
MANTHAN

A General Awareness Weekly

7th September to 13th 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



Andhra Pradesh tops Ease of Doing Business rankings of States and UTs

- **Andhra Pradesh topped the chart** among all Indian States and Union Territories in the **Business Reform Action Plan (BRAP) 2019 rankings**. **Uttar Pradesh and Telangana bagged second and third positions respectively.**
- **The Commerce and Industry Ministry released the ranking of States and Union Territories (UTs) in terms of ease of doing business** in a function attended by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Commerce & Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and Urban Development Minister Hardeep Singh Puri.
- **The BRAP ranking aims at triggering competition among states to improve business climate** in order to **attract domestic and global investors**. The parameters include areas such as **construction permit, labour regulation, and environmental registration**, access to information, land availability and single window system.
- **The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) conducts the exercise for all States and Union Territories under the Business Reform Action Plan. In the World Bank's latest 'Doing Business' report, India has jumped 14 places to the 63rd position.**

Foreign direct investment (FDI) in India grew by 13% to a record of \$ 49.97 billion in the 2019-20 financial year, according to official data. Sectors which attracted **maximum foreign inflows during 2019-20 include services (\$ 7.85 billion), computer software and hardware (\$ 7.67 billion), telecommunications (\$ 4.44 billion), trading (\$ 4.57 billion), automobile (\$ 2.82 billion), construction (\$ 2 billion), and chemicals (\$ one billion)**, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) data showed. **Singapore emerged as the largest source of FDI in India during the last fiscal with \$ 14.67 billion investments.** It was followed by **Mauritius (\$ 8.24 billion), the Netherlands (\$ 6.5 billion), the US (\$ 4.22 billion), Caymen Islands (\$ 3.7 billion), Japan (\$ 3.22 billion), and France (\$ 1.89 billion).**

11th INDRA NAVY: Bilateral maritime exercise between Indian and Russian Navy

- **The 11th edition of exercise INDRA NAVY, a biennial bilateral maritime exercise between Indian and Russian Navy will begin in the Bay of Bengal.**
- **The primary aim of exercise INDRA NAVY-20 is to further consolidate inter-operability built up by the two Navies over the years** and also to enhance understanding and procedures for multi-faceted maritime operations.
- **The Indian Navy has deployed guided missile destroyer Ranvijay, indigenous frigate Sahyadri and fleet tanker Shakti, along with their integral helicopters for the exercise. The Russian Federation Navy is being represented by destroyer Admiral Vinogradov, destroyer Admiral Tributs and fleet tanker Boris Butoma of the Pacific Fleet, based at Vladivostok.**

India and Russia have been engaged in joint naval drills since 2003. "Indra" Navy is a bilateral maritime exercise between the Indian and Russian navies and epitomizes the strategic relationship between the two countries. Exercise INDRA-2017, the first ever Tri Services Joint Exercise between Indian and Russian Armed Forces was conducted in the Eastern Military District of Russia from 19 to 29 Oct 2017.

Tribal Affairs Ministry signs agreement with IIPA for setting up of National Institute of Tribal Research

- Tribal Affairs Ministry signed an agreement with Indian Institute of Public Administration, IIPA for setting up of National Institute of Tribal Research at the IIPA campus, New Delhi.
- The proposed National Institute will be functional in a few months and will be engaged in quality tribal research in collaboration with reputed government and non-governments NGOs spread over the country. The agreement was signed in the presence of Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda.

Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) launched Van Dhan Samajik Doori Jagrookta Abhiyaan, which is aimed at educating Tribals engaged in gathering Non-timber forest products (NTFPs) in forest areas, on covid-19 response, key preventive behaviour like social distancing, home quarantine, and hygiene tips. Van Dhan Kendras, established under the scheme initiated by TRIFED, Ministry of Tribal Affairs are leading the way in helping tribals generate their livelihood in these distressed times.

India is the world's 2nd largest road network

- India has now the second largest road network in the world being fuelled by the tremendous growth in construction of expressways and highways.
- Road, Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari informed that the current rate of road building per day has averaged to 30 Kilometre a day, with the highest being 40 Kilometre per day of highways.

The road transport and highways ministry has mandated a special identification for Bharat Stage (BS) VI four wheeler vehicles from October 1, 2020. The government has called for providing a green strip on the sticker of registration details on the BS VI four wheelers, such that these vehicles can be identified easily. This will be applicable to petrol, CNG and diesel vehicles. The union government had mandated automobile manufacturers to switch to BS VI emission norms from April 1, 2020.

Record 63 Indian universities join world ranking; IISc retains top position

- Bengaluru's Indian Institute of Science (IISc) has retained its position as the highest-rated Indian university while the country recorded the highest ever tally of 63 universities in the Times Higher Education University Ranking 2021 released.
- The 63 universities is an increase of 14 from last year. The University of Oxford retains the top spot in the ranking based on the assessment of over 1,500 universities' quality of teaching, international outlook, research, and knowledge transfer.
- Overall, the IISc (301-350) maintains its position as the highest-ranked Indian university since it first qualified for the rankings in 2015, organisers of the ranking said.
- Among the debutant Indian institutions in this year's rankings, Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology Delhi, King George's Medical University (Lucknow), and Mahatma Gandhi University rank highest (601-800 band).

Fruits & vegetables in J&K covered under 'Operation Green's TOP to TOTAL' scheme

- In Jammu and Kashmir, what could be termed as a shot in arm for farmers of J&K, the Centre has brought majority of fruits and vegetables grown in Jammu under a fresh initiative of Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan. Almost all fruits and vegetables in J&K are covered under the 'Operation Green's TOP to TOTAL' scheme.
- It aims to prevent distress sales, Price stabilization interventions in Jammu and Kashmir under Central Sector Scheme- "Operation Greens" which has been extended from Tomato, Onion and Potato (TOP) to all notified fruits and vegetables (TOTAL) for a period of six months on pilot basis.

Operation Greens is a project approved by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries with the target to stabilise the supply of tomato, onion and potato crops (TOP crops) in India, as well as to ensure their availability around the country, year-round without price volatility.

States mandated to set up panel on Content Regulation of Government Ads

- As per directions of the Supreme Court, **States are mandated to set up their three member committees on Content Regulation of Government Advertisements.**
- **State-level committees** have already been constituted by **Karnataka, Goa, Mizoram and Nagaland. Chhattisgarh government** has given its consent to the Central Committee to monitor the content of their government advertisements.
- The Committee on Content Regulation in Government Advertising, CCRGA in its 19th meeting held last week took a serious note of delay in constituting state level Committees by other states. **The CCRGA was of the view that some state governments' delay in setting up the state-level committees** may be construed as contempt of Supreme Court's order.
- **The meeting chaired by former Chief Election Commissioner of India Om Prakash Rawat was attended by two other members,** Ramesh Narayan of Asian Federation of Advertising Associations and past President, IAA and Part- Time Member of Prasar Bharti Board Ashok Kumar Tandon.

In 2016 Supreme Court modified its earlier order and allowed publication of pictures of Union Ministers, Chief Ministers, Governors and State Ministers can now appear in government advertisements with the Supreme Court modifying its earlier order and allowing their publication. The verdict came on pleas by Centre and states including poll-bound West Bengal and Tamil Nadu which had sought a review of the Supreme Court judgment barring publication of leaders' photos in advertisements except those of the President, Prime Minister and the Chief Justice of India, saying it infringed fundamental rights and federal structure.

First World Solar Technology Summit inaugurated

- **The International Solar Alliance's first World Solar Technology Summit was inaugurated.** Representatives of ISA member countries attended the summit through video conference. Union Minister and International Solar Alliance President RK Singh read Prime Minister Narendra Modi's message for the summit.
- In his message, **Prime Minister appealed all countries to be part of the International Solar Alliance and join the campaign to save the earth.** PM said that India's per capita carbon emission are the lowest on the world, still India's commitment to adopt renewable energy helped it in achieving the fourth rank in the world in terms of renewable energy.
- At the summit, an agreement was also signed between **the National Thermal Power Corporation and International Solar Alliance, to implement 47 projects. Under this agreement, NTPC will start solar power generation projects in 47 member countries of ISA.** During the summit, a partnership agreement was also exchanged between Global Green Institute and International Solar Alliance. **The agreement comprises of a target to install 10 lakh solar pumps in member countries of the ISA for irrigation purposes.**

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

Narendra Singh Tomar inaugurates 22 bamboo clusters in nine states

- **Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar inaugurated 22 bamboo clusters in nine states by virtual mode.** These States are Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Assam, Nagaland, Tripura, Uttarakhand and Karnataka.
- A logo for the National Bamboo Mission was also released. **Lauding the success of the National Bamboo Mission, Mr Tomar said that the country is now gearing up to increase the export of bamboo products.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has always strived that local industries should be protected and make progress so that local artisans get a source of livelihood. He said, keeping in consideration the importance of bamboo, **the Indian Forest Act 1927 was amended in the year 2017 to remove bamboo for the category of trees.**

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

Centre of Excellence in Artificial Intelligence inaugurated at NIT Trichy

- The Centre of Excellence in Artificial Intelligence was inaugurated at National Institute of Technology (NIT) Trichy, by its Director Dr Mini Shaji Thomas.
- The Centre, with various cutting edge technical facilities, was set up with Rs 1.18 crore funding from the Higher Education Funding Agency - HEFA. The Centre already has in hand various projects worth Rs 1.27 crores from various central institutes like ISRO, DRDO and the Naval Research Board.

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

At 96.2%, Kerala tops India's literacy rate chart again; Andhra Pradesh ranks lowest with 66.4%

- With 96.2 percent literacy, Kerala has once again emerged as the most literate state in the country, while Andhra Pradesh featured at the bottom with a rate of 66.4 percent, showed a report based on National Statistical Office (NSO) survey.
- The report on 'Household Social Consumption: Education in India as part of the 75th round of National Sample Survey – from July 2017 to June 2018' provides for state-wise detail of literacy rate among the persons aged seven years and above.
- According to the study, after Kerala, Delhi has the best literacy rate at 88.7 percent, followed by Uttarakhand's 87.6 percent, Himachal Pradesh's 86.6 percent, and Assam's at 85.9 percent.
- On the other hand, Rajasthan is the second-worst performer with a literacy rate at 69.7 percent, followed by Bihar at 70.9 percent, Telangana at 72.8 percent, Uttar Pradesh at 73 percent, and Madhya Pradesh at 73.7 percent.
- The study has pegged the overall literacy rate in the country at about 77.7 percent. In rural areas, the literacy rate is 73.5 percent compared to 87.7 percent in urban areas of the country. At the all-India level, the male literacy rate is higher at 84.7 percent compared to 70.3 percent among women.

PM Modi launched Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi digitally launched the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY). He also launched e-Gopala App, a comprehensive breed improvement marketplace and information portal for direct use of farmers.
- The Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) is a flagship scheme for focused and sustainable development of fisheries sector in the country with an estimated investment of Rs. 20,050 crores for its implementation during a period of 5 years from FY 2020-21 to FY 2024-25 in all States/Union Territories, as a part of AatmaNirbhar Bharat Package.
- The investment of Rs. 20,050 crores under PMMSY is the highest ever in the fisheries sector. Out of this, an investment of about Rs 12340 crores is proposed for beneficiary-oriented activities in Marine, Inland fisheries and Aquaculture and about Rs 7710 crores investment for Fisheries Infrastructure.
- PMMSY aims at enhancing fish production by an additional 70 lakh tonne by 2024-25, increasing fisheries export earnings to Rs.1,00,000 crore by 2024-25, doubling of incomes of fishers and fish farmers, reducing post-harvest losses from 20-25% to about 10% and generation of additional 55 lakhs direct and indirect gainful employment opportunities in fisheries sector and allied activities.

Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying is a newly formed ministry in India. It was formed in May 2019 by Modi government from the department of same name under Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare. Sanjeev Kumar Balyan is appointed as minister of State for Animal Husbandry, Fisheries and Dairying.

Government constitutes EGoM to guide corporatisation process of OFB

- Consequent to the decision of the **Government to convert Ordnance Factory Board, OFB, a subordinate office of Ministry of Defence into one or more than one 100 per cent Government owned corporate entities**, the Government has **constituted an Empowered Group of Ministers, EGoM**, under the **Chairmanship of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh**.
- The EGoM will **oversee and guide the entire process, including transition support and redeployment plan of employees** while safeguarding their wages and retirement benefits. Other ministers in the EGoM are Home Minister Amit Shah, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, Labour and Employment Minister Santosh Kumar Gangwar and Minister for Personnel Dr Jitendra Singh.

Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) consisting of the Indian Ordnance Factories is an Government agency **under the control of department of defence production (DDP) Ministry of Defence (MoD)**, Government of India. It is engaged in **research, development, production, testing, marketing and logistics of a comprehensive product range in the areas of air, land and sea systems**. It is **headquartered in Kolkata**.

PM Narendra Modi dedicated to nation three key projects related to Petroleum sector in Bihar

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated to the nation **three key projects related to the Petroleum sector in Bihar** through video conferencing. **The projects include the Durgapur-Banka section of the Paradip-Haldia-Durgapur Pipeline Augmentation Project and two LPG Bottling Plants**.
- They have been **commissioned by Indian Oil and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited- HPCL**, under the aegis of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.
- The 193 kilometer long **Durgapur-Banka pipeline section is a part of the Paradip-Haldia-Durgapur Pipeline Augmentation Project**, for which the foundation stone was laid by the Prime Minister. Durgapur-Banka section is the extension of the existing 679 Kilometer long Paradip-Haldia-Durgapur LPG pipeline to the new LPG bottling plant at Banka in Bihar.

Following COVID-19 lockdown, the Bihar Education Project Council (BEPC) has launched a mobile application and plans to book a slot with the All India Radio for the audio broadcast of study materials for government school students. Recently, the BEPC, a wing of the State Education department, **launched a mobile application “Unnayan: Mera Mobile, Mera Vidyalaya”** for Class VI to XII of over 70,000 government-run schools.

Bihar is the third-largest state of India by population, according to the census 2011. It is a **land-locked state**, although the outlet to the sea through the port of Kolkata is not far away. **Nalanda University is located in the town of Rajgir**, in the northern Indian state of Bihar. **It was a Buddhist center of learning from 427 to 1197 CE**. It has been called **“one of the first great universities in recorded history**. Phagu Chauhan is the **current Governor of Bihar**. Nitish Kumar is the **current Chief Minister of Bihar**.

Centre launches Climate Smart Cities Assessment Framework along with ‘Streets for People Challenge’

- Housing and Urban Affairs Minister **Hardeep Singh Puri** launched the **Climate Smart Cities Assessment Framework, CSCAF 2.0**, along with the **‘Streets for People Challenge’** in a virtual event.
- **The objective of CSCAF is to provide a clear roadmap for cities towards combating Climate Change** while planning and implementing their actions, including investments. CSCAF initiative intends to inculcate a climate-sensitive approach to urban planning and development in India.
- **The Streets for People Challenge is the response to the need for making the cities more walkable and pedestrian friendly**.

Minister of State for Housing & Urban Affairs Hardeep S Puri launched a mobile app, **‘mHariyali’**, which is aimed to encourage public engagement in planting trees and other such green drives. **The app provides for automatic geo-tagging of plants**. The app will also enable nodal officers to periodically monitor the plantation.

Gujarat: State declares its first heritage tourism policy

- **Unveiling the first “heritage tourism policy”** Gujarat government allowed opening up of heritage hotels, museums, banquet halls and restaurants inside historic palaces, forts and buildings.
- **This policy is applicable to historic structures that existed before January 1, 1950** and will allow international and domestic tourists to see and experience historic structures from close quarters.
- Under this policy, **a new heritage hotel or an existing one will get financial assistance of Rs 5-10 crore for renovation or expansion.** The basic heritage structure should not be altered during this process. **The government will give a 20 per cent subsidy (maximum of Rs 5 crore) if the investment is up to Rs 25 crore.** If the investments are over Rs 25 crore, then the maximum subsidy would be Rs 10 crore.

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

EAM Jaishankar co-chairs ASEAN-India Ministerial Meeting

- **External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar co-chaired the ASEAN-India Ministerial Meeting** along with his Thailand counterpart Don Pramudwinai. The meeting was held virtually and saw the participation of Foreign Ministers of the ten ASEAN Member States and India.
- **It reviewed the status of ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership** in several areas including maritime cooperation, connectivity, education and capacity building and people-to-people contacts.
- It also reviewed the **progress in implementation of the ASEAN-India Plan of Action, 2016-2020.** The new ASEAN-India Plan of Action (2021-2025) was adopted at the Meeting. The Ministers discussed ways to strengthen cooperation to fight COVID-19 pandemic and exchanged views on important regional and international developments.

Subrahmanyam Jaishankar is the current Minister of External Affairs of the Government of India since 31 May 2019. He is a member of the Bharatiya Janata Party and is a Member of Indian Parliament in the Rajya Sabha since 5 July 2019, representing Gujarat. He has previously served as the Foreign Secretary from January 2015 to January 2018. He joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1977.

Andhra Pradesh CM Jagan Mohan Reddy launched YSR Poshana schemes

- **Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy launched YSR Sampoorna Poshana and YSR Sampoorna Poshana Plus schemes aimed at providing nutritious food for pregnant women, lactating mothers and children.**
- **While YSR Sampoorna Poshana Plus is for supplying nutritious food in 77 tribal areas covering eight ITDAs, 52 ICDS projects and 8,320 Anganwadi centres,** the remaining urban and rural areas in plain lands will be covered under the YSR Sampoorna Poshana.
- **Under YSR Sampoorna Poshana Plus, the government will be spending Rs 1,100 every month on every pregnant and lactating woman, Rs 620 on each child aged six and 36 months, and Rs 553 on each child aged between 36 and 72 months, totalling Rs 307.55 crore per annum on 3,80,000 beneficiaries.**

Andhra Pradesh is the first state in India to be formed under the State reorganisation act in 1956 and first state to be created based on the language in India. On 2 June 2014, the north-western portion of Andhra Pradesh was separated to form the new state of Telangana. The longtime capital of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, was transferred to Telangana as part of the division. Amaravati is the de facto capital city of the Andhra Pradesh. Biswabhusan Harichandan is serving as the current Governor of Andhra Pradesh. Andhra Pradesh is the first state in India to have Five Deputy Chief Ministers one each from Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, backward, minority and Kapu communities. YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is the current Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh.

PM Narendra Modi inaugurates 1.75 lakh houses built under PMAY - Gramin in MP

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated 1.75 lakh houses built under Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana - Gramin in 12 thousand villages in Madhya Pradesh. The Prime Minister released the 'Griha Pravesham' plaque and inaugurated all the houses simultaneously.

Pradhan Mantri Gramin Awaas Yojana (PMGAY), previously Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY), is a social welfare programme to provide housing for the rural poor in India. A similar scheme for urban poor was launched in 2015 as Housing for All by 2022. Under the PMGAY scheme, financial assistance worth Rs.120,000 (US\$1,700) in plain areas and Rs.130,000 (US\$1,800) in difficult areas (high land area) is provided for construction of houses.

Damaged British-era Durmi-Gauna Lake in Uttarakhand to be revived after 5 decades

- A British-era lake which was largely covered by debris following a cloudburst and landslide in Chamoli district will now be revived to make it a prominent tourist attraction.
- Durmi-Gauna Lake also known as Birahi taal, 18 km from Nijmula valley in Chamoli was a prominent lake of Garhwal region on the lines of Nainital in Kumaon during the early part of the last century.
- Britishers liked this hill spot owing to its scenic beauty against the background of the Trishul Himalayas and water of four rivulets forming the core water supply of this lake. The vast alpine pastures and panoramic Himalayan view from this lake and adjacent villages provide a breathtaking view to the visitors.
- "Durmi-Gauna Lake is situated in the midst of two villages Durmi and Gauna because of which this lake is known as Durmi-Gauna Lake. It was a major lake during the pre and post-Independence era. Boats used to operate on this lake with a large number of tourists and visitors from neighbouring districts of Garhwal-Kumaon division used to arrive.
- But due to a natural disaster on July 20, 1970 when a cloudburst and heavy rainfall and landslide resulted in burying much of the lake with debris and boulders from the mountain. Now, this lake will be revived and redeveloped with multi development projects to restore its lost status".

Char Dham National Highway is an under construction two-lane express National Highway with a minimum width of 10 metres in the Indian state of Uttarakhand. The proposed highway will complement the under construction Char Dham Railway by connecting the four holy places in Uttarakhand states namely Badrinath, Kedarnath, Gangotri and Yamunotri. The project includes 900 km national highways which will connect whole of Uttarakhand state

Odisha Government launches "GARIMA" welfare scheme for sanitation workers

- Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched "GARIMA" a new Scheme to ensure Safety and Dignity of Core Sanitation Workers of the State. Under this scheme, about 20,000 core sanitation workers and their families covering one lakh population are likely to be benefitted. A dedicated corpus fund initially with Rs 50 crore will also be created, a State Commission for Core Sanitation Workers will also be constituted, the Scheme will be implemented in all the 114 Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) of Odisha.

Government moves ahead with Orientation and Training Programme of iRAD App

- Road Transport and Highways Ministry is in the process of implementing Integrated Road Accident Database Project (iRAD) which will be applicable across the country. In the first instance, it has been decided to implement the proposal in six states.
- These are Maharashtra, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. The basic iRAD app has been developed and will be customized as per the requirements of concerned states. Mobile app of iRAD is available for Android platform and will be available shortly for other platforms like iOS.

Nitin Jairam Gadkari was served as the President of the BJP from 2010-2013. He is the current Minister for Road Transport & Highways of India and Shipping Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in the Government of India. Gadkari represents Lok Sabha from Nagpur constituency, Maharashtra.



In a first, US census to count Sikhs as ‘distinct ethnic group’

- **Sikhs will be counted as a distinct ethnic group for the first time in US history, by the Census Bureau.** This is a significant step towards **establishing a separate identity away from the composite “Asian Indian” category for people from India** who are broadly known as Indian-Americans.
- According to several experts, the step potentially gives ammunition to **Sikh separatists who promote the idea of Khalistan from the comfort of their homes in the US, Canada and other western countries.**
- Others, meanwhile, stress there is no cause of anxiety and counting will help Sikhs become less “invisible” in the context of US government policies. **Also, the community will go under the broader category of “Asian” and not under “Asian Indian” as was the case in the 2010 count when “Sikh” was seen as a “religious” response.**
- Meanwhile, the Census Bureau is currently engaged in a decennial count by mail, phone and online, and the process is expected to end September 30. The Census Bureau’s decision is seen as a **huge victory by Sikhs who were one of the first immigrants from India to arrive on American shores more than 120 years ago.**

United States of America (USA) is a federal republic composed of **50 states** and capital is **Washington, D.C.,** **Donald John Trump** is the **45th** and current President of the United States. He became the **oldest and wealthiest person ever to assume the presidency, the first without prior military or government service, and the fifth to have won the election while losing the popular vote.**

Third annual Indo-Pacific Business Forum to be held in Hanoi

- **The third annual Indo-Pacific Business Forum is slated to be held in Vietnam’s capital Hanoi on October 28 and 29. The United States government, in partnership with the Government of Vietnam, the US Chamber of Commerce, the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the US-ASEAN Business Council, will be sponsoring the forum.**
- The forum advances a vision for the Indo-Pacific as a free and open region composed of nations that are independent, strong and prosperous. **Government and business leaders from the US, Vietnam and across the Indo-Pacific will discuss energy and infrastructure, the digital economy, market connectivity, health and economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and US-Indo-Pacific partnerships and commercial opportunities.**

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

Denmark just got a whole museum devoted to the pursuit of happiness

- **Denmark has consistently ranked among the happiest countries in the world.** While it might seem to be jolly because of no solid reason, the truth is that Denmark takes a lot of effort to ensure the mental well-being of its nationals.

- A shining example of this is “The Happiness Museum” that the country has opened in its capital Copenhagen. A one-of-a-kind establishment, The Happiness Museum is a brainchild of ‘The Happiness Research Institute.’ The institute is meant to head research into mental well-being and quality of life in the country. The museum will now replicate its ideals.

Denmark is a Nordic state in Northern Europe and the North Atlantic. Copenhagen is the capital and most populous city of Denmark. Mette Frederiksen has been Prime Minister of Denmark since June 2019. Margrethe II is the Queen of Denmark. The krone is the official currency of Denmark, Greenland, and the Faroe Islands.

World’s first graduate-level AI University

- Mohamed Bin Zayed University of Artificial Intelligence (MBZUAI) is the world’s first graduate-level AI University. Named after His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Armed Forces, the AI University will introduce a new model of academia and research to the field of Artificial Intelligence.
- The establishment promises to provide students and faculty members with access to some of the world’s most advanced AI systems in existence. The global business value derived from Artificial Intelligence (AI) is projected to reach over \$3.9 trillion by 2022, according to industry analyst firm Gartner.

First India-France-Australia Trilateral Dialogue held virtually

- The first India-France-Australia Trilateral Dialogue was held virtually. The meeting was co-chaired by Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla, Secretary-General, French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs François Delattre, and Secretary, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Frances Adamson.
- The focus of the dialogue was on enhancing cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region. The outcome oriented meeting was held with the objective of building on the strong bilateral relations that the three countries share with each other. The three sides agreed to hold the dialogue on an annual basis.

India to host CHG meeting of SCO on 29-30 November in New Delhi

- India is scheduled to host the meeting of Council of Heads of Government (CHG) of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) on 29-30 November 2020 in New Delhi.
- This will be the first Prime Minister level meeting to be hosted by India since its elevation as a full-member of SCO. In the run-up to the CHG Meeting, India has taken lot of initiatives in a wide range of areas.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation 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.

World’s first hydrogen-powered passenger train hits the rails in Austria

- Train passengers in Austria will get a chance to travel on the first passenger train in the world to run on a hydrogen fuel cell, the Coradia iLint built by Alstom. Following successful tests in Germany that finished earlier this year, the train will conduct the public trial.
- Austrian Federal Railways (ÖBB) will test the Coradia iLint on regional railway lines in the country’s south, where they could replace diesel trains. It can reach speeds of 140 kph and produce zero emissions. 41 of the hydrogen-powered trains have been sold in Germany, with the UK, the Netherlands, France and Italy interested in the technology.

Austria is a landlocked East Alpine country in the southern part of Central Europe. Vienna is the national capital and largest city of Austria. Sebastian Kurz has been chancellor of Austria since January 2020. Alexander Van der Bellen is the current President of Austria. Euro is the currency of it.



Banque Saudi Fransi and Mastercard launch world's first priceless card

- **Banque Saudi Fransi (BSF) and Mastercard** have announced the launch of the world's first **Priceless Mastercard Credit Card**. The exclusive card was launched earlier this year during a private BSF customer event hosted at Al Ula, a celebrated UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- The card builds on Mastercard's 20-year legacy of delivering and enabling Priceless experiences by offering cardholders exclusive access to events and experiences in line with their passions.
- The **Priceless card, the most elite in Mastercard's portfolio**, will give cardholders the opportunity to experience the world's most prestigious music, sporting and entertainment events, meet celebrities, and enjoy a host of unparalleled travel and lifestyle privileges.

Mastercard Incorporated (MasterCard) is an American multinational financial services corporation headquartered in the Mastercard International Global Headquarters in Purchase, New York, United States. Its principal business is to process payments between the banks of merchants and the card-issuing banks or credit unions of the purchasers who use the "Mastercard" brand debit, credit and prepaid cards to make purchases.

Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand lead in Broadband Readiness Index

- The **Broadband Readiness Index (BRI)** being prepared by the Department of Telecommunications has thrown up a surprise with Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand faring better on the criteria set by the Central government.
- The BRI was launched in association with economic policy think-tank **Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER)** last year to further expand the broadband network across the country and analyses the state's readiness to adopt the fixed line network.
- The **Index** also becomes significant in the wake of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's announcement on August 15 that 6 lakh villages across the country will be connected by optical fibre within a thousand days.

Vodafone Idea embarks on new journey, unveil brand identity Vi

- **Vodafone and Idea, the two brands of Vodafone Idea Ltd (VIL)** have together been rebranded as "**Vi**" (read as "**We**") and with this new brand identity, the two distinct brands will now fade away.
- "The integration of two brands is a culmination of the largest telecom integration in the world," VIL said in a filing with the stock exchanges. "VIL is now leaner and agile, and the deployment of many principles of 5G architecture has helped us transform into a future-fit, digital network for the changing customer needs."

Vodafone Group is a British multinational telecommunications conglomerate, with headquarters in London. **Idea Cellular** is an Indian mobile network operator based at Mumbai, Maharashtra. On 20 March 2017, Idea and Vodafone India announced that their respective boards had approved a merger of the two companies. The merger is completed in 2019, and the newly merged entity will be named **Vodafone Idea Ltd**. **Kumar Mangalam Birla** heads the merged company as the Chairman. Ex-CEO of Vodafone Romania is the current CEO of the company.

RBI constituted KV Kamath committee names 26 sectors for restructuring

- **The KV Kamath committee has selected 26 sectors which will require restructuring based on its analyses of financial parameters hit due to the economic crash caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.**
- **In its report the five member committee said power, construction, iron and steel, roads, real estate, wholesale trading, textiles, consumer durables, aviation, logistics, hotels, restaurants and tourism, mining are among the sectors that will need restructuring. The committee selected five financial parameter related to leverage, liquidity, debt serviceability etc.**
- **The financial parameters included total outside liability to adjusted tangible net worth, debt to EBIDTA, current ratio, debt service coverage ratio (DSCR) and average debt service coverage ratio (ADSCR) “Time is of essence at the present juncture.**

K. V. Kamath was the former chief of the New Development Bank of BRICS countries; previously he has also served as the Chairman of Infosys Limited, the second-largest Indian IT services company.

CSMIA becomes India's first airport to achieve ACI Health Accreditation

- **Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) has become the first Indian airport to be accredited under the Airport Council International's (ACI) Airport Health Accreditation (AHA) programme.**
- **Launched by ACI in July 2020, in accordance with the International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO) Council Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART) recommendations, the AHA programme assesses the new health measures and procedures adopted by airports as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and include procedures like cleaning and disinfection, physical distancing, staff protection, physical layout, passenger communications and passenger facilities.**

CIPET to establish 2 new Centres for Skilling and Technical Support at Bhagalpur & Varanasi

- **Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering & Technology (CIPET) under the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers will be shortly establishing two new Centres for Skilling and Technical Support- CSTS at Bhagalpur (Bihar) and Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh).**
- **Secretary, Chemicals and Petrochemicals Shri R.K Chaturvedi said that every year 1000 youths will be trained in each centre through Diploma & Skill Development programmes for gainful employment in petrochemicals & allied industries. Presently CIPET has 43 operational centres and 9 more centres are in the process of establishment across the country catering to the needs of Polymer and allied industries.**

TradeIndia to host India's first of kind Virtual Packaging Expo India 2020

- **After the immense success of the pioneering COVID-19 Essentials Expo India, TradeIndia has come up with another noble and enterprising initiative. The Packaging Expo India organized by TradeIndia is a virtual trade fair that will prove instrumental in enabling the packaging industry gain a veritable platform to connect with global buyers digitally.**
- **The packaging industry, that chiefly constitutes of manufacturers, suppliers and exporters, will receive a great upward push through this virtual trade event. It will help the various players of the packaging industry showcase their products and services before visitors, forge lasting business partnerships, achieve qualified leads and assign distributors.**

Bank of India launches 'Signature Visa Debit Card' for HNIs

- **Bank of India (BoI) launched “Signature Visa Debit Card” for the affluent/high net worth individuals maintaining an average quarterly balance of rupees 10 lakhs and above.**
- **The public sector bank, said this international contactless debit card will be available in metal and plastic variants. “This card will have a spending limit of up to Rs. 5 lakhs on POS & e-commerce and Rs.1 lakh on ATM.**

Bank of India is a commercial bank with headquarters in Bandra Kurla Complex, Mumbai and Founded in 1906, it has been government-owned since nationalisation in 1969.

Five PSUs under Petroleum Ministry to join International Solar Alliance Coalition for Sustainable Climate Action

- Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said that **five Public Sector Undertakings under his Ministry will be joining International Solar Alliance (ISA) Coalition for Sustainable Climate Action (ISA-CSCA) as Corporate Partners.**
- **First World Solar Technology Summit organized by ISA,** Mr Pradhan said that Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC), Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) and GAIL (India) Limited will be contributing to ISA's Corpus Fund.
- **Lauding the role of the ISA for making rapid strides since its launch at the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris on 30 November 2015 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the then French President,** Pradhan said that as the latest **inter-governmental international organization with its headquarters in India,** ISA is not only a testament to India's unwavering faith in multilateralism but also a commitment to a better, sustainable and greener future.

A state-owned enterprise in India is called a public sector undertaking (PSU) or a public sector enterprise. Those companies are owned by the union government of India or one of the many state or territorial governments or both. The company stock needs to be majority-owned by the government to be a PSU. In 1951 there were just five enterprises in the public sector in India, but in March 2019 this had increased to 348.

Public Sector Banks' doorstep banking services launched by FM Nirmala Sitharaman

- **Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated Doorstep Banking Services by Public Sector Banks** and participated in the awards ceremony to felicitate best performing banks on EASE Banking Reforms Index.
- As part of the EASE Reforms, **Doorstep Banking Services is envisaged to provide convenience of banking services to the customers at their doorstep** through the universal touch points of Call Centre, Web Portal or Mobile App. The services shall be rendered by the **Doorstep Banking Agents deployed by the selected Service Providers at 100 centres across the country.**
- **At present only non-financial services like pick up of negotiable instruments, new cheque book requisition slip, 15G / 15H forms, IT / GST challan,** issue request for standing instructions, request for account statement are available to customers. Financial services shall be made available from next month.

Seven Indian-Americans in Forbes' list of richest people in US

- **Seven Indian- Americans have figured in Forbes' list of richest Americans, topped by Amazon founder Jeff Bezos for the third year in a row. Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Cofounder Bill Gates is ranked second on the list with a net worth of USD 111 billion.** The richest people in the US saw their wealth swell despite the coronavirus pandemic's devastated impact on the economy.
- **The list has seven Indian- Americans - cybersecurity firm ZScaler CEO Jay Chaudhry, Founder and Chairman of Symphony Technology Group Romesh Wadhvani, cofounder and CEO of online home goods retailer Wayfair Niraj Shah, Silicon Valley venture capital firm Khosla Ventures founder Vinod Khosla, Managing Partner of Shervette Ventures Kavita Ram Shriram, Airline veteran Rakesh Gangwal and Workday CEO and Cofounder Aneel Bhusri.**

Bengaluru gets India's first On-Airport public bonded warehouse

- **The Bengaluru International Airport Limited (BIAL) which operates the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) announced the opening of the On-Airport Public-bonded warehouse,** claiming to be India's first airport to do so.
- **"In order to simplify processes and meet customer demands with the help of key stakeholders, including the Bengaluru Customs, BIAL has taken this step to set up India's first on-campus Public Bonded Warehouse".**
- **The facility — covering an area of 10,000 square feet — is expected to help re-export of goods,** in long-term storage of bonded cargo, to assist in partial clearances, and to allow labeling, packing, and repacking services.

Government forms committee for assessment of relief to bank borrower

- Government has constituted a three member expert committee to assist in the assessment of relief to bank borrowers. The committee chaired by former CAG Rajiv Mehrishi will measure the impact on the national economy and financial stability of waiving of interest and COVID-19 related moratorium.
- It will also give suggestions to mitigate financial constraints of various sections of society in this respect and measures to be adopted in this regard. The panel will submit its report within one week. The move came as various concerns have been raised during the ongoing hearing in the Supreme Court in the matter regarding relief sought in terms of waiver of interest and waiver of interest on interest and other related issues.

India slips 26 spots on economic freedom index: Economic Freedom of the World 2020 report

- India has fallen 26 spots to the 105th position on the Global Economic Freedom Index 2020. The country was at the 79th spot in last year's rankings. The Economic Freedom of the World: 2020 Annual Report by Canada's Fraser Institute has been released in India in conjunction with New Delhi-based think tank Centre For Civil Society.
- India reported marginal decrease in size of government (from 8.22 to 7.16), legal system and property rights (from 5.17 to 5.06), freedom to trade internationally (6.08 to 5.71) and regulation of credit, labour and business (6.63 to 6.53). A score closer to 10 indicates a higher level of economic freedom.

Reliance Industries becomes first Indian company to have a market capitalisation of \$200 billion

- Reliance Industries became the first Indian company to have a market capitalisation of more than \$200 billion after its shares touched a record high of Rs 2,344.95, up over 8%.

Madhya Pradesh: Central discom first to adopt e-office in India

- Madhya Kshetra Vidyut Vitran Company (central discom) has become the first power distribution company in the country to adopt e-office system. It is effectively being run in corporate office, offices of regional chief general manager and circles. It has been e-filing and doing correspondence through NIC e-office system.

RBI issues guidelines for appointment of CCO in banks

- Reserve Bank of India has issued guidelines for appointment of Chief Compliance Officer (CCO) in banks to ensure uniform approach with regard to compliance and risk management culture across the banking industry.
- Accordingly, RBI has said that the CCO must be appointed for a minimum fixed period of three years. The person should be a senior executive of the bank, preferably in the rank of a general manager or an equivalent position or he could also be recruited from outside.
- Further, there shall not be any responsibility which brings elements of conflict of interest, especially the role relating to business. He must not be a member of any committee which brings his/her role in conflict with responsibility as member of the committee, including any committee dealing with purchases/sanctions.
- As per the circular, no vigilance case or adverse observation from the RBI should be pending against the candidate identified for appointment as the CCO. Selection of the candidate for the post of the CCO should be done on the basis of a well-defined selection process and recommendations made by the senior executive-level selection committee constituted by the board for the purpose.

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



Inventions/Discoveries

NIMHANS develops new Indian Brain Templates, brain atlas

- Neurologists, neurosurgeons and psychiatrists in India can map the brain structure of their patients and make an accurate assessment using Indian Brain Templates (IBT) and a brain atlas developed by a team of neuroscientists from NIMHANS.
- The neuroscientists studied over 500 brain scans of Indian patients to develop five sets of Indian brain templates and a brain atlas for five age groups covering late childhood to late adulthood (six to 60 years).
- “The Montreal Neurological Index (MNI) template that we currently use is based on Caucasian brains. The MNI template was made by averaging 152 healthy brain scans from just a small slice of the city’s population in North America.
- But Caucasian brains are different from Asian brains. While some countries have their own scale to measure the brain, we are still dependent on the Caucasian brain template. What we have developed now is a scale that will measure an Indian brain.

The **human brain** is the central organ of the human nervous system, and with the spinal cord makes up the central nervous system. The **brain consists of the cerebrum, the brainstem and the cerebellum**. The **cerebrum is the largest part of the human brain**. The brain is contained in, and protected by, the skull bones of the head. The **adult human brain weighs on average about 1.2–1.4 kg (2.6–3.1 lb)** which is about 2% of the total body weight. The cerebrum controls voluntary movement, intelligence and memory. Precision, coordination and timing, posture are all controlled by the cerebellum.

IIT Guwahati researchers design engineered surfaces to detect, prevent coronavirus

- Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati have developed methods to detect and prevent the novel coronavirus using bio-interface interactions between the virus and the surface spike protein.
- According to the team of researchers, the novel coronavirus (SARS CoV-2) is composed of inner nucleic acid which is covered with surface spike glycoprotein and the engineered surfaces can be potentially applied for the detection as well as prevention of COVID-19 – the disease caused by the virus.

Two new species of cockroach wasps found

- In a significant development, researchers at the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), Kozhikode have discovered two new species of cockroach wasps in the Western Ghats. These wasps species were discovered from Coonoor in Tamil Nadu and Peppara Wild Life Sanctuary in Kerala. They belonged to the family Ampulicidae and hunted cockroaches to feed their larvae, thereby helping to control the natural population of cockroaches.

Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), founded on 1 July 1916 by Government of India Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, as premier Indian organisation in zoological research and studies to promote the survey, exploration and research of the fauna in the country.

India successfully flight tests indigenous Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle

- In a historic mission, **India successfully flight tested Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle (HSTDV)**. This is a giant leap in indigenous defence technologies and a significant milestone towards a Sashakt Bharat and Atmanirbhar Bharat.
- **The HSTDV took off from the Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam launch complex at Wheeler Island off the Odisha coast.** The vehicle reaches a certain altitude, then cruises and also **reaches very high temperatures, up to 1,000-2,000 degrees Celsius, during re-entry.** “After the Anti-Satellite Test, this is the biggest achievement recently,” the source pointed out.
- **DRDO with this mission has demonstrated capabilities for highly complex technology** that will serve as the building block for Next Gen Hypersonic vehicles in partnership with industry.

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

Indian scientists develop machine learning-based practical approach for automatic interpretation of 3D seismic data

- **Scientists struggling with the manual interpretation of growing seismic data to explore causes of earthquakes,** particularly when the area is geologically complex, are now armed with a machine learning-based solution that can help in automatic interpretation of this data.
- **Scientists from Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (WIHG),** an autonomous Institute under the Department of Science & Technology, Govt. of India, have **developed a neural-based (machine learning-based) practical approach for automatic interpretation of 3D seismic data.** This first of its kind approach has been developed by computing a new attribute called meta-attribute.
- **The tabular sheet intrusions between older layers of sedimentary rock or beds of volcanic lava (sill complexes)** significantly contribute to the transport and storage of hot magma, and leading to overburden. This acts as plausible structural traps for hydrocarbon accumulations in sedimentary basins.
- **The petroliferous (petroleum containing) Canterbury basin of New Zealand is a classic example,** where saucer-shaped magmatic sills are embedded within the Cretaceous to Eocene (geological period that lasted from about 145 to 33.9 million years ago) **succession** resulting into forced folds and hydrothermal vents above the sill terminations.

IIT Guwahati in collaboration with Workspace Metal Solutions develops first-of-its-kind self-check Kiosk

- **Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati in collaboration with Workspace Metal Solutions Pvt. Ltd., Udaipur,** has developed a first-of-its-kind self-check kiosk.
- The small structure **helps by streamlining the flow of people through the kiosk.** The Kiosk only takes about 30 seconds to check whether the person safe to enter the premises or not.
- **The self-check kiosk has been developed by Dr. Senthilmurugan Subbiah,** Associate Professor, Department of Chemical Engineering, IIT Guwahati, and Puneet Talesara, Founder, Workspace Group, and alumnus of IIT Guwahati.
- **The cost of a self-check kiosk varies from 3.5 lakh to 7.5 lakh** depending on the specification and features. The product has already been commercialised.

CSIR-CMERI and NISE to bolster the Solar Energy Sector

- **CSIR-Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute (CMERI), Durgapur and National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE), Gurugram** joined hands by **signing an online Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** as a ‘Strategic Association’ to bolster the Solar Energy sector across the nation.

Sea ice extent in Arctic lowest in July since 1979; in Antarctic, it surpassed average level in Sept.

- **The extent of sea ice in the Arctic region plunged to record lows in July 2020.** The extent of ice in the Arctic recorded in August was the third lowest for any August in more than four decades.
- On the other end, **the extent of sea ice in the Antarctic recorded higher than average levels in September 2020.** The average monthly extent of sea ice for August has consistently fallen in the last 41 years. In 2020, it was 5.08 million sq. km., the third-lowest since 1979.

Multidisciplinary drifting Observatory for the Study of Arctic Climate (MOSAiC) expedition is a one-year-long expedition into the Central Arctic, planned to take place from 2019 to 2020. For the first time a modern research icebreaker will operate in the direct vicinity of the North Pole year round, including the nearly half year long polar night during winter. **MOSAiC represents the largest Arctic expedition in history.** The aim of the expedition will be to parameterise the atmospheric, geophysical, oceanographic and all other possible variables in the Arctic, and use it to more accurately forecast the changes in our weather systems.

Rare species of orchid found for first time in western Himalayas

- After nearly 124 years, **a small and very rare species of orchid *Liparis pygmaea* has been found again in India, in alpine meadows of Uttarakhand Himalayas,** said orchid specialist Jeewan Singh Jalal from Botanical Survey of India, Pune.
- The specialist from Botanical Survey identified the species after it was found by two officials of Uttarakhand forest department's research wing during their Suptkund trek in Chamoli district at an altitude of 3800 metres in June this year. Around 1250 species of orchids are found in India, of which nearly 250 Orchid species are found in Uttarakhand alpine zone between 3100 to 3900 metres elevation.

India's child mortality rate declined between 1990 and 2019: UN

- **India's child mortality rate has declined substantially between 1990 and 2019** but the country, along with Nigeria, still accounted for almost a third of all under-five deaths last year, according to a new UN report which warned that COVID-19 pandemic threatens to undo decades of progress in eliminating preventable child deaths globally.
- The 'Levels & Trends in Child Mortality' Report 2020 said that the **number of global under-five deaths dropped to its lowest point on record in 2019** — down to 5.2 million from 12.5 million in 1990.

US Spacecraft named After NASA Astronaut Kalpana Chawla, the first India-born woman to enter space

- **An American commercial cargo spacecraft bound for the International Space Station has been named after fallen NASA astronaut Kalpana Chawla, the first India-born woman to enter space,** for her key contributions to human spaceflight.
- **Northrop Grumman, an American global aerospace and defence technology company,** announced that its next **Cygnus capsule will be named the "S.S. Kalpana Chawla",** in memory of the mission specialist who died with her six crewmates aboard the space shuttle Columbia in 2003.

World's largest rooftop greenhouse opens in Montreal

- **The world's largest rooftop greenhouse has opened in Montreal, Canada.** The greenhouse than spans 15,000 sq m was set up by Lufa Farms, on the top of a warehouse. **The greenhouse** was opened to meet the growing demand for locally sourced foods. **This greenhouse, almost the size of three football fields, can grow enough food to feed 10,000 families**

A greenhouse gas (sometimes abbreviated GHG) is a gas that absorbs and emits radiant energy within the thermal infrared range. Greenhouse gases cause the greenhouse effect on planets. The primary greenhouse gases in Earth's atmosphere are **water vapor (H₂O), carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), and ozone (O₃).**

SPORTS



Sports Personalities in News

De Bruyne named English football's player of the year

- De Bruyne became the first City player to capture the Professional Footballers' Association award. Manchester City midfielder Kevin De Bruyne was voted English football's player of the year, denying Liverpool a third straight winner of the prestigious award.
- De Bruyne became the first City player to capture the Professional Footballers' Association award after scoring 13 goals and making a record-tying 20 assists last season.

India's First Football Training App Launched by Bhaichung Bhutia Football Schools

- Bhaichung Bhutia Football Schools (BBFS) have launched their app enJogo – the first-ever football-based training app. The 'enJogo app' has a library of workouts with in-built videos of drills with audio instructions that accompany a user while they workout. The app's name is the shortened form of 'enjoy football'. 'Jogo' comes from 'Jogo Bonito' which is the portuguese phrase of the 'beautiful game'.

IPL 2020: Ali Khan becomes first American cricketer to join IPL, to play for KKR

- For the first time in history, the IPL will see participation by an American cricketer after Kolkata Knight Riders signed Ali Khan, a 29-year-old fast bowler from the USA. Khan was selected in a USA squad for the first time for the 2016 Auty Cup and ICC WCL Division Four in Los Angeles.

Zvonareva, Siegemund win US Open women's doubles title

- Vera Zvonareva and Laura Siegemund stood awkwardly facing each other, rackets and arms in the air in confusion. The rules of tennis during the coronavirus pandemic were the only thing Zvonareva and Siegemund couldn't figure out in their first tournament together. The duo won the US Open women's doubles title beating the third-seeded team of Xu Yifan and Nicole Melichar.

Lewis Hamilton Wins Dramatic Tuscan Grand Prix, Albon Secures First Career Podium

- Mercedes' Lewis Hamilton won the dramatic Tuscan Grand Prix at Mugello that was twice stopped and re-started. With this win, Hamilton takes the 90th F1 pole position of his career, only one short of equalling Michael Schumacher's all-time record.
- Mercedes' Valtteri Bottas and Red Bull's Alex Albon finished second and third respectively. Albon claimed the maiden podium of his Formula 1 career.

MISCELLANEOUS

Poshan Maah: Second Webinar organized on topic 'Nutrient Requirement for Children & Mothers during first 1000 days'

- **The Ministry of Women and Child Development is organizing a series of webinars during the third Poshan Maah being celebrated this month.** The first webinar on Best Practices and Success Stories from POSHAN Abhiyaan was organized.
- The second webinar was held on **the topic of Nutrient Requirement for Children and Mothers during the first 1000 days.** The webinars were **presided over by Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Irani.** Mrs Irani appreciated the efforts of the coordinating Ministries and appealed to all to **promote Jan Bhagidari in making all-out efforts to make the POSHAN Abhiyaan a success.**

Food Processing Industries Minister inaugurates Organic Food Processing Unit in Barabanki

- **Food Processing Industries Minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal inaugurated the Organic Food Processing Unit in Barabanki,** Uttar Pradesh through video conference.
- The Minister added that the **diverse basket of agricultural raw material base and agro-climatic attributes of Uttar Pradesh** provide the requisite platform for the state to develop a vibrant food processing industry.

Gujarat CM Vijay Rupani launches welfare scheme for farmers

- **Gujarat chief minister Vijay Rupani launched a welfare scheme for farmers with seven components designed for their overall development.** Rupani launched the scheme vis video conferencing from Gandhinagar. The scheme covers seven welfare components such as cow-based organic farming, economic upliftment of farmers, adoption of new crop varieties and distribution of agri equipment to small and marginalised farmers, the release said.
- **Under the crop storage scheme, farmers will get an assistance of Rs 30,000 to construct godowns to store their produce,** it said.
- **In case of the transportation scheme, farmers will get a financial assistance upto Rs 75,000 to buy small vehicles to transport their produce,** the release said. On the launch day, the state government disbursed financial assistance of Rs 400 crore to around 1.16 lakh farmers, it was stated.

First Indira Gandhi Chair for environmental sciences set up

- **The Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust set up the first Indira Gandhi Chair in Environmental Sciences in collaboration with Bengaluru-based National Institute of Advanced Studies** to commemorate two of the former prime minister's passions — ecology and science.

Home Minister Amit Shah e-launches development projects worth Rs 221 crore in Ahmedabad

- **Home Minister Amit Shah e-dedicated and e-launched development projects worth Rs 221 crore in Ahmedabad district.** The works e-dedicated by Union Home Minister include Rs 130.91 crore pipeline network to carry water from Vaishnavdevi Circle to Shantipura and Sarkhej along Ring Road, Rs 15 crore new water distribution station near APMC Yard in south-west zone, Rs 24.99 crore water distribution station near Makarba Police Lines in Sarkhej ward and Rs 5.26 crore Chharodi village lake.

Punjab CM Amarinder Singh launches Smart Ration Card Scheme

- **Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh launched the Smart Ration Card Scheme to cover 1.41 crore beneficiaries across the state.**
- Rolling out the scheme virtually, with connection to 100 places across the state, **the Chief Minister said, 37.5 lakh cards will be distributed to the eligible beneficiaries this month.** Besides, he also announced a separate state-funded scheme to provide subsidized rations to the nine lakh beneficiaries not covered under the National Food Security Act (NFSA).

PERSONS IN NEWS

Ayushmann Khurrana becomes UNICEF's celebrity advocate for children's rights campaign

- **UNICEF India announced Ayushmann Khurrana as its celebrity advocate** for children's rights campaign – 'For Every Child'. Khurrana will support UNICEF towards ending violence against children.
- **He will work towards this initiative in India and joins the likes of former football star David Beckham**, who works on this campaign globally, a press release issued on behalf of the actor said.
- **Dr. Yasmin Ali Haque, UNICEF representative in India** said they are delighted to have Khurrana as a UNICEF celebrity advocate as they believe that his support will help in creating awareness about the issue.

Former health secretary Preeti Sudan appointed WHO panellist

- **The World Health Organisation's independent panel for pandemic preparedness and response appointed former health secretary Preeti Sudan** as one of its 11 panellists from across the world.
- **The decision by the panel's two heads, former New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clarke and former Liberia President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf**, received a rather muted response in India.
- **Helen Clarke is believed to have conveyed that Sudan's experience as the head of the government ministry that led India's response to the pandemic makes her much more suited for the job.** Member states such as India were invited to nominate their candidates but the chairs had the freedom to pick their own candidate as they did with Sudan.

Paresh Rawal named chairperson of NSD

- **President Ram Nath Kovind named former Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP and actor Paresh Rawal as the chairperson of the National School of Drama (NSD).**
- The post of the NSD chairperson has been vacant since 2017, with vice-chairperson Dr. Arjun Deo, a Rajasthani poet, critic, playwright, theatre director and translator, acting as the head. **"Rawal will be the chairperson for the next four years."**

World's Top 50 Thinkers of COVID-19 Age: Kerala Health Minister KK Shailaja ranks first on list, beats New Zealand's Jacinda Ardern

- **Kerala Health Minister KK Shailaja fondly known as Shailaja Teacher has ranked first on the World's Top 50 Thinkers of COVID-19 Age list by UK's Prospect Magazine.**
- **The Prime Minister of New Zealand Jacinda Ardern has ranked second the list, which was prepared through a public ballot.**
- **Lauding the Kerala Health Minister for her efforts in the fight against COVID-19**, the magazine wrote, "So deft was her handling of a 2018 outbreak of the deadly Nipah disease that it was commemorated in a film, Virus. In 2020, she was the right woman in the right place."

AWARDS

Noted broadcaster Sir David Attenborough presented with Indira Gandhi peace prize

- **Noted broadcaster and natural historian David Attenborough** has been presented the **Indira Gandhi Peace Prize 2019** by the **Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust**.
- **Attenborough** has been given the prize for “revealing the wonders of the natural world, educating and entertaining generations of people through his films and books for tirelessly working to awaken humankind to the need to preserve and protect the biodiversity on our planet, and advocating the necessity to live a sustainable and harmonious way of life, working with rather than against nature,” the citation read.
- **He was named the recipient of the award in November** last year. **His name was selected by an international jury chaired by former President Pranab Mukherjee**, who died last week. The virtual award ceremony attended by Congress president and Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust chairperson **Sonia Gandhi**, former Prime Minister **Manmohan Singh** and **Rahul Gandhi**.
- **Sir David’s current series with the BBC Natural History Unit—Seven Worlds, One Planet—is broadcast on BBC One on Sunday nights.**
- Last year, **Sonia Gandhi had presented the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2018 to Centre for Science and Environment (CSE)**, a New Delhi-based environment think-tank, for its work in environmental education and protection.

The Indira Gandhi Prize or the **Indira Gandhi Peace Prize** or the **Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development** is the **prestigious award accorded annually by Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust to individuals or organisations in recognition of creative efforts toward promoting international peace, development and a new international economic order**; ensuring that scientific discoveries are used for the larger good of humanity, and enlarging the scope of freedom. **The prize carries a cash award of 2.5 million Indian rupees and a citation.** A written work, in order to be eligible for consideration, should have been published. The panel constituted by the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust consists of prominent national and international personalities including previous recipients. **It was established and first awarded in 1986 to a non-profit, non-partisan international network of committed legislators Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA).**

French star Juliette Binoche to be honoured with Golden Icon Award at Zurich Film Festival

- **The 16th edition of annual film gala will be held from September 24 to October 4 this year.** The 56-year-old Academy Award winner will be the first French artiste to receive the award.
- **She will be presented the honour on September 30 at a presentation ahead of a screening of her most recent film, the French-language comedy “How to Be a Good Wife”.**

Chaitanya Tamhane-directorial ‘The Disciple’ bags prestigious FIPRESCI award at Venice Film Festival

- **Chaitanya Tamhane’s ‘The Disciple’ has bagged the prestigious FIPRESCI award at the 2020 Venice Film Festival.** The film, which looks at the world of classical musicians on the fringes of success, had its premiere at the Biennale last week, receiving glowing reviews from the critics.
- **The award, presented by the The International Federation of Film Critics (FIPRESCI, short for Federation Internationale de la Presse Cinematographique), aims to promote and develop film culture as well as safeguard professional interests.**

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Literacy Day being celebrated across globe on 8th September every year

- **Countries across the world celebrated International Literacy Day on 8 September 2020.** This day was declared **International Literacy Day** by UNESCO on 26th October 1966 at the 14th Session of UNESCO's General Conference. It was celebrated for the first time in 1967 and its main aim is to highlight the importance of literacy to individuals, communities and societies.
- **International Literacy Day 2020 focuses** on “Literacy teaching and learning in the COVID-19 crisis and beyond,” especially on the role of educators and changing pedagogies. The theme highlights literacy learning in a **lifelong learning perspective**, and therefore, mainly focuses on youth and adults.

International Day to Protect Education from Attack, 9 September

- In proclaiming the **International Day to Protect Education from Attack** to be celebrated for the first time in **2020**, the UN is sending a clear message regarding the importance of safeguarding schools as places of protection and safety for students and educators and the need to keep education at the top of the public agenda.
- This remains a priority while governments continue to **grapple with the COVID-19 pandemic** that has led to **school closures for more than 90% of the world's student population**.

International Day for South-South Cooperation, 12 September

- **In 2018 the United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation on 12 September marks the 40th anniversary of the 1978 adoption by consensus of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries.**
- **South-South cooperation is a manifestation of solidarity among peoples and countries of the South** that contributes to their national well-being, their national and collective self-reliance and the attainment of internationally agreed development goals, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

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

- Which of the following states has topped the chart among all Indian States and Union Territories in the Business Reform Action Plan (BRAP) 2019 rankings?
(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Chhattisgarh (d) Gujarat
- The 11th edition of exercise INDRA NAVY, a biennial bilateral maritime exercise between Indian and Russian Navy will begin in the _____.
(a) Arabian Sea (b) Indian Ocean (c) Bay of Bengal (d) River Ganga
- Tribal Affairs Ministry signed an agreement with Indian Institute of Public Administration, IIPA for setting up of National Institute of Tribal Research at the IIPA campus _____.
(a) New Delhi (b) Kolkata (c) Mumbai (d) Nagpur
- According to Nitin Gadkari, India has now the _____ largest road network in the world being fuelled by the tremendous growth in construction of expressways and highways.
(a) First (b) Second (c) Third (d) Fifth
- Which of the following Indian Universities has retained its position as the highest-rated Indian university in the recently released Times Higher Education University Ranking 2021?
(a) Indian Institute of Science Bengaluru (b) Indian Institute of Technology Delhi
(c) Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi (d) Jamia Millia Islamia Central University, New Delhi
- Recently, _____ and Mastercard have announced the launch of the world's first Priceless Mastercard Credit Card.
(a) Banque Holland Hansi (b) Banque Saudi Fransi
(c) Laureal Knight Yatching (d) Partier Loud Hinsi
- The Broadband Readiness Index (BRI) being prepared by the Department of Telecommunications has thrown up a surprise with _____ and Uttarakhand faring better on the criteria set by the Central government.
(a) Chhattisgarh (b) Haryana (c) Sikkim (d) Goa
- Recently, Researchers at the _____ have developed methods to detect and prevent the novel coronavirus using bio-interface interactions between the virus and the surface spike protein.
(a) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati
(b) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi
(c) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bombay
(d) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras
- In a significant development, researchers at the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), Kozhikode have discovered two new species of _____ in the Western Ghats.
(a) Cockroach Wasps (b) Turtle (c) Snake (d) Colorful Frog
- Recently, The Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust will present the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2019 to renowned broadcaster _____.
(a) Sir David Attenborough (b) Malala Yousufzai
(c) Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (d) Sheikh Hasina
- Which of the following airports has become the first Indian airport to be accredited under the Airport Council International's (ACI) Airport Health Accreditation (AHA) programme?
(a) Indira Gandhi International Airport (b) Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport
(c) Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (d) Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose International Airport

12. Recently, The KV Kamath committee has selected _____ which will require restructuring based on its analyses of financial parameters hit due to the economic crash caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
(a) 16 sectors (b) 19 sectors (c) 26 sectors (d) 33 sectors
13. The third annual Indo-Pacific Business Forum is slated to be held in _____ on October 28 and 29, 2020.
(a) Hanoi (b) Kuala Lumpur (c) Jakarta (d) Singapore
14. Recently, Vodafone and Idea, the two brands of Vodafone Idea Ltd (VIL) have together been rebranded as _____ and with this new brand identity, the two distinct brands will now fade away.
(a) Vi (b) VIN (c) Void (d) Win India
15. Which of the following states / Union Territories almost all fruits and vegetables are covered under the 'Operation Green's TOP to TOTAL' scheme?
(a) Jammu and Kashmir (b) Sikkim (c) Himachal Pradesh (d) Puducherry
16. In a historic mission, India successfully flight tested _____.
(a) Hypersonic Technology Devastator Vehicle
(b) Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle
(c) Hyperactive Technology Demonstrator Velocity
(d) Hypersonic Technical Diode Vehicle
17. Recently, Scientists from Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (WIHG) have developed a _____ practical approach for automatic interpretation of 3D seismic data.
(a) neural based (b) neutron based (c) proton based (d) electron based
18. As per directions of the Supreme Court, States are mandated to set up their _____ member committees on Content Regulation of Government Advertisements.
(a) Two (b) Three (c) Four (d) Seven
19. The countries across the world celebrated International Literacy Day on:
(a) 2nd September (b) 4th September (c) 6th September (d) 8th September
20. Who among the following recently launched app enJogo – the first-ever football-based training app in India?
(a) Sunil Chhetri Football Schools (b) Sandesh Jhingan Football Schools
(c) Bhaichung Bhutia Football Schools (d) Brendon Fernandes Football Schools
21. Recently, International Solar Alliance's first World Solar Technology Summit was inaugurated. At present how many members are there in ISA?
(a) 76 (b) 99 (c) 121 (d) 168
22. According to a recent report based on National Statistical Office (NSO) survey, which of the following states has emerged as the most literate state in the country?
(a) Sikkim (b) Nagaland (c) Kerala (d) Goa
23. Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering & Technology (CIPET) under the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers will be shortly establishing two new Centres for Skilling and Technical Support- CSTS at Bhagalpur (Bihar) and _____.
(a) Amritsar (Punjab) (b) Varanasi (UP) (c) Surat (Gujarat) (d) Bikaner (Rajasthan)
24. Which of the following will be counted as a distinct ethnic group for the first time in US history, by the Census Bureau?
(a) Buddhist (b) Hindus (c) Muslim (d) Sikhs

25. Which of the following banks launched “Signature Visa Debit Card” for the affluent/high net worth individuals maintaining an average quarterly balance of rupees 10 lakhs and above?
 (a) Bank of Maharashtra (b) State Bank of India
 (c) Bank of India (d) Bank of Baroda
26. Recently, Dharmendra Pradhan said that five Public Sector Undertakings under his Ministry will be joining International Solar Alliance (ISA) Coalition for Sustainable Climate Action (ISA-CSCA) as Corporate Partners. Which of the following is not one among the five?
 (a) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (b) Oil India Limited
 (c) Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (d) Indian Oil Corporation Limited
27. Which of the following IIT’s in collaboration with Workspace Metal Solutions Pvt. Ltd., Udaipur, has developed a first-of-its-kind self-check kiosk?
 (a) Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (b) Indian Institute of Technology Madras
 (c) Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (d) Indian Institute of Technology Delhi
28. Recently, _____ and National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE), Gurugram joined hands by signing an online Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) as a ‘Strategic Association’ to bolster the Solar Energy sector across the nation.
 (a) CSIR-Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute (CMERI), Durgapur
 (b) CSIR-Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute (CMERI), Patna
 (c) CSIR-Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute (CMERI), Guwahati
 (d) CSIR-Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute (CMERI), Ranchi
29. Who among the following is to be honoured with Golden Icon Award at Zurich Film Festival?
 (a) Juliette Binoche (b) Isabelle Adjani (c) Catherine Deneuve (d) Brigitte Bardot
30. Recently, Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar inaugurated _____ bamboo clusters in nine states by virtual mode?
 (a) 11 (b) 17 (c) 22 (d) 28
31. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will digitally launch the Pradhan Mantri _____ Sampada Yojana, PMMSY.
 (a) Mineral (b) Matsya (c) Maan (d) Mansoor
32. Recently, The world’s largest rooftop greenhouse has opened in _____.
 (a) Montreal, Canada (b) Lyon, France (c) Zurich, Switzerland (d) Budapest, Hungary
33. How many Indian-Americans have figured in Forbes’ list of richest Americans, topped by Amazon founder Jeff Bezos for the third year in a row?
 (a) Three (b) Five (c) Seven (d) Eleven
34. The first India, _____, Australia Trilateral Dialogue was held virtually.
 (a) Germany (b) France (c) Ireland (d) Japan
35. Which of the following states launched YSR Sampoorna Poshana and YSR Sampoorna Poshana Plus schemes aimed at providing nutritious food for pregnant women, lactating mothers and children?
 (a) Telangana (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Odisha (d) Tamil Nadu
36. Name the first Manchester City player who won the Professional Footballers’ Association award recently.
 (a) Eric Garcia (b) Riyad Mahrez (c) Phil Foden (d) Kevin De Bruyne
37. In Uttar Pradesh Food Processing Industries Minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal inaugurated the Organic Food Processing Unit in _____ through video conference.
 (a) Barabanki (b) Unnao (c) Ghaziabad (d) Mahoba

38. The Centre of Excellence in Artificial Intelligence was inaugurated at National Institute of Technology (NIT) _____.
(a) Warangal (b) Tirchy (c) Jammu (d) Suratkal
39. According to a new UN report which warned that COVID-19 pandemic threatens to undo decades of progress in eliminating preventable child deaths globally. India's child mortality rate has _____ substantially between 1990 and 2019.
(a) Inclined (b) Declined
(c) First Inclined then Declined (d) Remain Stagnant
40. Name the British-era Lake which was largely covered by debris following a cloudburst and landslide in Chamoli district which will now be revived to make it a prominent tourist attraction.
(a) Bedini Lake (b) Parashar Lake (c) Durmi-Gauna lake (d) Hemkunt Lake
41. India is scheduled to host the meeting of Council of Heads of Government (CHG) of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, SCO on 29-30 November 2020 in _____.
(a) Bhopal (b) New Delhi (c) Mumbai (d) Chennai
42. The World's first graduate-level AI University is located in:
(a) Canada (b) China (c) UAE (d) Oman
43. What is the rank of India in Global Economic Freedom Index 2020?
(a) 54th (b) 63rd (c) 89th (d) 105th
44. Which of the following companies became the first Indian company to have a market capitalisation of more than \$200 billion after its shares touched a record high?
(a) BHEL (b) IOCL (c) Reliance Industries (d) GAIL
45. Recently, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated _____ by Public Sector Banks and participated in the awards ceremony to felicitate best performing banks on EASE Banking Reforms Index.
(a) Quicker Banking Services (b) Arunoday Banking Services
(c) Doorstep Banking Services (d) One Stop Banking Services
46. After nearly 124 years, a small and very rare species of orchid *Liparis pygmaea* has been found again in India, in alpine meadows of _____.
(a) Uttarakhand Himalayas (b) Sikkim Himalayas
(c) Jammu and Kashmir Himalayas (d) Rajasthan
47. Recently, Government has constituted a three member expert committee to assist in the assessment of relief to bank borrowers. The committee will be chaired by:
(a) Deepak Kocchar (b) Rajiv Mehrishi (c) Aravind Panagariya (d) Sindhushree Khullar
48. Who has been recently appointed as the chairperson of the National School of Drama (NSD)?
(a) Naseeruddin Shah (b) J P Dutta (c) Paresh Rawal (d) Rupa Ganguli
49. Recently, An American commercial cargo spacecraft bound for the International Space Station has been named after fallen NASA astronaut _____.
(a) Kalpana Chawla (b) Sunita Williams (c) Shweta Pramanik (d) Priya Natrajan
50. Recently, Gujarat chief minister Vijay Rupani launched a welfare scheme for farmers with _____ components designed for their overall development.
(a) Four (b) Five (c) Seven (d) Eleven

51. Recently, Government of India has decided to convert Ordnance Factory Board, OFB, a subordinate office of Ministry of Defence into one or more than one 100 per cent Government owned corporate entities, the Government has constituted an Empowered Group of Ministers, EGoM, under the Chairmanship of _____.
 (a) Defence Minister Rajnath Singh (b) Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman
 (c) Prime Minister Narendra Modi (d) Home Minister Amit Shah
52. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated to the nation three key projects related to the Petroleum sector in _____ through video conferencing.
 (a) Uttar Pradesh (b) West Bengal (c) Jharkhand (d) Bihar
53. Who among the following launched the Climate Smart Cities Assessment Framework, CSCAF 2.0, along with the 'Streets for People Challenge' in a virtual event?
 (a) R.K.Singh (b) Amit Shah (c) Hardeep Singh Puri (d) Narendra Modi
54. Recently, which of the following Indian states unveiled the first "heritage tourism policy" which allowed opening up of heritage hotels, museums, banquet halls and restaurants inside historic palaces, forts and buildings?
 (a) Rajasthan (b) Uttarakhand (c) Gujarat (d) Goa
55. Which of the following countries passengers will get a chance to travel on the first passenger train in the world to run on a hydrogen fuel cell, the Coradia iLint built by Alstom?
 (a) Australia (b) Austria (c) Hungary (d) Finland
56. Which of the following Indian airports announced the opening of the On-Airport Public-bonded warehouse, claiming to be India's first airport to do so?
 (a) Bengaluru International Airport Limited (b) Chennai International Airport Limited
 (c) New Delhi International Airport Limited (d) Kolkata International Airport Limited
57. Which of the following companies has become the first power distribution company in the country to adopt e-office system?
 (a) Purva Kshetra Vidyut Vitran Company (b) Paschim Kshetra Vidyut Vitran Company
 (c) Madhya Kshetra Vidyut Vitran Company (d) Dakshin Kshetra Vidyut Vitran Company
58. Recently, Neurologists, neurosurgeons and psychiatrists in India can map the brain structure of their patients and make an accurate assessment using Indian Brain Templates (IBT) and a brain atlas developed by a team of neuroscientist's from _____.
 (a) AIIMS (b) NIMHANS
 (c) RML Hospital, Lucknow (d) JIPMER
59. Who is the first American cricketer to join IPL and to play for KKR?
 (a) Ali Khan (b) Vyapak Mandal (c) Manish Malhotra (d) Rupak Das
60. Recently, Chaitanya Tamhane's _____ has bagged the prestigious FIPRESCI award at the 2020 Venice Film Festival.
 (a) 'The Disciple' (b) 'The Tortoise' (c) 'The Classless' (d) 'The Cascade'
61. Recently, UNICEF India announced _____ as its celebrity advocate for children's rights campaign – 'For Every Child'?
 (a) Ayushmann Khurrana (b) Salman Khan
 (c) Ranveer Singh (d) Varun Dhawan
62. Recently, Reserve Bank of India has issued guidelines for appointment of _____ in banks to ensure uniform approach with regard to compliance and risk management culture across the banking industry.
 (a) Chief Executive Officers (b) Chief Compliance Officer
 (c) Chief Administrative Officer (d) Chief Revenue Officer

63. Recently, External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar co-chaired the ASEAN-India Ministerial Meeting along with his _____ counterpart Don Pramudwinai.
(a) Thailand (b) Vietnam (c) Cambodia (d) Brunei
64. Which of the following states launched “GARIMA” a new Scheme to ensure Safety and Dignity of Core Sanitation Workers of the State?
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Bihar (c) Odisha (d) Jharkhand
65. The Road Transport and Highways Ministry is in the process of implementing Integrated Road Accident Database Project (iRAD) which will be applicable across the country. In the first instance, it has been decided to implement the proposal in _____ states.
(a) Four (b) Five (c) Six (d) Ten
66. Who won the dramatic Tuscan Grand Prix at Mugello in September 2020?
(a) Valtteri Bottas (b) Lewis Hamilton (c) Servican Miry (d) Alex Albon
67. Who won the US Open women’s doubles title 2020?
(a) Serena Williams and Venus Williams (b) Naomi Osaka and Alexandra Berty
(c) Vera Zvonareva and Laura Siegemund (d) Sania Mirza and Maratoli Udart
68. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated 1.75 lakh houses built under Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana - Gramin in 12 thousand villages in _____.
(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Uttar Pradesh (c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Rajasthan
69. Recently, International Day for South-South Cooperation was observed on:
(a) 6th September (b) 8th September (c) 10th September (d) 12th September
70. Which of the following countries recently got a whole museum devoted to the pursuit of happiness?
(a) Sweden (b) Norway (c) Denmark (d) Finland

ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

1. **b** Andhra Pradesh topped the chart among all Indian States and Union Territories in the Business Reform Action Plan (BRAP) 2019 rankings.
2. **c** The 11th edition of exercise INDRA NAVY, a biennial bilateral maritime exercise between Indian and Russian Navy will begin in the Bay of Bengal.
3. **a** Tribal Affairs Ministry signed an agreement with Indian Institute of Public Administration, IIPA for setting up of National Institute of Tribal Research at the IIPA campus, New Delhi.
4. **b** India has now the second largest road network in the world being fuelled by the tremendous growth in construction of expressways and highways.
5. **a** Bengaluru's Indian Institute of Science (IISc) has retained its position as the highest-rated Indian university while the country recorded the highest ever tally of 63 universities in the Times Higher Education University Ranking 2021 released.
6. **b** Banque Saudi Fransi (BSF) and Mastercard have announced the launch of the world's first Priceless Mastercard Credit Card.
7. **a** The Broadband Readiness Index (BRI) being prepared by the Department of Telecommunications has thrown up a surprise with Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand faring better on the criteria set by the Central government.
8. **a** Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati have developed methods to detect and prevent the novel coronavirus using bio-interface interactions between the virus and the surface spike protein.
9. **a** In a significant development, researchers at the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), Kozhikode have discovered two new species of cockroach wasps in the Western Ghats.
10. **a** The Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust will present the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2019 to renowned broadcaster Sir David Attenborough.
11. **b** Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) has become the first Indian airport to be accredited under the Airport Council International's (ACI) Airport Health Accreditation (AHA) programme.
12. **c** The KV Kamath committee has selected 26 sectors which will require restructuring based on its analyses of financial parameters hit due to the economic crash caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
13. **a** The third annual Indo-Pacific Business Forum is slated to be held in Vietnam's capital Hanoi on October 28 and 29.
14. **a** Vodafone and Idea, the two brands of Vodafone Idea Ltd (VIL) have together been rebranded as "Vi" (read as "We") and with this new brand identity, the two distinct brands will now fade away.
15. **a** Almost all fruits and vegetables in J&K are covered under the 'Operation Green's TOP to TOTAL' scheme.
16. **b** In a historic mission, India successfully flight tested Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle (HSTDV).
17. **a** Scientists from Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (WIHG), an autonomous Institute under the Department of Science & Technology, Govt. of India, have developed a neural-based (machine learning-based) practical approach for automatic interpretation of 3D seismic data.

- 18. b** As per directions of the Supreme Court, States are mandated to set up their three member committees on Content Regulation of Government Advertisements.
- 19. d** 8 September was declared international literacy day by UNESCO on 26 October 1966 at 14th session of UNESCO's General conference.
- 20. c** Bhaichung Bhutia Football Schools (BBFS) have launched their app enJogo – the first-ever football-based training app.
- 21. c** The International Solar Alliance is an alliance of 121 countries initiated by India, most of them being sunshine countries, which lie either completely or partly between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn.
- 22. c** With 96.2 percent literacy, Kerala has once again emerged as the most literate state in the country, while Andhra Pradesh featured at the bottom with a rate of 66.4 percent, showed a report based on National Statistical Office (NSO) survey.
- 23. b** Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering & Technology (CIPET) under the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers will be shortly establishing two new Centres for Skilling and Technical Support- CSTS at Bhagalpur (Bihar) and Varanasi (UP) .
- 24. d** Sikhs will be counted as a distinct ethnic group for the first time in US history, by the Census Bureau.
- 25. c** Bank of India (BoI) launched “Signature Visa Debit Card” for the affluent/high net worth individuals maintaining an average quarterly balance of rupees 10 lakhs and above.
- 26. b** First World Solar Technology Summit organized by ISA, Mr Pradhan said that Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC), Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) and GAIL (India) Limited will be contributing to ISA's Corpus Fund.
- 27. a** Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati in collaboration with Workspace Metal Solutions Pvt. Ltd., Udaipur, has developed a first-of-its-kind self-check kiosk.
- 28. a** CSIR-Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute (CMERI), Durgapur and National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE), Gurugram joined hands by signing an online Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) as a 'Strategic Association' to bolster the Solar Energy sector across the nation.
- 29. a** French star Juliette Binoche to be honoured with Golden Icon Award at Zurich Film Festival.
- 30. c** Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar inaugurated 22 bamboo clusters in nine states by virtual mode.
- 31. b** Prime Minister Narendra Modi digitally launched the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana, PMMSY.
- 32. a** The world's largest rooftop greenhouse has opened in Montreal, Canada.
- 33. c** Seven Indian- Americans have figured in Forbes' list of richest Americans, topped by Amazon founder Jeff Bezos for the third year in a row. Indian- Americans have figured in Forbes' list of richest Americans, topped by Amazon founder Jeff Bezos for the third year in a row
- 34. b** The first India-France-Australia Trilateral Dialogue was held virtually. The meeting was co-chaired by Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla, Secretary-General, French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs François Delattre, and Secretary, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Frances Adamson.

- 35. b** Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh YS Jagan Mohan Reddy launched YSR Sampoorna Poshana and YSR Sampoorna Poshana Plus schemes aimed at providing nutritious food for pregnant women, lactating mothers and children.
- 36. d** Manchester City midfielder Kevin De Bruyne was voted English football's player of the year, denying Liverpool a third straight winner of the prestigious award.
- 37. a** Food Processing Industries Minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal inaugurated the Organic Food Processing Unit in Barabanki, Uttar Pradesh through video conference.
- 38. b** The Centre of Excellence in Artificial Intelligence was inaugurated at National Institute of Technology (NIT) Trichy, by its Director Dr Mini Shaji Thomas.
- 39. b** India's child mortality rate has declined substantially between 1990 and 2019
- 40. c** Durmi-Gauna lake also known as Birahi taal, 18 km from Nijmula valley in Chamoli was a prominent lake of Garhwal region on the lines of Nainital in Kumaon during the early part of the last century.
- 41. b** India is scheduled to host the meeting of Council of Heads of Government (CHG) of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, SCO on 29-30 November 2020 in New Delhi.
- 42. c** UAE announced world's first graduate-level research-based AI University.
- 43. d** India has fallen 26 spots to the 105th position on the Global Economic Freedom Index 2020.
- 44. c** Reliance Industries became the first Indian company to have a market capitalisation of more than \$200 billion after its shares touched a record high of Rs 2,344.95, up over 8%.
- 45. c** Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated Doorstep Banking Services by Public Sector Banks and participated in the awards ceremony to felicitate best performing banks on EASE Banking Reforms Index.
- 46. a** After nearly 124 years, a small and very rare species of orchid *Liparis pygmaea* has been found again in India, in alpine meadows of Uttarakhand Himalayas.
- 47. b** Government has constituted a three member expert committee to assist in the assessment of relief to bank borrowers. The committee chaired by former CAG Rajiv Mehrishi will measure the impact on the national economy and financial stability of waiving of interest and COVID-19 related moratorium.
- 48. c** President Ram Nath Kovind named former Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP and actor Paresh Rawal as the chairperson of the National School of Drama (NSD).
- 49. a** An American commercial cargo spacecraft bound for the International Space Station has been named after fallen NASA astronaut Kalpana Chawla
- 50. c** Gujarat chief minister Vijay Rupani launched a welfare scheme for farmers with seven components designed for their overall development.
- 51. a** The Government to convert Ordnance Factory Board, OFB, a subordinate office of Ministry of Defence into one or more than one 100 per cent Government owned corporate entities, the Government has constituted an Empowered Group of Ministers, EGoM, under the Chairmanship of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.
- 52. d** Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated to the nation three key projects related to the Petroleum sector in Bihar through video conferencing.

- 53. c** Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri launched the Climate Smart Cities Assessment Framework, CSCAF 2.0, along with the 'Streets for People Challenge' in a virtual event.
- 54. c** Unveiling the first "heritage tourism policy" Gujarat government allowed opening up of heritage hotels, museums, banquet halls and restaurants inside historic palaces, forts and buildings.
- 55. b** Train passengers in Austria will get a chance to travel on the first passenger train in the world to run on a hydrogen fuel cell, the Coradia iLint built by Alstom.
- 56. a** The Bengaluru International Airport Limited (BIAL) which operates the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) announced the opening of the On-Airport Public-bonded warehouse, claiming to be India's first airport to do so.
- 57. c** Madhya Kshetra Vidyut Vitran Company (central discom) has become the first power distribution company in the country to adopt e-office system.
- 58. b** Neurologists, neurosurgeons and psychiatrists in India can map the brain structure of their patients and make an accurate assessment using Indian Brain Templates (IBT) and a brain atlas developed by a team of neuroscientists from NIMHANS.
- 59. a** For the first time in history, the IPL will see participation by an American cricketer after Kolkata Knight Riders signed Ali Khan, a 29-year-old fast bowler from the USA.
- 60. a** Chaitanya Tamhane's 'The Disciple' has bagged the prestigious FIPRESCI award at the 2020 Venice Film Festival.
- 61. a** UNICEF India announced Ayushmann Khurrana as its celebrity advocate for children's rights campaign – 'For Every Child'. Khurrana will support UNICEF towards ending violence against children.
- 62. b** Reserve Bank of India has issued guidelines for appointment of Chief Compliance Officer (CCO) in banks to ensure uniform approach with regard to compliance and risk management culture across the banking industry.
- 63. a** External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar co-chaired the ASEAN-India Ministerial Meeting along with his Thailand counterpart Don Pramudwinai.
- 64. c** Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched "GARIMA" a new Scheme to ensure Safety and Dignity of Core Sanitation Workers of the State.
- 65. c** In the first instance, it has been decided to implement the proposal in six states.
- 66. b** Mercedes' Lewis Hamilton won the dramatic Tuscan Grand Prix at Mugello that was twice stopped and re-started.
- 67. c** Vera Zvonareva and Laura Siegemund stood awkwardly facing each other, rackets and arms in the air in confusion.
- 68. a** Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated 1.75 lakh houses built under Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana - Gramin in 12 thousand villages in Madhya Pradesh.
- 69. d** Chaitanya Tamhane's 'The Disciple' has bagged the prestigious FIPRESCI award at the 2020 Venice Film Festival.
- 70. c** Denmark has consistently ranked among the happiest countries in the world. While it might seem to be jolly because of no solid reason, the truth is that Denmark takes a lot of effort to ensure the mental well-being of its nationals.