behavioural science and nudge theory,** which focuses on human actions and how to change them, and was drafted with **The Behavioural Insights Team and GRID-Arendal.** It contains 40 ready-made nudges simple measures that make it easier to make green choices which university campuses can deploy to encourage students and staff to embrace more sustainable behaviours.

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is an agency of United Nations and coordinates its environmental activities, assisting developing countries in implementing environmentally sound policies and practices. It was founded by Maurice Strong, its first director, as a result of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (Stockholm Conference) in June 1972. UNEP headquarters was established in Nairobi, Kenya, on 5 June 1972.

Bangladesh to host FAO Asia-Pacific regional conference for the first time

- **Bangladesh will host the 36th Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)** for the first time since it joined the organisation in 1973.
- **FAO is a specialised agency of the United Nations that leads international efforts to defeat hunger.** The first regional conference was held in Bangalore, India, in 1953. Bangladesh joined FAO in 1973 and has since been a fully active member but never hosted the APRC.

Bangladesh is a country in South Asia. It shares land borders with India and Myanmar (Burma). Nepal, Bhutan and China are located near Bangladesh but do not share a border with it. Dhaka is its capital and largest city, followed by Chittagong, which has the country's largest port. Bangladeshi taka is the currency of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Mohammad Abdul Hamid is the 16th and current President of Bangladesh, in office since April 2013. Sheikh Hasina is the current Prime Minister of the Bangladesh.



India ranks in top 50 countries for 1st time in Global Innovation Index

- India ranked in the top 50 countries for the first time in the Global Innovation Index, which was released. India jumped four positions to rank at 48th since 2019. Moving up four positions since last year, India became the third most innovative lower middle economy in the world.
- According to the Global Innovation Index (GII) list, 2020 released jointly by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), Cornell University and INSEAD Business School presented the latest global trends and annual innovation ranking for 131 countries. The rankings show stability at the top but a gradual “eastward shift in the locus of innovation” as Asian economies like China, India, the Philippines and Vietnam have advanced considerably in the innovation ranking over the years.
- Switzerland, Sweden, the US, the UK and the Netherlands lead the innovation ranking, and the top 10 positions are dominated by high-income countries, WIPO said in a statement.
- According to the report jump can be attributed to newly available indicators and improvements in various areas of the GI. India ranks in the top 15 in indicators such as ICT services exports, government online services, graduates in science and engineering and R&D-intensive global companies.

The Global Innovation Index (GII) is an annual ranking of countries by their capacity for, and success in, innovation. It is published by Cornell University, INSEAD, and the World Intellectual Property Organization, in partnership with other organisations and institutions, and is based on both subjective and objective data derived from several sources, including the International Telecommunication Union, the World Bank and the World Economic Forum. The index was started in 2007.

New E-market Platform “Agriota” launched to Bridge Gap between Indian Farmers & UAE food industry

- The UAE has launched Agriota, a new technology-driven agri-commodity trading and sourcing e-market platform that will bridge the gap between millions of rural farmers in India and the Gulf nation’s food industry.
- Under the initiative, launched earlier this week by the Dubai’s free-zone Dubai Multi Commodities Centre (DMCC) and the government of Dubai’s authority on commodities trade and enterprise, millions of Indian farmers will get an opportunity to connect directly with the entire food industry in the UAE, including food processing companies, traders and wholesalers through the Agriota-E Marketplace platform.
- In 2019, India exported more than USD 38 billion of agricultural and processed food products, with one of their largest markets being the Middle East. Initially, the platform will offer cereals, pulses, oil seeds, fruits, vegetables, spices and condiments.

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.

RIL to buy Future Group's retail, related units for Rs. 24,713 crore

- **Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd. (RRVL)**, a subsidiary of Reliance Industries Ltd., has **announced the acquisition of the retail and wholesale, and logistics and warehousing businesses of the Future Group**, on a slump sale basis, for a lump sum of Rs. 24,713 crore.
- **The acquisition is being done as part of the scheme in which Future Group is merging certain companies carrying on the above businesses into Future Enterprises Ltd. (FEL).**
- **The retail and wholesale undertaking of Future Group is being transferred to Reliance Retail and Fashion Lifestyle Ltd. (RRFLL)**, a wholly owned subsidiary of RRVL, while the **logistics and warehousing undertaking is being transferred to RRVL.**

Future Group is an Indian conglomerate company founded by Kishore Biyani, headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra. The company is known for having a significant prominence in Indian retail and fashion sectors, with popular supermarket chains like **Big Bazaar** and **Food Bazaar**, lifestyle stores like **Brand Factory**, **Central**, etc.

Koppala to get India's first toy manufacturing cluster

- In line with Vocal for Local campaign and boosting toy manufacturing, **Koppala in Karnataka will have India's first toy manufacturing cluster.**
- **Karnataka Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa announced the proposed toy cluster in Koppala about 351 km from Bengaluru**, which will attract over Rs 5,000 crore in investments. **Karnataka is the third-largest market for toys in India with around USD 159 million**, or 9.1 percent of the national market according to government estimates.

Indian power market goes green with launch of pan-India GTAM in electricity

- **Indian power market has gone green with the launch of pan-India Green Term Ahead Market (GTAM) in electricity.** New and Renewable Energy Minister **R K Singh** said the introduction of GTAM platform would lessen the burden on Renewable Energy-rich States.
- **GTAM platform** will lead to an increase in the number of participants in the renewable energy sector. It will **benefit buyers of renewable energy through competitive prices and transparent and flexible procurement.** It will also benefit renewable energy sellers by providing access to the pan-India market. GTAM contracts will allow additional avenues to the renewable energy generators for sale of energy.
- **Government's target of 175 Gigawatt renewable energy capacity by 2022** is driving accelerated renewable penetration pan-India.

Vedanta ties up with SBI for long-term syndicated loan of Rs 10,000 cr

- **Vedanta tied up with State Bank of India for a long-term syndicated loan facility worth Rs 10,000 crore.** A syndicated loan is offered by a group of lenders who work together to provide credit to a large borrower.
- Vedanta Ltd has tied up a long-term syndicated loan facility for Rs 10,000 crore with State Bank of India as facility agent and SBICAP Trustee Company Ltd as the security trustee with door to door tenor of seven years. **The facility end use stipulates refinancing of near-term debt maturities of Vedanta and for capital expenditure of the metals and mining giant, it said.**

Vedanta Limited is a mining company based in India, with its main operations in iron ore, gold and aluminium mines in Goa, Karnataka, Rajasthan and Odisha. In 2007, Vedanta Resources Plc, a diversified metals and mining group founded by Anil Agarwal, acquired 51% controlling stake in Sesa Goa Ltd.

IRDAI sets up panel on index-linked life products

- **Insurance regulator IRDAI has constituted a six-member working group on index-linked products** following requests for permission from life insurers to introduce such products.
- **The working group, to be led by Dinesh Pant, appointed actuary of LIC of India, will examine the need for such products in India** and how they will better serve needs and interests of customers relative to traditional savings product.
- **It will also examine the products earlier available in the market in terms of product structure, ease of customer understanding and administrative processes and any other matter of relevance.**

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

Amul: The milk cooperative becomes the first Indian dairy brand to make it to the Rabobank's Global Top 20 list

- **In a first, Amul has become the only Indian dairy brand to make into the global top 20 list of Rabobank.**
- **The list released by the Dutch multinational banking company has placed Amul, also known as the Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF), in the 16th position with an annual turnover of \$5.5 billion (Rs. 38,500 crores).**
- **Besides, the list also featured Nestle at the top with an annual turnover of \$22.1 billion.** Moreover, Dairy Farmers of America jumped 3 positions in the list to secure the 3rd rank with an annual turnover of \$20.1 billion.

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

Rajasthan government, SIDBI to ink MoU for cluster-based development of MSMEs

- **The Rajasthan government and the Small Industrial Development Bank of India (SIDBI) will soon ink an agreement to create newer avenues and growth opportunities for MSME units in the State.**
- **For upcoming and existing MSME units in the State, SIDBI will identify clusters and create a plan to reach out to small entrepreneurs and provide consultation, business solutions and guidance for availing benefits under current schemes.**
- **A project management unit (PMU) will be set up by SIDBI in Rajasthan to provide assistance to certain sectors which are cluster-based such as textiles in Bhilwara and handicrafts in Jodhpur. The initiative is aimed at creating a bridge between MSMEs and the Central/State government for understanding ground-level challenges that MSMEs are facing and creating an ideal ecosystem for ease of doing business.**

RBI revises PSL guidelines; Bank loans to start-ups to get priority sector tag

- Reserve Bank of India has revised **Priority Sector Lending guidelines**. RBI said the move is aimed at addressing regional disparities in the flow of priority sector credit.
- In the revised guidelines, **higher weightage** have been assigned to incremental priority sector credit in identified districts where priority sector credit flow is comparatively low.
- **Bank finance to start-ups up to 50 crore rupees**, loans to farmers for installation of solar power plants for solarisation of grid connected agriculture pumps and loans for setting up Compressed Bio Gas plants have been included as fresh categories eligible for finance under priority sector.
- Priority sector loans refer to loans that banks need to mandatorily lend to economically weaker sections of the society. Renewable energy sector has also been added to priority sector lending in the year 2015.

Priority Sector Lending is an important role given by the (RBI) to the banks for providing a specified portion of the bank lending to few specific sectors like agriculture and allied activities, micro and small enterprises, poor people for housing, students for education and other low income groups and weaker sections.. This is essentially meant for an all-round development of the economy as opposed to focusing only on the financial sector. **40% of the total net bank credit should go to a priority sector advances.**

RBI revises guidelines for opening Current Accounts

- The RBI has reviewed and issued revised guidelines for opening of Current Accounts by banks to ensure discipline among borrowers.
- As per this banks have been instructed not to open current accounts for customers who have availed credit facilities in the form of cash credit (CC)/ overdraft (OD) from the banking system and all transactions shall be routed through the CC/OD account. The new rules will be applicable to existing current, CC/OD accounts with various banks.
- “Where a bank’s exposure to a borrower is less than 10% of the exposure of the banking system to that borrower, while credits are freely permitted, debits to the CC/OD account can only be for credit to the CC/OD account of that borrower with a bank that has 10% or more of the exposure of the banking system to that borrower,” RBI said in a circular.

RBL Bank launches cardless cash withdrawal facility through ATMs

- RBL Bank has launched cardless cash withdrawal facility from ATMs, leveraging the Instant Money Transfer (IMT) system. The private sector lender said it has tied-up with Empays Payment Systems, a global financial technology provider, to offer this service.
- RBL Bank customers can withdraw cash without their debit cards from 389 IMT-enabled automated teller machines (ATMs) of the bank or more than 40,000 other bank ATMs across the country, it said in a release.
- To avail the service a customer has to log into RBL Bank’s MoBank app to locate an ATM that supports the IMT function and initiate cash withdrawal by either using his or her mobile number linked to the account or by following a few easy steps on the app.

RBL Bank, formerly known as Ratnakar Bank, is an Indian private sector bank headquartered in Mumbai and founded in 1943. It offers services across six verticals: corporate and institutional banking, commercial banking, branch and business banking, retail assets, development banking and financial inclusion, treasury and financial market operations. In July 2010, Vishwavir Ahuja became managing director and CEO of the bank. In August 2014 the name of the bank was changed to RBL Bank Limited.



Inventions/Discoveries

Hubble Telescope captures spellbinding image of supernova blast

- NASA has released stunning pictures of a small section of a supernova captured by the Hubble telescope. The spellbinding picture looks right out of a science fiction movie as it appears as a “light veil draped across the sky” to NASA.
- The Cygnus supernova blast wave has been located around 2,400 light-years away from our planet. The supernova has a peculiar position in the northern constellation of “Cygnus (the Swan)” where it covers an area 36 times larger than the full Moon”.
- The supernova explosion took place between 10,000 to 20,000 years ago caused by a dying star breaking apart which is 20 times larger than our Sun. Since then the supernova remnant — a structure resulting from the explosion of a star in a supernova — has expanded 60 light-years from its centre. The shockwave which is marked by the outer structure is expanding at a speed of 354 kilometre per second.

Hubble Space Telescope (often referred to as HST or Hubble) is a space telescope that was launched into low Earth orbit in 1990 and remains in operation. It was not the first space telescope, but it is one of the largest and most versatile, well known both as a vital research tool and as a public relations boon for astronomy. The Hubble telescope is named after astronomer Edwin Hubble and is one of NASA's Great Observatories, along with the Compton Gamma Ray Observatory, the Chandra X-ray Observatory, and the Spitzer Space Telescope.

Indian astronomers discover one of the farthest Star galaxies in universe

- Indian astronomers have discovered one of the farthest Star galaxies in the universe in a landmark achievement. Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh said it is a matter of pride that India's first Multi-Wavelength Space Observatory ‘AstroSat’ has detected extreme-UV light from a galaxy located 9.3 billion light-years away from Earth.
- The galaxy called AUDFs01 was discovered by a team of Astronomers led by Dr Kanak Saha from the Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics, Pune.

Astrosat is India's first dedicated multi-wavelength space telescope. It was launched on a PSLV-XL on 28 September 2015. With the success of this satellite, ISRO has proposed launching AstroSat-2 as a successor for Astrosat.

IndiGo flies Plasma from Bengaluru for COVID-19 Patient in Srinagar for first time by air

- Two bags of convalescent plasma were transported by IndiGo on its connecting flights from Bengaluru to Srinagar, via Delhi, for a COVID-19 patient. “The plasma was first flown from Bengaluru to Delhi on 6E 363 followed by the connecting flight from Delhi to Srinagar 6E 2486”.

- **The plasma sustained a transit period of over eight hours** and was delivered successfully at the government hospital in Srinagar the low-cost carrier noted. It was kept in the on-board cargo areas of the two flights.

Blood plasma is a ‘yellowish liquid’ component of blood that holds the blood cells of whole blood in suspension. It is the liquid part of the blood that carries cells and proteins throughout the body. **It makes up about 55% of the body’s total blood volume.** It is mostly water (up to 95% by volume), and contains important dissolved proteins (6–8%) (e.g., serum albumins, globulins, and fibrinogen), glucose, clotting factors, electrolytes (Na⁺, Ca²⁺, Mg²⁺, HCO₃[–], Cl[–], etc.), hormones, carbon dioxide (plasma being the main medium for excretory product transportation), and oxygen.

IIT Guwahati collaborates with university in Czech Republic for data protection project

- **A team of researchers from Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati, in collaboration with scientists from the University of Pardubice, Czech Republic, is working towards developing indigenous algorithms that can protect the Nation’s digital data from cyber-attacks by advanced computers.**
- **The team has also designed encryption architectures that can be used to protect sensitive health data that is transmitted through the internet.** The recent advances in computer science, such as the development of the quantum computer, are all set to overthrow Moore’s law that has ruled the roost for the past half a century. **The phenomenal computational power of quantum computers not only embodies possibilities of astronomical progress, but also enormous threats.**

New freshwater fish identified in the Ganga

- **Researchers from Kerala and West Bengal have identified a new species of freshwater fish from the Ganga in West Bengal.** The fish, which is edible, has been christened **Systemus gracilus** for its thin and compressed body. ‘Gracilus’ means slim in Latin. **This fish can be cultured in inland waterbodies.**
- The fish, which has a light reddish-white body and fins, was **discovered from Naihati, West Bengal.** **Systemus is a genus in the family Cyprinidae.** Systemus gracilus can be distinguished from other species of the genus by its high and strongly compressed body, tiny barbels, and anal fin with six branched rays. The collected specimens were of 11 to 12 cm in length.

Atmanirbhar Bharat: IIT Delhi incubated startup launches “Chakr DeCoV” to decontaminate N95 masks

- **IIT Delhi incubated startup Chakr Innovation has launched ‘Chakr DeCoV’ to decontaminate N95 masks.** Designed in the shape of a cabinet, Chakr DeCoV is built with an innovative decontamination mechanism, which utilises the high penetrability of Ozone gas for **cleaning the pores of the N95 mask, ensuring complete decontamination of its intricate layers.**
- **Ozone is a strong oxidizing agent that destroys viruses by diffusing through the protein coat, resulting in damage to the viral RNA.**
- **Proper dosage and exposure of Ozone can result in inactivation of SARS CoV-2 and a 99.9999 per cent reduction in bacterial load,** after which an N95 mask can be reused for up to 10 times without any impact on the filtration efficiency.

IGI to get India’s first on-site Covid test lab, results in 6 hours

- To test incoming international passengers, **India’s first on-site Covid testing facility is coming up at the capital’s Indira Gandhi International Airport** and will provide RT-PCR test results within six hours.
- The facility, to be **set up by a private laboratory empanelled by the Delhi government for Covid testing,** is expected to be operational by mid-September.

New climber species found in Western Ghats

- **Scientists at the Jawaharlal Nehru Tropical Botanic Garden and Research Institute (JNTBGRI), Palode, have identified a new and rare species of climber of the genus Pothos (family Araceae) from the Western Ghats in Idukki district.**
- **The species has been christened Pothos boyceanus after Peter C. Boyce, an expert on Araceae of southeast Asia. The discovery by G. Rajkumar, Nazarudeen Ahammed, T. Shaju, and R. Prakashkumar (Director, JNTBGRI) has been published in Taiwania, an international journal of biodiversity.**

The Western Ghats, also known as Sahyadri (Benevolent Mountains), is a mountain range that covers an area of 140,000 square kilometres (54,000 sq mi) in a stretch of 1,600 kilometres (990 mi) parallel to the western coast of the Indian peninsula, traversing the states of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Goa, Maharashtra and Gujarat. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is one of the eight hot-spots of biological diversity in the world. It is sometimes called the Great Escarpment of India.

UNICEF to lead global procurement, supply of COVID vaccines

- **In what could possibly be the world's largest and fastest ever operation of its kind, the UNICEF will be leading the procurement and supply of coronavirus vaccines to ensure that all countries have safe, fast and equitable access to initial doses when they are available.**
- **The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is the world's largest single vaccine buyer, procuring more than 2 billion doses of various vaccines annually for routine immunisation and outbreak response on behalf of nearly 100 countries.**
- **With several vaccine candidates showing promise, the UNICEF, in collaboration with the Revolving Fund of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), will lead efforts to procure and supply doses of COVID-19 vaccines on behalf of the COVAX Global Vaccines Facility for 92 low and lower middle-income countries, whose vaccine purchases will be supported by the mechanism.**

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF is a United Nations (UN) agency headquartered in New York City that provides humanitarian and developmental assistance to children and mothers in developing countries. It was created by the United Nations General Assembly on 11 December 1946, to provide emergency food and healthcare to children in countries that had been devastated by World War II. Henrietta Holsman Fore is an American government official who serves as the Executive Director of UNICEF.

SPORTS



Sports Personalities in News

Tour de France 2020: Alexander Kristoff wins stage one

- **Alexander Kristoff** timed his sprint finish to perfection to win the opening stage of the Tour de France in Nice. After a large group crashed inside the final 3 km, Norwegian Kristoff, 33, surged home in a sprint also involving Ireland's Sam Bennett, who was fourth.
- **Alexander Kristoff of Norway** became the first yellow jersey wearer in this year's Tour de France after a chaotic opening stage in Nice was partially neutralised when almost every rider in the peloton was involved in a crash at one point or another.

Lewis Hamilton wins Belgian Grand Prix, now 2 behind Schumacher's record

- **Lewis Hamilton** led from start to finish at the Belgian Grand Prix to clinch his 89th career win and move two behind Michael Schumacher's Formula One record.
- The world champion was untroubled from pole position, beating his Mercedes teammate Valtteri Bottas by eight seconds and finishing 15 seconds ahead of Red Bull's Max Verstappen. Renault's Daniel Ricciardo was fourth and grabbed an extra point for the fastest lap.

Sumit Nagal storms into second round of US Open

- **Sumit Nagal** stormed into the second round of the ongoing US Open Tennis. Nagal defeated Bradley Klahn of USA in the first round of the US Open to progress further into the tournament.
- With this result, the 23-year-old Nagal has become the first Indian to win a singles main draw match at a Grand Slam in the last seven years.

CFI All Set To Host First-Ever Cycling Summit In 2021

- The Cycling Federation of India (CFI) is all set to host the first-ever Cycling Summit in 2021, with an aim to promote the culture of cycling in the country.
- The CFI has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with a marketing exploration firm, Contarctica, for the summit.
- The Cycling Summit 2021 will be hosted in Delhi, Mumbai, and Bangalore and is expected to be a unique confluence of cycling enthusiasts, renowned athletes, and businesses from all over the country.

India storm into Chess Olympiad final for first time

- **Koneru Humpy** held her nerve in an Armageddon game to pull off a 2-1 victory for India in the Chess Olympiad semifinal against Poland.
- India, whose previous best finish at the Olympiad was a bronze medal in 2014, are now assured of a first ever gold or silver. They will meet the winners of the Russia vs USA semifinal.

World Cup host Qatar set to play in Gold Cup next year in US

- **World Cup host Qatar is set to play in the Gold Cup next year in the United States** after accepting an invitation from soccer's governing body for North and Central America and the Caribbean.
- **The Asian Cup champion will participate in the 2021 and 2023 Gold Cup tournaments** as a guest under a memorandum of understanding signed in Bahrain in 2017.

Indian Grandmaster P Iniyan clinches victory at prestigious World Open online chess

- **Indian Grandmaster P Iniyan clinches victory at prestigious World Open online chess tournament**
Indian Grandmaster P Iniyan won the prestigious Annual World Open online chess tournament held recently
- The Tamil Nadu player scored seven and half points out of a possible nine with six victories and three draws to finish on top, ahead of many higher rated Grandmasters. **Grandmaster P Iniyan became the first Indian to win the annual World Open chess tournament.**

Planning to host BRICS Games during Khelo India Games 2021

- Union Minister of Youth and Sports Kiren Rijiju has said that **India is planning to host BRICS Games 2021**, which will be **aligned with the Khelo India Games scheduled for next year.**
- **"BRICS Games 2021 will be held during the same time and at same venues as of Khelo India Games 2021** so that our players from various parts of the country, who will gather for Khelo India Games, will have the benefit and great opportunity of witnessing BRICS Games from close quarters.
- This will be a great morale booster and motivational moment for them," Rijiju said in a video **conference between the Sports Ministers of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa).**

MISCELLANEOUS

APICD Board constituted for implementing Vizag-Chennai industrial corridor project

- In a significant step towards the operationalisation of AP Industrial Corridor Development Act, 2017 (APICDA), the Andhra Pradesh government has constituted the AP Industrial Corridor Development Authority, APICD Board and an executive committee with effect from August 28 in pursuance of the proposals submitted by the director of Visakhapatnam-Chennai Industrial Corridor Development Project.
- The APICD Board has the Chief Minister as Chairman and Minister for Industries and Commerce as the vice-chairman and Minister for Finance, Chief Secretary, Special Chief Secretary/Principal Secretaries-finance, revenue, municipal administration, water resources, energy and Panchayat Raj (PR) and APIIC vice-chairman as members.

Punjab Govt launches 'I Rakhwali' App to make citizens 'Greenery Saviours'

- To strengthen its drive to preserve and maintain the environment in Punjab and make people stakeholders in the process, the State Forest Department launched 'I Rakhwali' application to help netizens to become 'Greenery Saviours'.
- Launching the application, Punjab Forest Minister Sadhu Singh Dharamsot said that the application has been developed to ensure greenery and to protect the environment in Punjab, and its main aim is to inspire people to plant more trees. With this new initiative, the Punjab government aims to safeguard the state forest area by making people a stakeholder in this process.

Jammu & Kashmir government set to conserve heritage value of 6 Mughal gardens of Kashmir

- The Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) administration is all set to conserve the six Mughal gardens in a bid to empanel them as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) mandated world heritage sites.
- At present, the six Mughal gardens --- Nishat, Shalimar, Cheshmashahi, Pari Mahal, Achabal and Veerinag -- are under UNESCO's tentative list of heritage sites.

Piyush Goyal addresses US-India Strategic Partnership Forum through virtual conference

- Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal has invited the US business and industry to work with their Indian counterparts to take the bilateral trade to greater heights.
- Addressing the US-India Strategic Partnership Forum through a virtual conference, Mr Goyal said the two democracies share deep commitment with each other, at the Government, Business and people to people levels.

Cabinet appointments panel approves restructuring of Railway Board, names first CEO

- The appointments committee of the cabinet (ACC) formally approved the restructuring of the Railway Board and approved the appointment of VK Yadav, the current chairman of the Railway Board as its first CEO.
- In December 2019, the Union Cabinet in a major move to reform the 150-year-old railway board of the Indian Railways approved the restructuring of the apex body of the Indian Railways by trimming its strength to half, and unifying its eight railways services into a central service called the Indian Railway Management Service.
- Pradeep Kumar has been appointed Member, Infrastructure, PC Sharma has been appointed Member, Traction and Rolling Stock, PS Mishra has been made Member, Operations and Business Development. Manjula Rangarajan has been appointed Member, Finance.

Government to appoint secretary-rank officer to head National Recruitment Agency

- The Centre will appoint a secretary-rank officer as the chairman of the National Recruitment Agency (NRA), which will conduct online Common Eligibility Test to shortlist candidates for majority of Central government jobs, a Personnel Ministry Order said.
- Besides the chairman, the NRA will have eight members a secretary of the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) or his representatives, representatives of the Ministry of Railways and the Department of Financial Services, chairmen of the Staff Selection Commission (SSC), the Railway Recruitment Board (RRB) and the Institute of Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS), and two experts from the field of academics, it said.
- It will also have a Secretary and Controller of Examinations and the post will be held by an officer at the level of joint secretary to the government of India. The officer will be appointed on deputation basis, the Order said.

Festival of Onam being celebrated across country

- Amid Covid 19 pandemic, Keralites across the globe is celebrating Thiruvonam on 31 August 2020, the biggest cultural festival of the State.
- Thiruvonam is the most auspicious day of Onam festival. This annual harvest festival of the State celebrates the visit of mythical and righteous King Mahabali.
- Onam is being celebrated by all Keralaites irrespective of religion symbolising secularism and harmony. Onam marks the season of plenty, but this time the Covid pandemic had taken the sheen out of the festivities.

Famous art of 'Etikoppaka' dolls of Visakhapatnam district finds a place in "Mann ki Baat"

- The famous art of 'Etikoppaka' dolls of Visakhapatnam district finds a place in the "Mann ki Baat" programme of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- In the Mann Ki Baat speech, Prime Minister Narendra Modi made a special mention of the famous Etikoppaka dolls saying that the toys would be useful to unleash the creativity in children in the current Pandemic situation.

Prakash Javadekar chairs a webinar on first ever International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies

- Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar chaired a webinar on the first-ever International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies. Mr Javadekar also reviews the progress of activities under the National Clean Air programme (NCAP) during the course of the webinar.
- The webinar was joined by Principal Secretaries of the Urban Development Departments and Environment Departments of 28 states and 8 Union Territories. Commissioners of 122 cities as identified in the NCAP programme also participated.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his address from the Red Fort on this year's Independence Day, had highlighted the need of holistic improvement in air quality in 100 cities.
- The General Assembly of the United Nations on 19th December last year had adopted a resolution to observe the International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies on 7th September every year starting from this year.

PERSONS IN NEWS

Ambani twins, Adar Poonawalla, Byju's founder named in Fortune's 40 Under 40 list

- **Reliance Jio Board Directors Isha Ambani and Akash Ambani, Serum Institute of India CEO Adar Poonawalla and Byju Raveendran, co-founder of India's leading education technology company Byju's, are among the "emerging leaders" from across the world named by Fortune in its annual list of influential people under the age of 40.**
- **The 2020 Fortune 40 under 40 list highlights 40 influential people each in five categories of finance, technology, healthcare, government and politics, and media and entertainment from around the world. Featured in the list are 28-year-old Ambani twins, children of Reliance Chairman Billionaire Mukesh Ambani and Nita Ambani.**

For first time, a woman to head Canada's Space Agency

- **For the first time in its 31-year history, the Canadian Space Agency will have a female president. The government announced that longtime public servant Lisa Campbell will take over as head of the agency. Ms. Campbell replaces Sylvain Laporte, who has been president since 2015.**

Australia appoints cricket icon Matthew Hayden as trade envoy to India

- **The Australian government has appointed former cricketer Matthew Hayden and Indian-origin politician Lisa Singh as trade envoys for advancing business ties with India. Three new appointments to the board of the Australia-India Council were announced.**
- **Foreign Affairs Minister Marise Payne said, "Ashok Jacob has been reappointed as chair, and will be joined by three new board members." Lisa Singh, former Labor Party Senator from Tasmania, would be the Deputy Chair. Former Victoria Premier Ted Baillieu and former cricketer Hayden are the other new members.**

Ariana Grande becomes first woman with 200 mn followers on Instagram

- **Pop star Ariana Grande has become the first woman to have 200 million followers of photo-video sharing platform Instagram.**
- **The 27-year-old musician is followed by reality TV star-entrepreneur Kylie Jenner and singer-actor Selena Gomez with 193 and 190 million followers, respectively.**

Tamil Nadu's M Veeralakshmi Becomes India's First Woman Ambulance Driver

- **In a first, a woman was appointed to drive an ambulance in Tamil Nadu, as Chief Minister K Palaniswami flagged off 118 as part of an initiative to strengthen emergency services in the state. Beginning a new journey, M Veeralakshmi was appointed driver of one of the newly launched '108' ambulances and it is a 'first' in the country.**

IPS Charu Sinha to become first woman head of CRPF's Srinagar sector

- **For the first time, a female IPS officer has been appointed as Inspector General (IG) of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) Srinagar sector, one of the terrorist-affected areas in Jammu and Kashmir.**
- **Charu Sinha, IPS officer of the 1996-batch Telangana cadre, will now be heading the Srinagar sector for CRPF as the Inspector General. This is not the first time when she has been assigned such a tough task, earlier also; she had worked as IG, the Bihar sector in CRPF and has dealt with Naxals.**
- **Under her leadership, various anti-Naxals operations were carried out. Later, she was transferred to IG Jammu in CRPF where she spent a long and successful tenure.**

AWARDS

Ratan Tata Anand Mahindra and Narayana Murthy bestowed lifetime achievement awards by WDA first edition

- In a first-of-its-kind virtual summit, World Digital Awards announced its first edition awardees in India, ratified by the premier accrediting agency in the world, IAA.
- Ratan Tata Anand Mahindra, Mukesh Ambani and NR Narayana Murthy were conferred the Lifetime Achievement Awards, whereas Special Recognition Awards were conferred for immense contribution in their fields Eminent Psychologist Dr Jawahar Suriseti for social good through education; Debjani Ghosh (President Nasscom) for Tech; Michelin Star Chef Vikas Khanna for Humanitarian aid; Actor Sonu Sood for excellent social service during pandemic; Vijay Shekhar Sharma of PayTM for promoting entrepreneurship; Ritesh Agrawal of OYO for entrepreneurial excellence and Ashok Kataria for excellence in Infrastructure domain.
- On 1st September, the World Digital Awards first edition in India announced from 11 am onwards on all social media platforms with one awardee being announced every 10 minutes. The ratification of these awards were done after a rigorous process. There were Lifetime Awards, Special Recognition and then category specific awards for Education, Healthcare and Startups. The rigorous process took a period of 45 days after which the list of 38 awardees was finalised.

GMR Hyderabad International Airport Wins CII National Awards of “National Energy Leader” & “Excellent Energy Efficient unit”

- GMR led Hyderabad International Airport has won the prestigious awards of CII “National Energy Leader” and “Excellent Energy Efficient Unit” at the 21st National Awards for ‘Excellence in Energy Management’ organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Godrej Green Business Centre (GBC) during the 19th edition.
- GHIAL has been recognized with “Excellent Energy Efficient Unit” and “National Energy Leader” accolades for the 4th and 2nd year in a row, respectively. GHIAL digitally received the awards on 28th August amidst the presence of industry dignitaries and participants on the last day of the event.

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

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Coconut Day celebrated on 2nd September

- **The first celebration of World Coconut Day was in the year 2009. The occasion is to commemorate the foundation day of Asian and Pacific Coconut Community (APCC),** which operates under the flagship authority of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP). The theme of World Coconut Day this year is ‘Invest in Coconut to save the world’.
- **The main objective of celebrating this day is to create awareness across the globe about the importance of the coconut and its benefits.** The day is especially marked in countries under Asian and Pacific regions by the Asian and Pacific Coconut Community (APCC) as they house most of the world’s coconut growing production centres. **In India, Kerala tops the production in coconut,** but Tamil Nadu and Karnataka are also picking up in this sector.

International Day of Charity: 5 September

- **The International Day of Charity was established with the objective of sensitizing and mobilizing people, NGOs, and stakeholders all around the world to help others through volunteer and philanthropic activities.**
- **The date of 5 September was chosen in order to commemorate the anniversary of the passing away of Mother Teresa of Calcutta, who received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979 “for work undertaken in the struggle to overcome poverty and distress, which also constitute a threat to peace.”**

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. The Sonamura-Daudkandi inland waterways protocol route connecting Tripura to _____ would be made operational on 5th September 2020.
(a) Bangladesh (b) Myanmar (c) Nepal (d) Bhutan
2. The PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) was launched by the _____.
(a) Ministry of Rural Affairs (b) Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
(c) Ministry of Home Affairs (d) Ministry of Panchayati Raj
3. Mustapha Adib was named as Prime Minister by four former Prime Ministers on the eve of binding consultations between the president and parliamentary blocs on their choice for the post. He belongs to which of the following countries?
(a) Ghana (b) Austria (c) Lebanon (d) Jordan
4. Which of the following countries President has appointed a council for national reconciliation, which will have final say on whether the government will sign a peace deal with the Taliban?
(a) Afghanistan (b) Pakistan (c) USA (d) Russia
5. Which of the following companies has announced the acquisition of the retail and wholesale, and logistics and warehousing businesses of the Future Group, on a slump sale basis, for a lump sum of Rs.24,713 crore?
(a) Godrej Retail Ventures Ltd. (b) Tata Retail Ventures Ltd.
(c) Heritage Ltd (d) Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd.
6. Which of the following space agencies has released stunning pictures of a small section of a supernova captured by the Hubble telescope?
(a) NASA (b) ISRO (c) CERN (d) JAXA
7. Alexander Kristoff of _____ became the first yellow jersey wearer in this year's Tour de France.
(a) Finland (b) Norway (c) Spain (d) Denmark
8. The Centre will appoint a _____ as the chairman of the National Recruitment Agency (NRA).
(a) Secretary-rank officer
(b) Union Home Minister
(c) Union Minister of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions
(d) UPSC Chairman
9. Thiruvonam is a biggest cultural festival of which of the following states?
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Kerala (c) Jharkhand (d) Maharashtra
10. The famous art of 'Etikoppaka' dolls of _____ district finds a place in the "Mann ki Baat" programme of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
(a) Bidar (b) Rangareddy (c) Tiruchi (d) Visakhapatnam
11. Recently, Airports Council International (ACI) Asia-Pacific announced that Incheon International Airport in _____ is the first airport in the Asia-Pacific region to be accredited under the ACI Airport Health Accreditation programme.
(a) Seoul (b) Singapore (c) Jakarta (d) Bangkok
12. Name the remote-controlled medical trolley which has been developed by Indian railways to help deliver food and medicines to COVID-19 patients.
(a) TRUEBOT (b) COVIDBOT (c) MEDBOT (d) RAILBOT

13. Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently announced that _____ will be observed as “Nutrition Month”.
(a) August (b) September (c) October (d) November
14. Recently, 17th ASEAN-India Economic Ministers Consultations held virtually was chaired by:
(a) Vietnam (b) Thailand (c) Cambodia (d) Myanmar
15. Name Singapore’s Indian-origin politician who scripted history when Parliament conferred the duties and privileges to him as the city-state’s first Leader of the Opposition.
(a) Pritam Singh (b) Sandeep Sawhney (c) Vijay Singh (d) Krishnamurthi Pattiyan
16. Recently, UAE has launched _____ a new technology-driven agri-commodity trading and sourcing e-market platform that will bridge the gap between millions of rural farmers in India and the Gulf nation’s food industry.
(a) Agriota (b) Agrinam (c) Agrodec (d) Agroker
17. Which of the following Indian airports has won the prestigious awards of CII “National Energy Leader” and “Excellent Energy Efficient Unit” at the 21st National Awards for ‘Excellence in Energy Management’?
(a) Bengaluru International Airport (b) Lucknow International Airport
(c) Hyderabad International Airport (d) Indore International Airport
18. Recently, who won the Belgian Grand Prix to clinch his 89th career win?
(a) Lewis Hamilton (b) Michael Schumacher (c) Daniel Ricciardo (d) Valtteri Bottas
19. Recently, Former President Pranab Mukherjee passed away. He was the _____ president of India.
(a) 11th (b) 12th (c) 13th (d) 14th
20. International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances is observed on:
(a) 27th August (b) 28th August (c) 29th August (d) 30th august
21. Who has become the first woman to have 200 million followers of photo-video sharing platform Instagram?
(a) Ariana Grande (b) Kylie Jenner (c) Selena Gomez (d) Kate Middleton
22. In line with Vocal for Local campaign and boosting toy manufacturing, Koppala in _____ will have India’s first toy manufacturing cluster.
(a) Kerala (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Karnataka (d) Tamil Nadu
23. India and _____ are scheduled to hold the bilateral naval exercise, Indra 2020, in the Andaman Sea, close to the strategic Strait of Malacca.
(a) Malaysia (b) Indonesia (c) Russia (d) USA
24. Insurance regulator IRDAI has constituted a six-member working group on index-linked products following requests for permission from life insurers to introduce such products. This group will be lead by:
(a) Mukesh Jain (b) Dinesh Pant (c) Kumud Mishra (d) Ajay Rawat
25. Recently, which of the following has become the only Indian dairy brand to make into the global top 20 list of Rabobank?
(a) Mother Dairy (b) Amul (c) Parag (d) Patanjali
26. Name the female IPS officer who has been appointed as Inspector General (IG) of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) Srinagar sector for the first time?
(a) Charu Sinha (b) Deepti Nagar (c) Ambalika Bannerjee (d) Vanya Pathak
27. Recently, Indian astronomers have discovered one of the farthest Star galaxies in the universe in a landmark achievement. What is the name of the galaxy discovered?
(a) Robotec (b) CYKLt07 (c) BUHGd05 (d) AUDFs01

28. The first-ever Cycling Summit in 2021 will be hosted by:
(a) Nepal (b) India (c) Bangladesh (d) Singapore
29. The _____ administration is all set to conserve the six Mughal gardens in a bid to empanel them as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) mandated world heritage sites.
(a) Jammu & Kashmir (b) Ladakh (c) Himachal Pradesh (d) Punjab
30. Recently, who has become the first Indian to win a singles main draw match at a Grand Slam in the last seven years?
(a) Saket Myneni (b) Rohan Bopanna (c) Sumit Nagal (d) Yuki Bhambri
31. Recently, The Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister has approved the introduction in Parliament of the Jammu and Kashmir Official Languages Bill 2020 in which five languages will be official languages. Which of the following languages is not among the five?
(a) Hindi (b) Punjabi (c) Dogri (d) Urdu
32. Which of the following two states are paired under Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat programme to promote national integration through mutual understanding recently?
(a) Uttar Pradesh and Haryana (b) Punjab and Sikkim
(c) Karnataka and Uttarakhand (d) Odisha and Jharkhand
33. Which of the following three countries agreed to launch an initiative to ensure the resilience of supply chains in the Indo-Pacific, with the move coming against the backdrop of tensions created by China's aggressive actions across the region?
(a) China, Japan and Vietnam (b) Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore
(c) Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia (d) India, Australia and Japan
34. Which of the following states launched mobile App 'AMA SAHAR' web app to provide citizen centric services in September 2020?
(a) West Bengal (b) Odisha (c) Assam (d) Meghalaya
35. Recently, World's first fossil-free steelmaking started in:
(a) Indonesia (b) China (c) Norway (d) Sweden
36. Recently, Australian government has appointed former cricketer _____ and Indian-origin politician Lisa Singh as trade envoys for advancing business ties with India.
(a) Matthew Hayden (b) Brett Lee (c) Glenn McGrawth (d) Shane Warne
37. India ranked in the top 50 countries for the first time in the Global Innovation Index, which was released recently. India jumped four positions to rank at _____ since 2019.
(a) 50th (b) 48th (c) 42nd (d) 39th
38. Recently, A team of researchers from _____ in collaboration with scientists from the University of Pardubice, Czech Republic, is working towards developing indigenous algorithms that can protect the Nation's digital data from cyber-attacks by advanced computers.
(a) Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (b) Indian Institute of Technology Bombay
(c) Indian Institute of Technology Madras (d) Indian Institute of Technology Delhi
39. In a first-of-its-kind virtual summit, World Digital Awards announced its first edition awardees in India, ratified by the premier accrediting agency in the world, IAA. Who among the following is not among the industrialists, conferred the Lifetime Achievement Awards?
(a) Ratan Tata (b) Adi Godrej (c) Mukesh Ambani (d) NR Narayana Murthy

40. Recently, World Coconut Day was celebrated on _____.
 (a) 25th August (b) 28th August (c) 31st August (d) 2nd September
41. The Union Cabinet gave its approval for _____ a new national capacity building and performance evaluation programme for civil servants.
 (a) Mission Kaustubh (b) Mission Karmashastra (c) Mission Karmakant (d) Mission Karmayogi
42. The appointments committee of the cabinet (ACC) formally approved the restructuring of the Railway Board and approved the appointment of _____ the current chairman of the Railway Board as its first CEO.
 (a) VK Yadav (b) YC Chaudhary (c) HK Sharma (d) JM Gupta
43. The Election Commission will set up India's first regional voters' awareness centre in _____ which will cater to four states Rajasthan, Haryana, Punjab and Madhya Pradesh.
 (a) Udaipur (b) Jodhpur (c) Chandigarh (d) Jaipur
44. Who among the following has been appointed as new Prime Minister of Tunisia?
 (a) Triyal V Khayyan (b) Jicken Hivedri (c) Hichem Mechichi (d) Usman Ahmed
45. The _____ government and the Small Industrial Development Bank of India (SIDBI) will soon ink an agreement to create newer avenues and growth opportunities for MSME units in the State.
 (a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Rajasthan (c) Haryana (d) Chhattisgarh
46. Who among the following is not among the "emerging leaders" from across the world named by Fortune in its annual list of influential people under the age of 40?
 (a) Isha Ambani (b) Deepika Rathore (c) Byju Raveendran (d) Adar Poonawalla
47. Recently, Researchers from Kerala and West Bengal have identified a new species of freshwater fish _____ from the Ganga in West Bengal.
 (a) Sytomu Grillunctus (b) Systemus Gracilus (c) Gertou Restig (d) Loutire Hicter
48. Which of the following IIT's has launched 'Chakr DeCoV' to decontaminate N95 masks?
 (a) IIT Bombay (b) IIT Kanpur (c) IIT Delhi (d) IIT Madras
49. Recently, International Day of Charity was observed on:
 (a) 31 August (b) 2 September (c) 3 September (d) 5 September
50. The CONCACAF Gold Cup is associated with:
 (a) Hockey (b) Football (c) Lawn Tennis (d) Rugby
51. Which of the following countries will host a summit of the council of heads of government of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) on November 30?
 (a) Russia (b) Pakistan (c) Turkmenistan (d) India
52. Which of the following states re-launched a scheme to provide self-employment to around 2 lakh youths of the state known as SVAYEM?
 (a) Assam (b) Arunachal Pradesh (c) Bihar (d) Andhra Pradesh
53. In a major step towards self-reliance of the women, _____ government has decided to allocate outlets under Public Distribution System to women self-help group.
 (a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Rajasthan (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Haryana
54. Recently, which of the following is the second European nation after France to formally adopt a strategy for the Indo-Pacific Region?
 (a) Germany (b) Sweden (c) Finland (d) Portugal

55. Which of the following recently launched a new publication, “The Little Book of Green Nudges”, which aims to inspire up to 200 million students around the globe to adopt environmentally friendly habits and greener lifestyles?
 (a) UNSC (b) Greenpeace International
 (c) UN Environment Programme (d) Red Data Book
56. Who among the following is to be the first female president of the Canadian Space Agency, for the first time in its 31-year history?
 (a) Alisa Healey (b) Lisa Campbell (c) Gini Natwell (d) Diana Matthew
57. Recently, RBI has reviewed and issued revised guidelines for opening of _____ by banks to ensure discipline among borrowers.
 (a) Recurring Deposit Account (b) Current Account
 (c) Saving Account (d) Fixed Deposit Account
58. To test incoming international passengers, India’s first on-site Covid testing facility is coming up at the _____ and will provide RT-PCR test results within six hours.
 (a) Indira Gandhi International Airport
 (b) Rajiv Gandhi International Airport
 (c) Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose International Airport
 (d) Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport
59. Which of the following states has launched ‘I Rakhwali’ application to help netizens to become ‘Greenery Saviours’?
 (a) Haryana (b) Rajasthan (c) Gujarat (d) Punjab
60. Recently, “Dalle khursani” or the red cherry pepper chilli, which is grown in _____ and considered as one among hottest varieties in the world, has earned a geographical indication (GI) tag from the Union department of industry promotion and internal trade.
 (a) Assam (b) Sikkim (c) Manipur (d) Nagaland
61. Which of the following states is set to implement a Rupees 600-crore project for brining 10 lakh hectares of parched land in 10 districts under watershed development with World Bank assistance?
 (a) Kerala (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Karnataka (d) Uttar Pradesh
62. Which of the following Union Territories launched Smart Performance Appraisal Report Recording Online Window (SPARROW) system for Administrative Service officers?
 (a) Jammu and Kashmir (b) Lakshadweep (c) Sikkim (d) Goa
63. According to a report brought out by non-governmental organisation Mobile Creches and launched by Vice-President Venkaiah Naidu, which of the following states topped for well-being of children?
 (a) Kerala (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Chhattisgarh (d) Jharkhand
64. The trial run from Daudkandi in _____ to Sonamura in Tripura started as the MV Premier sailed from Daudkandi with 50 metric tonne of cement cargo.
 (a) Bangladesh (b) Myanmar (c) Bhutan (d) Nepal
65. Recently, Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Thaawarchand Gehlot launched the 24x7 Toll-Free Mental Health Rehabilitation Helpline _____.
 (a) “USHA” (b) “ABHILASHA” (c) “KIRAN” (d) “PRAKASH”
66. Which of the following countries will host the 36th Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) the first time since it joined the organisation in 1973?
 (a) Myanmar (b) Nepal (c) India (d) Bangladesh

67. Which of the following has revised Priority Sector Lending guidelines and aimed at addressing regional disparities in the flow of priority sector credit?
(a) Ministry of Finance (b) Ministry of Corporate Affairs
(c) Reserve Bank of India (d) State Bank of India
68. Scientists at the Jawaharlal Nehru Tropical Botanic Garden and Research Institute (JNTBGRI), Palode, have identified a new and rare species of climber of the genus Pothos (family Araceae) from the _____.
(a) Western Ghats (b) Meghalaya (c) Eastern Ghats (d) Ganga Delta
69. In what could possibly be the world's largest and fastest ever operation of its kind, the _____ will be leading the procurement and supply of coronavirus vaccines to ensure that all countries have safe, fast and equitable access to initial doses when they are available.
(a) UNSC (b) UNICEF
(c) Greenpeace International (d) ILO
70. Who among the following chaired a webinar on the first-ever International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies?
(a) Narendra Modi (b) Prakash Javadekar (c) Peeyush Goyal (d) Amit Shah



ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

1. a The Sonamura-Daudkandi inland waterways protocol route connecting Tripura to Bangladesh would be made operational on 5th September 2020.
2. b The PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) was launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs on June 01, 2020 for providing affordable Working Capital loan to street vendors to resume their livelihoods that have been adversely affected due to Covid-19 lockdown. Odisha has been among the top 10 States to benefit from the PM SVANidhi scheme.
3. c Lebanon's ambassador to Germany Mustapha Adib is on course to become the country's next prime minister after securing major political backing. Mr. Adib was named by four former prime ministers on the eve of binding consultations between the president and parliamentary blocs on their choice for the post.
4. a Afghanistan's President has appointed a council for national reconciliation, which will have final say on whether the government will sign a peace deal with the Taliban after what are expected to be protracted and uncertain negotiations with the insurgents.
5. d Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd. (RRVL), a subsidiary of Reliance Industries Ltd., has announced the acquisition of the retail and wholesale, and logistics and warehousing businesses of the Future Group, on a slump sale basis, for a lump sum of ₹24,713 crore.
6. a NASA has released stunning pictures of a small section of a supernova captured by the Hubble telescope. The spellbinding picture looks right out of a science fiction movie as it appears as a "light veil draped across the sky" to NASA.
7. b Alexander Kristoff of Norway became the first yellow jersey wearer in this year's Tour de France after a chaotic opening stage in Nice was partially neutralised when almost every rider in the peloton was involved in a crash at one point or another.
8. a The Centre will appoint a secretary-rank officer as the chairman of the National Recruitment Agency (NRA), which will conduct online Common Eligibility Test to shortlist candidates for majority of Central government jobs, a Personnel Ministry Order said.
9. b Amid Covid 19 pandemic, Keralites across the globe is celebrating Thiruvonam on 31 August 2020, the biggest cultural festival of the State.
10. d The famous art of 'Etikoppaka' dolls of Visakhapatnam district finds a place in the "Mann ki Baat" programme of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
11. a Airports Council International (ACI) Asia-Pacific announced that Incheon International Airport in Seoul is the first airport in the Asia-Pacific region to be accredited under the ACI Airport Health Accreditation programme.
12. c During Corona crisis, apart from providing transport facilities and essential items like foodgrains to people, Indian Railways has also provided facilities for COVID-19 patients. It has developed a remote-controlled medical trolley named 'MEDBOT' to help deliver food and medicines to COVID-19 patients.
13. b Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that September will be observed as "Nutrition Month".
14. a Tran Tuan Anh, Minister of Industry and Trade of Vietnam co-chaired the 17th ASEAN-India Economic Ministers Consultations held virtually.

- 15. a** Pritam Singh, Singapore's Indian-origin politician scripted history when Parliament conferred the duties and privileges to him as the city-state's first Leader of the Opposition.
- 16. a** The UAE has launched Agriota, a new technology-driven agri-commodity trading and sourcing e-market platform that will bridge the gap between millions of rural farmers in India and the Gulf nation's food industry.
- 17. c** GMR led Hyderabad International Airport has won the prestigious awards of CII "National Energy Leader" and "Excellent Energy Efficient Unit" at the 21st National Awards for 'Excellence in Energy Management' organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Godrej Green Business Centre (GBC) during the 19th edition.
- 18. a** Lewis Hamilton led from start to finish at the Belgian Grand Prix to clinch his 89th career win and move two behind Michael Schumacher's Formula One record.
- 19. c** Former President Pranab Mukherjee is no more. He breathed his last at Army Hospital in New Delhi. He was 84. Mr Mukherjee served as 13th President of India from 2012 to 2017.
- 20. d** The Assembly welcomed the adoption of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, and decided to declare 30 August the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances, to be observed beginning in 2011.
- 21. a** Pop star Ariana Grande has become the first woman to have 200 million followers of photo-video sharing platform Instagram.
- 22. c** In line with Vocal for Local campaign and boosting toy manufacturing, Koppala in Karnataka will have India's first toy manufacturing cluster.
- 23. c** India and Russia are scheduled to hold the bilateral naval exercise, Indra 2020, in the Andaman Sea, close to the strategic Strait of Malacca.
- 24. b** The working group, to be led by Dinesh Pant, appointed actuary of LIC of India, will examine the need for such products in India and how they will better serve needs and interests of customers relative to traditional savings product.
- 25. b** In a first, Amul has become the only Indian dairy brand to make into the global top 20 list of Rabobank.
- 26. a** Charu Sinha, IPS officer of the 1996-batch Telangana cadre, will now be heading the Srinagar sector for CRPF as the Inspector General. This is not the first time when she has been assigned such a tough task, earlier also, she had worked as IG, the Bihar sector in CRPF and has dealt with Naxals.
- 27. d** India's first Multi-Wavelength Space Observatory 'AstroSat' has detected extreme-UV light from a galaxy located 9.3 billion light-years away from Earth. The galaxy called AUDFs01 was discovered by a team of Astronomers led by Dr Kanak Saha from the Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics, Pune.
- 28. b** The Cycling Federation of India (CFI) is all set to host the first-ever Cycling Summit in 2021, with an aim to promote the culture of cycling in the country.
- 29. a** The Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) administration is all set to conserve the six Mughal gardens in a bid to empanel them as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) mandated world heritage sites.
- 30. c** Sumit Nagal stormed into the second round of the ongoing US Open Tennis. Nagal defeated Bradley Klahn of USA in the first round of the US Open to progress further into the tournament. With this result, the 23-year-old Nagal has become the first Indian to win a singles main draw match at a Grand Slam in the last seven years.

- 31. b** The Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister has approved the introduction in Parliament of the Jammu and Kashmir Official Languages Bill 2020 in which five languages will be official languages. These are Urdu, Kashmiri, Dogri, Hindi and English.
- 32. c** Uttarakhand and Karnataka are paired under Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat programme to promote national integration through mutual understanding. Both the states have established relations through sports, trade and culture. Uttarakhand had inspired people in Karnataka in forest conservation.
- 33. d** India, Australia and Japan agreed to launch an initiative to ensure the resilience of supply chains in the Indo-Pacific, with the move coming against the backdrop of tensions created by China's aggressive actions across the region.
- 34. b** As a part of 5T mandate, Naveen Patnaik also launched mobile App 'AMA SAHAR' and 'SWACHHA SAHAR ODISHA' web app to provide citizen centric services. With launching of the web app, the ULBs will be able to submit utilisation certificate online which will bring better fiscal management.
- 35. d** The unique pilot plant in Lulea, Northern Sweden is a first step in decarbonizing the steel industry, which counts for 7% of global man-made greenhouse gas emissions.
- 36. a** The Australian government has appointed former cricketer Matthew Hayden and Indian-origin politician Lisa Singh as trade envoys for advancing business ties with India.
- 37. b** India ranked in the top 50 countries for the first time in the Global Innovation Index, which was released. India jumped four positions to rank at 48th since 2019.
- 38. a** A team of researchers from Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati, in collaboration with scientists from the University of Pardubice, Czech Republic, is working towards developing indigenous algorithms that can protect the Nation's digital data from cyber-attacks by advanced computers.
- 39. b** Ratan Tata, Anand Mahindra, Mukesh Ambani and NR Narayana Murthy were conferred the Lifetime Achievement Awards.
- 40. d** World Coconut Day is celebrated on 2nd September.
- 41. d** The Union Cabinet gave its approval for Mission Karmayogi, a new national capacity building and performance evaluation programme for civil servants.
- 42. a** The appointments committee of the cabinet (ACC) formally approved the restructuring of the Railway Board and approved the appointment of VK Yadav, the current chairman of the Railway Board as its first CEO.
- 43. d** The Election Commission will set up the country's first regional voters' awareness centre in Jaipur, which will cater to four states Rajasthan, Haryana, Punjab and Madhya Pradesh.
- 44. c** Tunisian lawmakers approved Hichem Mechichi as the country's new prime minister after pressing him for 11 hours over how he will bring the country out of an economic and social crisis that has driven a rise in migration to Europe and been worsened by the virus pandemic.
- 45. b** The Rajasthan government and the Small Industrial Development Bank of India (SIDBI) will soon ink an agreement to create newer avenues and growth opportunities for MSME units in the State.
- 46. b** Reliance Jio Board Directors Isha Ambani and Akash Ambani, Serum Institute of India CEO Adar Poonawalla and Byju Raveendran, co-founder of India's leading education technology company Byju's, are among the "emerging leaders" from across the world named by Fortune in its annual list of influential people under the age of 40.

47. b Researchers from Kerala and West Bengal have identified a new species of freshwater fish which has been christened *Systemus gracilus* from the Ganga in West Bengal.
48. c IIT Delhi incubated startup Chakr Innovation has launched 'Chakr DeCoV' to decontaminate N95 masks. Designed in the shape of a cabinet, Chakr DeCoV is built with an innovative decontamination mechanism, which utilises the high penetrability of Ozone gas for cleaning the pores of the N95 mask, ensuring complete decontamination of its intricate layers.
49. d The International Day of Charity is an international day observed annually on 5 September.
50. b The CONCACAF Gold Cup is the main association football competition of the men's national football teams governed by CONCACAF, determining the continental champion of North America, Central America, and the Caribbean.
51. d India will host a summit of the council of heads of government of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) on November 30 with a focus on contributing to the trade and economic agenda of the influential grouping.
52. a The Assam government re-launched a scheme to provide self-employment to around 2 lakh youths of the state. Known as Swami Vivekananda Assam Youth Empowerment (SVAYEM), it would provide 50 thousand rupees each as seed money to selected youths to start business ventures.
53. c In a major step towards self-reliance of the women in the state, Uttar Pradesh Government has decided to allocate outlets under Public Distribution System to women self-help groups. These are the outlets which are lying unattended in state.
54. a Germany has joined the Indo-Pacific club. The move is aimed at securing the trade routes from aggressive China. Germany has drafted 40-page guidelines as it formally adopts a strategy for the Indo-Pacific region.
55. c The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) launched a new publication, "The Little Book of Green Nudges", which aims to inspire up to 200 million students around the globe to adopt environmentally friendly habits and greener lifestyles.
56. b The government announced that longtime public servant Lisa Campbell will take over as head of the agency. Ms. Campbell replaces Sylvain Laporte, who has been president since 2015.
57. b The RBI has reviewed and issued revised guidelines for opening of Current Accounts by banks to ensure discipline among borrowers.
58. a To test incoming international passengers, the country's first on-site Covid testing facility is coming up at the capital's Indira Gandhi International Airport and will provide RT-PCR test results within six hours.
59. d To further strengthen its drive to preserve and maintain the environment in Punjab and make people stakeholders in the process, the State Forest Department launched 'I Rakhwali' application to help netizens to become 'Greenery Saviours'.
60. b "Dalle khursani" or the red cherry pepper chilli, which is grown in Sikkim and considered as one among hottest varieties in the world, has earned a geographical indication (GI) tag from the Union department of industry promotion and internal trade.
61. c Karnataka is set to implement a Rupees 600-crore project for brining 10 lakh hectares of parched land in 10 districts under watershed development with World Bank assistance.
62. a Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha launched Smart Performance Appraisal Report Recording Online Window (SPARROW) system for Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Service officers, at Raj Bhavan.

- 63. a** Kerala, Goa, Tripura, Tamil Nadu and Mizoram are among the top five States for well-being of children, according to a report brought out by non-governmental organisation Mobile Creches and launched by Vice-President Venkaiah Naidu.
- 64. a** The trial run from Daudkandi in Bangladesh to Sonamura in Tripura started as the MV Premier sailed from Daudkandi with 50 metric tonne of cement cargo.
- 65. c** Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Thaawarchand Gehlot launched the 24x7 Toll-Free Mental Health Rehabilitation Helpline “KIRAN”.
- 66. d** Bangladesh will host the 36th Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) the first time since it joined the organisation in 1973.
- 67. c** Reserve Bank of India has revised Priority Sector Lending guidelines. RBI said the move is aimed at addressing regional disparities in the flow of priority sector credit.
- 68. a** Scientists at the Jawaharlal Nehru Tropical Botanic Garden and Research Institute (JNTBGRI), Palode, have identified a new and rare species of climber of the genus Pothos (family Araceae) from the Western Ghats in Idukki district.
- 69. b** In what could possibly be the world’s largest and fastest ever operation of its kind, the UNICEF will be leading the procurement and supply of coronavirus vaccines to ensure that all countries have safe, fast and equitable access to initial doses when they are available.
- 70. b** Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar chaired a webinar on the first-ever International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies.

