

SSC BANKING MANTHAN

Current Affairs Supplement

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Preface

Dear Readers,

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 month for the upcoming exams like Banking, Insurance, CLAT, MBA etc. 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 fulfil aspirations.

Happy Reading!

Best Wishes

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POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

National



India's longest single-lane motorable suspension bridge inaugurated in Uttarakhand

- **Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat inaugurated India's longest single-lane motorable suspension bridge in Tehri Garhwal district to mark the state's 21st foundation day.**
- **Rawat inaugurated the 725-metre long Dobra-Chanti suspension bridge in the presence of cabinet ministers Subodh Uniyal, Dhan Singh Rawat and other officials. The bridge, opened for the public has been built in 14 years over the Tehri Lake with a cost of Rs. 2.95 crore.**
- **It would help connect Pratap Nagar town with Tehri Garhwal district headquarters. "The bridge over the Tehri Lake also reminds us of the sacrifices the people of old Tehri Garhwal made to pave the way for the Tehri dam project. The 440 metre long Dobra Chanthi Bridge built across the Tehri dam reservoir is the nation's longest motorable single-lane suspension bridge.**

Uttarakhand is often referred to as the Devbhumi, due to many Hindu temples and pilgrimage centres found throughout the state. On 9 November 2000, Uttarakhand became the 27th state of the Republic of India, being created from the Himalayan and adjoining northwestern districts of Uttar Pradesh. Trivendra Singh Rawat is the eighth and current Chief Minister of Uttarakhand. Baby Rani Maurya is serving as the seventh governor of Uttarakhand since 26 August 2018. The winter capital of Uttarakhand is Dehradun, the largest city of the state, which is a rail head. Gairsain, a town in Chamoli district is the summer capital of Uttarakhand. The High Court of the state is located in Nainital.

Kerala to become first state to provide royalty for paddy field owners

- **Close on the heels of announcing a minimum support price for 16 vegetables, the left-front government in Kerala has launched royalty for paddy fields in order to promote paddy cultivation. Paddy field owners will get a royalty of Rs. 2,000 per hectare for paddy fields that are being cultivated. Apart from paddy fields that are now under paddy cultivation can also avail the scheme.**
- **People who have adopted farming as a source of income for at least three years can register at the board. Farmers between 18 and 55 years of age can register with the board; however, they should not be part of any other welfare fund projects.**
- **Farmers with a minimum of five cents of land, to a maximum of 15 acres of their own land or leased land, will be entitled for pension after they cross the age of 60. Plantation farmers – rubber, coffee, tea, cardamom – who have seven and half acres of land will also be entitled for benefits under the scheme.**

Kerala is a state on the southwestern, Malabar Coast of India. It was formed on 1 November 1956 following the States Reorganisation Act by combining Malayalam-speaking regions. Kerala has the highest literacy rate 93.91% in the 2011 census; the highest life expectancy, 77 years; and the highest sex ratio, 1,084 women per 1,000 men. Arif Mohammad Khan is the current Governor of Kerala. Kerala is known as "God's own country" and is one of the popular tourist destinations in India. Pinarayi Vijayan is the current Chief Minister of Kerala, in office since 25 May 2016. As per the census 2011, Haryana has the lowest child sex ratio i.e. 834 per thousand males.

Telangana CM launches revamped Dharani portal to end corruption during land registration

- The long-awaited portal, a **first of its kind in the country**, will be used to **store digitised land records and for property registrations**, thereby doing away with the need for a human interface and eliminating the scope for graft.
- Ushering in a revolutionary system in the Revenue and Registration departments, the **Telangana government launched the 'Dharani portal'**, a **first of its kind in the country**, for **storing digitised land records and registration of properties**.
- This means, **property registrations** would be **done without a human interface from now on**, **eliminating the scope for corruption**. The service, which was temporarily stopped on September 7, resumed with the launch of the portal.

Telangana is a state in India situated on the south-central stretch of the Indian peninsula on the high Deccan Plateau. It is the **eleventh-largest state** and the **twelfth-most populated state** in India with a geographical area of 112,077 km² and 35,193,978 residents as per 2011 census. On 2 June 2014, the area was separated from the northwestern part of Andhra Pradesh as the newly formed state with Hyderabad as its capital. Telangana is a **landlocked state in the country**. Kalvakuntla Chandrashekhara Rao is the first and the current care taker Chief Minister of Telangana. Tamilisai Soundararajan is serving as the 2nd and current Governor of Telangana.

First solar-based water supply project of India launched in Arunachal Pradesh

- Union Jal Shakti Minister **Gajendra Singh Shekhawat** launched India's **first solar-based Integrated Multi-Village Water Supply Project (IMVWSP)** in Arunachal Pradesh.
- The **solar-based lift water supply project for 39 villages in Lower Dibang Valley district in Arunachal** has been commissioned at a cost of Rs 28.50 crore. Inaugurating the IMVWSP in the presence of Chief Minister Pema Khandu, Shekhawat appreciated the project as it is **not only first of its kind in the northeastern state, but also in the entire country**.

Ministry of Jal Shakti is a **ministry under Government of India** which was formed in May 2019 under the second Modi ministry. This was **formed by merging of two ministries; Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation and Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation**. Since 31 May 2019, **Gajendra Singh Shekhawat** is the Minister of Jal Shakti. The Minister of State (Jal Shakti) is **Rattan Lal Kataria**. The ministry was incorporated with an aim to clean the river Ganges.

UNESCO allots India's Panna Tiger Reserve 'Biosphere Reserve' status

- **Panna Tiger Reserve (PTR) in Madhya Pradesh (MP)** was included in the **global network of biosphere reserves** by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) last week. **The tiger reserve which once witnessed the disappearing tiger population has now been given this status** as it took major steps towards conservation.
- **The Panna 'National Park'** was **initially set up in 1981**. It received the status of a tiger reserve in the early 1990s when the "Project Tiger" was started and gradually the population of tigers started increasing. The reserve managed to grow 40 tigers by the early 2000s.
- **This year, in addition to Panna**, here are the other sites around the world that have been granted biosphere reserve status. **These include sites in the Maldives, Mongolia, Indonesia, Nigeria, Trinidad & Tobago, Comoros, Kazakhstan, Peru and Benin**.
- According to the United Nations (UN), a **biosphere reserve is where the international agency tries to reconcile the differences between human activity and the preservation of biodiversity**. Every year some are given the status of Biosphere reserves by UNESCO, while others are removed.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) based in Paris. **Audrey Azoulay** appointed as the **Director-general of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)**, becoming the **second female leader of the organization**. India is **sixth on the list of countries with 37 sites in the list**. Italy leads with 54 sites.

Y. K. Sinha to take oath as CIC

- **Information Commissioner Yashvardhan Kumar Sinha** was administered the oath as the **Chief Information Commissioner (CIC)**. Journalist Uday Mahurkar, former labour secretary Heera Lal Samariya, and former deputy comptroller and auditor general Saroj Punhani will be administered the oath as Information Commissioners by Mr. Sinha, the officials said.
- The selection of Mr. Sinha, Mr. Mahurkar, Mr. Samariya and Ms. Punhani was done by a three-member committee headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Besides Mr. Modi, leader of the Congress in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury and Home Minister Amit Shah are members of the panel. Mr. Sinha joined as the Information Commissioner on January 1, 2019.
- Mr. Sinha joined as the Information Commissioner on January 1, 2019. He has served as India's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom and Sri Lanka. The post of Chief Information Commissioner had been lying vacant for over two months after Bimal Julka completed his term on August 26, 2020.

The Central Information Commission has been constituted with effect from 12-10-2005 under the Right to Information Act, 2005. The jurisdiction of the Commission extends over all Central Public Authorities. Central Information Commission includes 1 Chief Information Commissioner (CIC) and not more than 10 Information Commissioners (IC) who are appointed by the President of India on the recommendations of a Committee. The first Chief Information Commissioner of India was Wajahat Habibullah. First woman Chief Information Commissioner was Deepak Sandhu. The tenure of the commissioners has been cut to three years in the new rules.

LG Manoj Sinha and MoS in PMO Dr. Jitendra Singh inaugurate Comprehensive Mansar Rejuvenation/Development Plan in Jammu virtually

- Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Minister of State in PMO Dr. Jitendra Singh inaugurated prestigious Comprehensive Mansar Rejuvenation/ Development Plan in Jammu through virtual mode.
- The prestigious project worth 198.37 crore rupees aims at increasing tourists' influx. It will facilitate the socio-economic development and will open more avenues for holistic development of the areas and will generate more employment opportunities for locals.
- Mansar is the most sought out tourist destination visited by the tourists in Jammu & the implementation of its Rejuvenation/ Development Plan will certainly bring Mansar on the world tourism map. The LG said that J&K has high potential to become a preferred tourist destination and can support a much higher employment workforce.

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

AYUSH Ministry and Invest India to jointly set up "Strategic Policy & Facilitation Bureau" for planned and systematic growth of Ayush sector

- The Ministry of AYUSH and M/s Invest India will form a collaboration to set up a "Strategic Policy & Facilitation Bureau" to facilitate planned and systematic growth of the Ayush sector.
- Setting up of the Bureau is a forward-looking step which will make the Ayush systems future-ready. This Bureau will support the Ministry in strategic and policy making initiatives that shall help pave the way to reach the full potential of the Sector and stimulate growth and investment.
- As a partner in the project, M/S Invest India would collaborate extensively with the Ministry to frame the work plan of the Bureau and define its short-and long-term targets. Invest India would deploy highly trained and expert resources to implement and execute the plans of the Ministry of AYUSH.

The Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (abbreviated as AYUSH) is purposed with developing education, research and propagation of indigenous alternative medicine systems in India. The Ministry is headed by a Minister of State (Independent Charge), which is currently held by Shripad Yesso Naik.

Bihar tops progress in Jal Jeevan scheme, WB lags far behind

- **More than 80% of rural households in Bihar** have been provided with tap water connections, according to Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat.
- **Having added more than 1.5 crore connections** in just over a year, the highest of any State under the Centre's Jal Jeevan scheme, Bihar is now set to achieve **100% coverage in 2021**, three years before the national deadline.
- **Goa became the first State to provide tap water connections in all rural homes** last month, and Telangana (98%) and Puducherry (87%) are also set to achieve full coverage next year.
- At the other end of the spectrum, **less than 3% of rural households in West Bengal have been covered under the scheme**. Like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, the State suffered from legacy issues and an extremely low baseline coverage — all three States had less than 2% coverage when the scheme was launched in August 2019.
- However, **West Bengal has made little progress, adding just 2.3 lakh connections** since then, and having completed less than 5% of its 2020-21 target so far.

The Jal Shakti Ministry has announced that the labourers returning to their home states due to covid-19, will be deployed for the Jal Jeevan Mission. The Jal Jeevan Mission aims for providing piped drinking water to all rural households by 2024. Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) envisages supply of 55 litres of water per person per day to every rural household through Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTC) by 2024. The Jal Shakti Ministry is the nodal ministry for the implementation of the scheme.

India's first solar-powered miniature train launched at Veli Tourist Village in Kerala

- A solar energy-driven miniature train, **billed as the country's first of its kind**, was inaugurated at the Veli Tourist Village by Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.
- The train, which would be an attraction for children especially, was **part of a string of projects totally worth Rs 60 crore** taken up to elevate the facilities at the panoramic destination to international standards.
- **Vijayan also dedicated an "Urban Park"** and a swimming pool at the eco-friendly tourist village, located on the outskirts of the state capital where the Veli Lake meets the Arabian Sea.

India, GCC Troika hold annual Political Dialogue in virtual mode

- **India and the GCC Troika held their annual Political Dialogue in virtual mode**. External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar led the Indian delegation.
- Senior representatives from **Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Qatar** also participated in the meeting. India had ensured that the supply chains from India to the Gulf were not disrupted despite the lockdowns during the pandemic.
- **India had also taken special care to ensure the return of Indian health professionals to GCC countries** and for supply of medicines and other essential items during the pandemic.
- **The GCC welcomed India's inclusion in the UNSC as a non-permanent member from January 2021**. Both sides affirmed their commitment to reform multilateral institutions to reflect the realities of the 21st century and to work together to address contemporary challenges such as the Covid-19 pandemic, climate change, sustainable development and terrorism.

Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is a regional intergovernmental political and economic union consisting of all Arab states of the Persian Gulf - Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates - except Iraq. The Charter of the GCC was signed on 25 May 1981, formally establishing the institution. In order to reduce their future dependence on oil, the GCC states are pursuing unprecedented economic structural reform.

Indian Naval Ship Airavat reaches Port Sudan as part of 'Mission Sagar-II'

- **Indian Naval Ship, Airavat** reached Port Sudan as a part of Mission Sagar-II. Indian government is providing assistance to **Friendly Foreign Countries** to overcome natural calamities and COVID-19 pandemic, and towards the same INS Airavat is carrying a consignment of 100 Tonnes of food aid for the people of Sudan.
- **Mission Sagar-II**, follows the first 'Mission Sagar' undertaken in May-June 2020, wherein India provided food and medicines to Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles, Madagascar and Comoros. As part of Mission Sagar-II, INS Airavat will deliver food aid to Sudan, South Sudan, Djibouti and Eritrea.
- **Mission Sagar-II**, is in line with the Prime Minister's vision of Security and Growth for All in the Region 'SAGAR' and highlights the importance accorded by India to relations with her maritime neighbours and further strengthens the existing bond.

India supplied 6.2 tonnes of essential medicines to Maldives, under Operation Sanjeevani as assistance in the fight against COVID 19. The medicines were delivered by an Hercules C-130J-30 aircraft of Indian Air Force. The medicines include influenza vaccines, antiviral drugs such as lopinavir and ritonavir among others as well as consumables such as catheters, nebulisers, urine bags and infant feeding tubes.

Hardeep Singh Puri launches 'Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge'

- **Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri** launched 'Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge' focusing on shaping cities for young children and their families. The challenge is conducted with the support of the **Bernard van Leer Foundation, Netherlands** with technical support from **WRI India**.
- Through the challenge, selected cities will receive technical assistance and capacity-building to reimagine parks and open spaces, improve access to early childhood facilities, adapt public spaces with early childhood-oriented amenities and create accessible, safe, walkable streets for young children and families.
- The challenge will be open to all Smart Cities, other cities with more than five lakh population, and capitals of States and Union Territories. The three-year challenge will help cities to "re-imagine parks and open spaces; improve access to early childhood facilities; adapt public spaces with early childhood-oriented amenities; and create accessible, safe, walkable streets for young children and families".

Hardeep Singh Puri is the current Civil Aviation Minister of India and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs in India. He is a 1974 batch Indian Foreign Service officer who served as the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations from 2009 to 2013. He formerly served as President of the United Nations Security Council and he represents Rajya Sabha from Uttar Pradesh.

President Kovind promulgates Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020

- **President Ram Nath Kovind** promulgated the Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020 to further amend Arbitration and Conciliation Act 1996.
- The Ordinance aims to ensure that all the stakeholders get an opportunity to seek unconditional stay of enforcement of arbitral awards where the underlying arbitration agreement or contract or making of the arbitral award are induced by fraud or corruption.
- Through the Ordinance, an addition has been made to **Section 36** whereby if the Court is satisfied that a prima facie case is made out that the arbitration agreement or contract which is the basis of the award was induced or effected by fraud or corruption, it will stay the award unconditionally pending disposal of the challenge made to the award under Section 34.
- Until recently, an arbitration award was enforceable even if an appeal was filed against it in the court under Section 36 of the law. The court, however, could grant a stay on the award on conditions as it deemed fit.

India will work with Nordic-Baltic countries for greener, smarter, digital & innovation-led future

- **External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar** said is a need for more resilient global supply chains. He was virtually addressing the first India -Nordic - Baltic Conclave. Dr Jaishankar said India will work with Nordic-Baltic countries for a greener, smarter, digital and innovation-led future.

- India has elevated engagement with these international locations, and **2018 noticed first India Nordic summit in Sweden throughout which Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and all 5 Nordic leaders** had been current. **Denmark will see the 2nd India Nordic summit** and this was one of many key outcomes of the India-Denmark digital summit that occurred earlier this 12 months.

Nordic international locations are a bunch of 5 international locations in Northern Europe—Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Iceland, whereas Baltic international locations are three countries—Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania who share a shoreline with Baltic Sea.

PM Narendra Modi chaired Virtual Global Investor Roundtable Conference

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi chaired the Virtual Global Investor Roundtable (VGIR) 2020 Conference** on 05 November 2020, **aimed at attracting investment in the country.** The conference focused on discussions around **India's economic and investment outlook**, structural reforms and the **government's vision for making the country a \$5 trillion economy.**
- The Virtual Global Investor Roundtable (VGIR) was organised by the Ministry of Finance and the National Investment and Infrastructure Fund.** It provided a platform for exclusive **dialogue between leading global institutional investors**, Indian business leaders and the highest decision makers from the government of India and financial market regulators.
- The roundtable witnessed **participation from 20 of the world's largest pension and sovereign wealth funds with a total assets under management of about USD 6 trillion.** These global institutional investors represent key regions including the US, Europe, Canada, Korea, Japan, Middle East, Australia, and Singapore.
- The Indian side included business leaders, financial market regulators, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman and RBI governor Shaktikanta Das. **Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired the Virtual Global Investor Roundtable Conference.** The Roundtable is being organized by the Ministry of Finance and National Investment and Infrastructure Fund.
- It is an exclusive dialogue between leading global institutional investors, Indian business leaders and **the highest decision makers from the Government of India and Financial Market Regulators.**

ECI organizes 3-day International Virtual Election Visitors Programme for Foreign Election Management Bodies

- Election Commission of India is organized a three-day International Virtual Election Visitors Programme for Foreign Election Management Bodies and Organizations** in the context of the ongoing Bihar Legislative Assembly Elections. In the past, the poll body had **organized International Election Visitor Programmes in 2014 Lok Sabha elections**, elections for a few State Assemblies in February-March 2017 and Lok Sabha Elections 2019.
- The Commission said, Bihar has an **electorate of over 72 million, one of the largest in the world to vote so far amid the COVID-19 pandemic** and it provides an opportunity to share the best practices and experience of the conduct of the poll process during the pandemic period.
- Delegates from over 40 countries across the world** including Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malawi, Maldives, Moldova, Mongolia, Mauritius, Nepal, Philippines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukraine, Uzbekistan and Zambia along with three international organizations, International IDEA, International Foundation of Electoral Systems and Association of World Election Bodies have been **participated in the programme.** Sunil Arora is the current Chief Election Commissioner of India.

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

Haryana House clears Bill to reserve 75% private sector jobs for locals

- The Haryana Assembly passed a Bill to reserve 75 per cent of private sector jobs in the state for residents of Haryana amid objections from not just the Opposition but also a legislator of the JJP which is part of the BJP-led ruling alliance.
- Once it becomes law, the Haryana State Employment of Local Candidates Bill, 2020 — it was a promise made by the JJP before the 2019 state elections — will apply to companies, societies, trusts, limited liability partnership firms, partnership firms etc. located across the state.
- The Bill states that “every employer shall employ 75 per cent of the local candidates with respect to such posts where the gross monthly salary or wages are not more than Rs. 50,000 or as notified by the government, from time to time. Provided that the local candidates may be from any district of the State, but the employer may, at his option, restrict the employment of local candidates from any district to 10 per cent of the total number of local candidates”.

Haryana was carved out of the former state of East Punjab on 1 November 1966 on linguistic basis. Among the world's oldest and largest ancient civilizations, the Indus Valley Civilization sites located at Rakhigarhi village in Hisar district of Haryana. Haryana is a landlocked state in northern India. As per the 2011 Census, Haryana has the lowest child sex ratio in the age group of 0-6 years in the country. According to the census, against 1,000 boys born, there were only 834 girls. The state capital of Haryana is Chandigarh, a Union Territory and also the capital of the neighboring state of Punjab. Satyadev Narayan Arya is the current Governor of Haryana.

PM Narendra Modi flagged off Ro-Pax service between Hazira-Ghogha in Gujarat

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi was inaugurated the Ro-Pax terminal at Hazira and flag off Ro-Pax service between Hazira and Ghogha in Gujarat through video conferencing.
- Hazira-Ghogha Ro-Pax ferry service will work as a Gateway to South Gujarat and Saurashtra region. It will reduce the distance between Ghogha and Hazira from 370 Kilometres to 90 Kilometres.
- With the onset of Ferry services, the port sector, furniture and fertilizer industries in Saurashtra and Kutch region will get a big boost. Eco-tourism and religious-tourism in Gujarat, especially in Porbandar, Somnath, Dwarka and Palitana will grow exponentially. The benefits of enhanced connectivity through this ferry service will also result in increased inflow of tourists in the famous Asiatic lion wildlife sanctuary at Gir.

PM Modi led Indian delegation at 20th Summit of SCO Council of Heads of States

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi led the Indian delegation at the 20th Summit of SCO Council of Heads of States, which will be held virtually on 10th of this month.
- The meeting was chaired by President of Russia Vladimir Putin. This will be the first SCO Summit to be held in virtual format and this is the third meeting that India participated as a full member. In the last three years, India has maintained extensive engagement in all fields under the SCO framework.

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

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

- Fifteenth Finance Commission submitted its report for the period of 2021-26 to President Ram Nath Kovind. The Finance Commission led by its Chairman N.K. Singh called on the President and submitted the report.
- As per the terms of reference (ToR), the Commission was mandated to give its recommendations for five years from 2021-22 to 2025-26 by 30 October, 2020. The report titled ‘Finance Commission in Covid Times’ has recommendations on a various range of issues such as vertical and horizontal tax devolution, local government grants and disaster management grant. The Commission was also asked to examine and recommend

performance incentives for states in many areas like power sector, adoption of direct benefit standard and solid waste management.

- “The Commission was also asked to examine whether a separate mechanism for funding of defence and internal security ought to be set up and if so how such a mechanism could be operationalised. The Commission has sought to address all its ToRs in this Report to the Union government,” said Finance Commission in a statement.
- The Finance Commission will also present a copy of the Report to the Prime Minister. The report will be tabled in the Parliament by the Finance Minister along with an Action Taken Report of the government.
- This Report has been organized in four volumes. Volume-I and II contain the main report whereas Volume-III is devoted to the Union Government which examines the medium-term challenges and the roadmap ahead. Volume-IV is entirely devoted to the states. The commission has analysed the finances of each state in great depth and has come up with state specific considerations to address the key challenges that individual states face.

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

India and Italy sign 15 agreements in various sectors

- India and Italy signed 15 agreements in various sectors following a Virtual Bilateral Summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Italian counterpart Giuseppe Conte.
- The agreements signed will provide for cooperation in a diverse range of areas including energy, green energy, shipbuilding and media sector. The Summit provided an opportunity to the two leaders to comprehensively review the broad framework of the bilateral relationship.

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

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

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

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

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi co-chaired the 17th ASEAN-India Summit along with Prime Minister of Vietnam Nguyen Xuan Phuc. The leaders of all ten ASEAN Member States virtually participated in the Summit.
- The Summit reviewed the status of ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership and take stock of progress made in key areas such as connectivity, maritime cooperation, trade and commerce, education and capacity building.

- The leaders also discussed ways to further strengthen ASEAN-India engagement and in this context noted the adoption of ASEAN-India Plan of Action (2021-2025). COVID-19, post-pandemic economic recovery and important regional and international developments will also be discussed at the Summit.

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

Triservice exercise 'Bull Strike' conducted at Nicobar Islands

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

Jharkhand Assembly passes resolution on 'Sarna Code'

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

Jharkhand is a state in eastern India, carved out of the southern part of Bihar on 15 November 2000. The city of Ranchi is its capital and Dumka its sub capital. Draupadi Murmu is the current and first woman Governor of Jharkhand. Hemant Soren is the current Chief Minister of Jharkhand. Previously, he had also served as the Chief Minister of Jharkhand from July 2013 to December 2014. He is the son of Shibu Soren, former Chief Minister of Jharkhand. "Jharkhand" means 'land of bush or forest'.

Tamil Nadu bags 'Best State' award for water management

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

- Perambalur district came second in the ‘Water Conservation’ category. Under the ‘Water Conservation’ category for South, Sasthavinathur Village Panchayat, Thoothukudi bagged the first place. **Madurai Municipal Corporation** was awarded the first place in the ‘Best Urban Local Body’ category.

Ministry of Jal Shakti is a ministry under Government of India which was formed in May 2019 under the second Modi ministry. This was formed by merging of two ministries; **Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation** and **Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation**. Since 31 May 2019, **Gajendra Singh Shekhawat** is the Minister of Jal Shakti. The Minister of State (Jal Shakti) is **Rattan Lal Kataria**. The ministry was incorporated with an aim to clean the river Ganges.

Nagaland decides to celebrate Hornbill Festival 2020 virtually

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

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

Kabartal becomes Bihar’s first Ramsar site

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

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

India receives 1st shipment from Bangladesh through water connectivity route

- The first commercial shipment from Bangladesh to **Karimganj, Assam** on the Protocol for Inland Water Trade and Transit (PIWTT) route was received.
- “**Harnessing Inland waterway connectivity for India-Bangladesh trade & prosperity!**” 1st ever commercial shipment from Bangladesh to **Karimganj, India** on PIWTT route received on 09 Nov 2020. Earlier, in a bid to

strengthen ties between New Delhi and Dhaka, the Indian Army gifted 20 fully trained military horses and 10 mine detection dogs to Bangladesh Army.

Maharashtra to distribute 75% of budgetary fund for capital expenditure

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

Maharashtra is India's second-most populous state and third-largest state by area. Nagpur is Maharashtra's second capital and hosts the winter session of the state legislature. Pune is its cultural capital. Shri Bhagat Singh Koshiyari is currently serving as Governor of the state of Maharashtra. Uddhav Bal Thackeray is the current Chief Minister of Maharashtra. He is the president of Shiv Sena.

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

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

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

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

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

Indian Railways (IR) is the fourth-largest railway network in the world by size. There are a total of 18 Railway zones. South Coast Railway Zone is the newest and 18th railway zone, headquartered at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. Piyush Vedprakash Goyal is currently serving as the Minister of Railways and Commerce in the Government of India. He was elected as the BJP candidate from Maharashtra for the Rajya Sabha on 3 June 2016. The practice of a separate Railway Budget was started by the British in 1924 under the recommendation of a 10-member Acworth Committee headed by British economist William Mitchell Acworth in 1920-21. On 21 September 2016, Government of India approved the merger of the Railway Budget with the Union budget of India, and thus came to end — a 92-year-old practice of separate rail and general budgets.

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

- The states of Kerala, Goa, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh have been most successful in integrating migrant workers, while crucial migrant receiving states, including Delhi, have done poorly, shows the Interstate Migrant Policy Index that seeks to measure integration of interstate migrants.
- India's average IMPEX 2019 score for 28 states and the Union Territory of NCT Delhi is 37 out of 100, reflecting the limited attention paid to integration efforts in destination states.

- The index has been developed by Mumbai-based research non-profit India Migration Now, and it assesses states' performance on eight policy areas spanning more than 60 policy indicators.
- The index could help bureaucrats and stakeholders in evolving policy for India's 455 million internal migrants who remain one of the most excluded groups in the country. This figure is from Census 2011, and may have changed between 2011-20.

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

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

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

International Crops Research Institute permitted to use drones

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

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

Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended 12th BRICS summit with Putin

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended the 12th BRICS Summit hosted by Russia on November 17. The theme for this year's summit has been decided as 'Global stability, shared security and innovative growth' and the met conducted in a virtual format.
- The ministry also confirmed that India will host the next session of the BRICS summit in 2021. The 12th Summit has seen the leaders from Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa engage in topics ranging from intra-BRICS cooperation and key issues in the global context, the official statement read.
- India will be taking over the chairmanship of the BRICS, which would be the third BRICS Presidency for India since its inception, after 2012 and 2016, and will host the 13th BRICS Summit in 2021.
- The meeting was originally scheduled to take place in Saint Petersburg from July 21 to 23, 2020, but was changed to a video conference held on November 17 due to the outbreak of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

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

Operation Thunder 2020: India Customs intercepts 18 tonnes red sandalwood

- The India Customs intercepted an 18-tonne shipment of red sandalwood destined for the United Arab Emirates, during a month-long “Operation Thunder 2020”, coordinated by the Interpol and the World Customs Organisation, which involved law enforcement agencies in 103 countries.
- The operation against environmental crime was held from September 14 to October 11. It resulted in large seizures of protected wildlife and forestry specimens and products, triggering arrests and investigations worldwide, said the Interpol.
- “Focusing on pre-identified routes and hotspots, ‘Operation Thunder 2020’ resulted in more than 2,000 seizures of wildlife and forestry products. In total, 699 offenders were apprehended and at least one Interpol Red Notice has already been requested based on information gained during the operation.

Operation Thunder 2020 is a month-long operation coordinated by the Interpol and the World Customs Organisation (WCO), which involved law enforcement agencies in 103 countries. “Operation Thunder 2020” is the fourth in a series of “Thunder” operations carried out annually since 2017.

Nitish Kumar takes oath as Bihar CM for 4th consecutive term

- Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar made history after he took oath for the top post for the fourth consecutive term to become the longest serving Chief Minister of the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA). He took oath as Bihar Chief Minister for the seventh time with two Deputy Chief Ministers from the BJP — four-time Katihar MLA Tarkishore Prasad and four-time Bettiah MLA Renu Devi.
- This is the seventh time when Nitish Kumar took an oath to become the Chief Minister of Bihar. He had served as the Chief Minister of the state for little over seven days in March 2000, after which he was elected in 2005 when he served a full term. He was re-elected to power in November 2010, after which he served for four years before resigning, and had again taken oath as Chief Minister in February 2015.
- He was voted to power in 2015 Assembly election as part of the ‘Mahagathbandhan’. However, after corruption allegations were levelled against his deputy Tejashwi Yadav in 2015, Nitish resigned only to be sworn in as Chief Minister merely 12 hours later joining hands with the BJP to form a government in the state.

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.

Arunachal Records Best Sex Ratio in India, Manipur Fares Worst

- According to a 2018 report on the ‘vital statistics on India based on the Civil Registration System’, Arunachal Pradesh recorded the best sex ratio in the country with 1,085 females born per thousand males, while Manipur fared the worst with just 757.

- Sex ratio refers to the number of females born per thousand males. The report was released by the Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, Ministry of Home Affairs, GOI and **sex ratio was determined on the basis of data provided by 30 states and Union Territories.**
- **Manipur, which recorded the lowest sex ratio, was followed by Lakshadweep at 839 and Daman & Diu at 877, Punjab at 896 and Gujarat at 896.** Delhi recorded a sex ratio of 929, Haryana recorded 914 and Jammu and Kashmir 952.
- **Besides Arunachal Pradesh, two other Northeastern states topped the list. Nagaland (965) took the second spot and Mizoram (964), the third.** The top three states were followed by Kerala at 963 and Karnataka at 957.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveils 'Statue of Peace' in Rajasthan's Pali

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi **unveiled the 'Statue of Peace' in Rajasthan to mark the 151st Birth Anniversary celebrations of Jainacharya Shree Vijay Vallabh Surishwer Ji Maharaj.**
- PM Modi paid tribute to Jainacharya and the spiritual leaders present on the occasion. **Mentioning two 'Vallabhs', Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel and the Jainacharya Shree Vijay Vallabh Surishwer Ji Maharaj.**
- **The 151-inch-tall statue is made of "ashtadhatu" (eight metals with copper being the major constituent) and is being installed at the Vijay Vallabh Sadhana Kendra, Jetpura, in Rajasthan's Pali.** The saint, who lived during 1870-1954, led an austere life, working selflessly and dedicatedly to spread the message of Lord Mahavira.
- He worked relentlessly for the welfare of the people, the spread of education and eradication of social evils, wrote inspiring literature (poetry, essays, devotional hymns and stavans) and gave active support to the **'freedom movement' and the cause of the 'swadeshi'.** He died in the year 1954.

The Statue of Unity is a colossal statue of Indian statesman and independence activist Vallabhbhai Patel (1875–1950), who was the first Deputy Prime Minister and Home minister of independent India and adherent of Mahatma Gandhi during the non-violent Indian Independence movement. Patel was highly respected for his leadership in uniting 562 princely states of India with a major part of the former British Raj to form the single Union of India. The statue is located in the state of Gujarat, India. It is the **world's tallest statue with a height of 182 metres (597 feet).** It is located on the Narmada River.

SC won't entertain plea challenging constitutional validity of Epidemic Act

- **The Supreme Court refused to entertain a plea challenging the constitutional validity of the Epidemic Act and questioned the petitioner as to why he has not moved the high court on the issue.**
- **The apex court said high courts have all the power to strike down Central Acts, like the Epidemic Act, and the petitioner should go there first.**
- What kind of petition you have filed Mr Mirashi (petitioner). Don't you have the Bombay High Court to challenge the Epidemic Act? **The high court has jurisdiction to strike down the Central Act, a bench headed by Justice D Y Chandrachud told petitioner H N Mirashi.**
- **The apex court observed that the contention of petitioner that high courts do not have the power to strike down a Central Act is totally misconceived. The high court has all the powers to do this, the bench told the petitioner who had raised issue regarding COVID-19 quarantine policy of the Maharashtra government.**

Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897 is a law which was first enacted to tackle bubonic plague in Mumbai (formerly Bombay) in former British India. The law is meant for containment of epidemics by providing special powers that are required for the implementation of containment measures to control the spread of the disease. Starting in March 2020, the act is being enforced across India in order to limit the spread of coronavirus disease 2019 during the COVID-19 pandemic in India. On 22 April 2020, the Government of India announced the **promulgation of an ordinance, 'The Epidemic Diseases (Amendment) Ordinance 2020', to amend the act, adding provisions to punish those attacking doctors or health workers. The ordinance allows for up to seven years of jail for attacking doctors or health workers (including ASHA workers).** The offense will be **cognizable and non-bailable** among other things. In addition to this, such cases need to be investigated in a time-bound and must be **resolved in 1 year.**

Sea Trials of India's First Indigenous Aircraft Carrier Vikrant Set to Begin in Jan 2021

- The Indian Navy is set to begin sea trials of its new aircraft carrier named after the erstwhile INS Vikrant which was decommissioned in January 1997.
- The new INS Vikrant which is yet to be commissioned will be India's first-ever Indigenous Aircraft Carrier (IAC-1) which is expected to begin sea trials in January 2021 along the coast of Karwar or Visakhapatnam as these two places are the only ones with facilities to accommodate it. The aircraft carrier is being constructed by Cochin Shipyard Limited in Kochi, Kerala.

First solar power-enabled Textile Mill in Asia to come up in Parbhani district

- In Maharashtra, the first solar power-enabled Textile Mill in Asia is coming up in Parbhani district. The project, once functional, will provide jobs to many women in the district.
- The Jai Bhawani women's cooperative textile mill will be the first in Asia that will operate on solar power. Spread across thirty acres of land the mill will process cotton to cloth.

The textile industry in India traditionally, after agriculture, is the only industry that has generated huge employment for both skilled and unskilled labour in textiles. The textile industry continues to be the second-largest employment generating sector in India. The first cotton mill in India was established in 1818 at Fort Gloster near Kolkata but was a commercial failure.

India, Kazakhstan reviews entire gamut of bilateral cooperation

- The 7th round of Foreign Office Consultations between India and Kazakhstan was held via video-conference. The Indian side was led by Vikas Swarup, Secretary (West) and the Kazakh side by Shakhmat Nuryshev, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan.
- The two sides reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral cooperation within the framework of their Strategic Partnership. The consultations covered political, economic and commercial, energy, defence, space, consular and cultural matters. They also shared views and experiences on combating COVID-19 pandemic.
- The two sides also exchanged views on regional and international issues of mutual interest and agreed to enhance cooperation in the multilateral arena, including during the forthcoming stint of India in the UN Security Council for the period 2021-22. An MoU on "Indian Grant Assistance for Implementation of High Impact Community Development Projects in Kazakhstan" was signed.

Kazakhstan is the world's largest landlocked country and the ninth largest in the world. Nur-Sultan is the capital city of Kazakhstan. Known between 1998 and 2019 as Astana and before that Akmola, it was renamed Nur-Sultan in March 2019, in honour of the departing Kazakh President, Nursultan Nazarbayev. The tenge is the currency of Kazakhstan. Nursultan Nazarbayev served as longest President of Kazakhstan since the office was created on April 24, 1990 until March 2019. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev is the current President of Kazakhstan.

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated Bengaluru Tech Summit 2020

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated Bengaluru Tech Summit, 2020 this month via video conferencing. The theme of the summit is "Next is Now".
- The summit deliberated on the key challenges emerging in the post-pandemic world with focus on the impact of prominent technologies and innovations in the domains of 'Information Technology & Electronics' and 'Biotechnology'. It has seen participation of Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison, Vice President of the Swiss Confederation Guy Parmelin, and many other prominent international figures.

Goa to get India's first green energy convergence project

- The Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) is set to roll out of India's first Green Energy Convergence Project in Goa. Under the project, EESL and the Department of New and Renewable Energy (DNRE) in Goa will carry out feasibility studies and implementation of decentralized solar energy projects.

- The project aims to connect seemingly independent sectors like Solar Energy, Energy Storage and LED lights to provide solutions, which can enable in decarbonisation and affordable energy access.
- Department of New & Renewable Energy (DNRE), Goa, together with Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), a joint venture of PSUs under the Ministry of Power signed a memorandum of understanding to discuss rolling out of India's first project under the newly formed Convergence Energy Services Limited (Convergence) in the State.
- It will include the installation of 100 Megawatt decentralized ground-mounted solar power projects on government land to be used for agricultural pumping. It seeks to replace 6,300 agricultural pumps and distribute 16 lakh LED bulbs for rural domestic households.

World Bank approves 120-mn to improve transport sector of Meghalaya

- The Government of India, Meghalaya government and the World Bank signed a 120 million dollar project to improve and modernise the transport sector of Meghalaya. This will help the state to harness its vast growth potential for high-value agriculture and tourism.
- The project will improve about 300 kilometres of strategic road segments and stand-alone bridges by using innovative, climate resilient, and nature-based solutions. It will also support innovative solutions such as precast bridges to reduce both time and cost of construction.

The World Bank is a vital source of financial and technical assistance to developing countries around the world. The World Bank Group comprises five institutions managed by their member countries. It was established in 1944, the World Bank Group is headquartered in Washington, D.C. David Robert Malpass is an American economic analyst and former government official serving as President of the World Bank Group since 2019. Together, IBRD and IDA form the World Bank, which provides financing, policy advice, and technical assistance to governments of developing countries. IDA focuses on the world's poorest countries, while IBRD assists middle-income and creditworthy poorer countries.

Madhya Pradesh to set up Gau Cabinet for protection & promotion of cows in state

- In Madhya Pradesh, the state government has decided to set up a Gau Cabinet for the protection and promotion of cows in the state. The Chief Minister informed that we have been decided to constitute a gau cabinet for the protection and fostering of godhan, cow and its progeny in the state.
- Ministers of the animal husbandry, forest, panchayat and rural development, revenue, home and farmers' welfare departments will be included in this cabinet. India's first cow sanctuary, Kamdhenu Gau Abhyaranya in Agar Malwa was set up by the state government in September 2017. It was developed by the MP Gau Samvardhan Board by spending about Rs 32 crore. The sanctuary is spread across 472 hectares.

Madhya Pradesh (meaning Central Province) is a state in central India. Its capital is Bhopal. Nicknamed the "Heart of India" due to its geographical location in India. Madhya Pradesh is the second-largest state in the country by area after Rajasthan. This state was the largest in India by area until 2000, when its southeastern Chhattisgarh region was made as a separate state. MP has the largest reserves of diamond and copper in India. The current governor of Madhya Pradesh is Anandiben Patel. Shivraj Singh Chouhan is the current Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh.

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated RE-INVEST 2020

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the 3rd Global Renewable Energy Investment Meeting and Expo (RE-Invest 2020) through video conferencing. The summit is organised by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy. The theme for RE-Invest 2020 is 'Innovations for Sustainable Energy Transition'.
- The Prime Minister expressed happiness that in the renewable energy sector, within a short time the progress from megawatts to gigawatts in generation capacity and "One Sun, One World, One Grid" are becoming a reality, all of which were discussed in the earlier editions. The Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, UK and President COP-26, and the Minister of Energy, Utilities and Climate, Denmark attended and spoke in the inaugural session.

- Minister for New and Renewable Energy, RK Singh informed that the 3rd RE-Invest will build upon the success of the first two editions held in 2015 and 2018. It will provide an international forum for investment promotion in renewable energy. It will also send signals to the global renewable community about India's commitment to the development and scaling up of renewable energy to meet its energy requirements in a sustainable manner.

Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) is a ministry of the Government of India that is mainly responsible for research and development, intellectual property protection, and international cooperation, promotion, and coordination in renewable energy sources such as wind power, small hydro, biogas, and solar power. The ministry is currently headed by R. K. Singh, a Minister of State (Independent Charge). He is a Member of the Indian Parliament for Arrah, Bihar, since May 2014.

Karnataka Deputy CM launches first State BioEconomy Report during Bengaluru Tech Summit

- Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister Dr. C N Ashwath Narayan launched the first State BioEconomy Report during the ongoing Bengaluru Tech Summit.
- According to the report, Karnataka's BioEconomy has grown by 14 to 17 percent in the previous two years, contributing 10.3 percent to the Gross State Domestic Product GSDP.
- This contributed 2.3 percent of India's 2.8 trillion GDP in the previous year. The report also says that Karnataka contributes more than one third to the national BioEconomy.
- BioEconomy refers to all the biological resources to produce food, feed, bio-based products, energy and services.

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

Govt releases backend code of Aarogya Setu App to enhance transparency

- Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has released the backend code of Aarogya Setu App in open domain. The source code of the Android and iOS versions were released earlier and the backend source code is also being released as per the policy of Government of India to share all code repositories with developer community.
- Ministry of Electronics and IT in a statement said that Aarogya Setu has proved to be very useful in India's fight against COVID19 and release of the source code of the Aarogya Setu App is a step in the direction of reaffirming the commitment of the Government to complete transparency.

Aarogya Setu (the bridge to liberation from disease) is an Indian COVID-19 "contact tracing, syndromic mapping and self-assessment" digital service, primarily a mobile app, developed by the National Informatics Centre under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).

India - Singapore Bilateral Maritime Exercise SIMBEX-20 held in Andaman Sea

- Indian Navy hosted the 27th edition of India - Singapore Bilateral Maritime Exercise SIMBEX-20 in Andaman Sea. It was continued till 25th of this month.
- The SIMBEX series of exercises between Indian Navy and Republic of Singapore Navy being conducted annually since 1994 are aimed at enhancing mutual inter-operability and imbibing best practices from each other. The scope and complexity of these exercises has increased steadily over the past two decades to include advanced naval drills covering a wide spectrum of maritime operations.
- The 2020 edition of SIMBEX witnessed the Indian Navy ships including, destroyer Rana with integral Chetak helicopter and indigenously built corvettes Kamorta and Karmuk, IN submarine Sindhuraj and P8I maritime reconnaissance aircraft were participated in the exercise. RSN was represented by the 'Formidable'

Class frigates ‘Intrepid’ and ‘Steadfast’ with integral S70B helicopter and ‘Endurance’ Class Landing Ship Tank ‘Endeavour’ in the exercise.

The Indian Navy is the naval branch of the Indian Armed Forces. The President of India is the Supreme Commander of the Indian Navy. The Chief of Naval Staff, a four-star admiral, commands the navy. Admiral Karambir Singh, PVSM, AVSM, ADC, is the 24th and current Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS) of the Indian Navy. When India became a republic in 1950, the Royal Indian Navy as it had been named since 1934 was renamed to Indian Navy. On March 17, 2020, in a major verdict, the Supreme Court had paved the way for granting permanent commission to women officers in Indian Navy, saying a level playing field ensures that women have the opportunity to overcome “histories of discrimination”.

India hosted SCO Heads of Government meet

- India hosted the 19th meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Council of Heads of Government in a virtual format, which was chaired by Vice President Venkaiah Naidu, the Ministry of External Affairs has said. Chinese Premier Li Keqiang attended the virtual meeting of the bloc which was also addressed by Vice-President Venkaiah Naidu.
- This is the first time that a Summit-level Meeting was held under India’s Chairmanship since it gained full membership of the organisation in 2017.
- Officials explained that while the SCO Heads of Government Council consists of Prime Ministers, PM Modi had been deputing others for the event in previous years as well, with the External Affairs Minister attending the SCO HoG meets in 2017 and 2018, while Defence Minister Rajnath Singh filled in for the PM in 2019.
- Moreover, tensions between India and Pakistan, which have played out in previous meetings, may have played a part in Mr. Khan’s decision to decline the invitation from India. During the SCO meeting of National Security Advisors, NSA Ajit Doval had walked out of the videoconference over his Pakistani counterpart’s decision to use a Pakistani map claiming Indian territories Kashmir and Junagadh as part of its territory as his backdrop.
- Apart from the eight SCO Member States, the meeting was attended by four Observer States of the SCO: including the President of Afghanistan Ashraf Ghani, the First Vice President of Iran, the Prime Minister of Belarus, and the Deputy Prime Minister of Mongolia. Turkmenistan has been invited as a Special Guest by India and was represented by the Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers.
- In November 2020, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping participated in the SCO Council of Heads of State (SCO-CHS), the highest forum of SCO, meeting hosted by Russia in a virtual format.

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

India to build new dam, launch projects worth \$80 million in Afghanistan

- India unveiled new development initiatives for Afghanistan, including a dam to supply water to Kabul and 150 community projects worth \$80 million, even as it called for an immediate and comprehensive ceasefire in the war-torn country.
- Against the backdrop of mounting global concern over increased attacks by the Taliban even as it engages the Afghan government in talks, external affairs minister S Jaishankar told a virtual international pledging conference that India is committed to a long-term role for the development of Afghanistan.
- An agreement with Afghanistan to build Shahtoot Dam in the Kabul River basin to provide drinking water to two million residents of Kabul city. This will be built on the 202-km Pul-e-Khumri electricity transmission line built in 2009 to provide power to the city.

Afghanistan is a landlocked country located within south-central Asia. Kabul is the capital of Afghanistan and its largest city. Mohammad Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai is the current President of Afghanistan, elected on 21 September 2014. Afghanistan is bordered by Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan to the north, Iran to the west, and Pakistan to the south and east. Abdullah Abdullah leads the High Council for National Reconciliation (HCNR), which is expected to lead the intra-Afghan peace talks with the Taliban. The afghani is the currency of Afghanistan, issued by the central bank Da Afghanistan Bank.

Odisha Assembly passes 'Odisha Essential Services (Maintenance) Amendment Bill-2020'

- **Odisha Essential Services (Maintenance) Amendment Bill-2020** was passed by the state assembly. The bill seeks to amend the existing Act of 1988 to prohibit strikes by employees of essential services in the state.
- Expanding the ambit of essential services, the bill includes services like fire service, excise, forest, prison reforms, electronics and Information and Communication departments.
- According to the provisions of the amended bill, persons resorting to or found instigating or funding illegal strikes may face imprisonment upto one year or a fine upto Rs. five thousand or both.

The modern state of Odisha was established on 1 April 1936, as a province in British India. The ancient kingdom of Kalinga, which was invaded by the Mauryan emperor Ashoka in 261 BCE resulting in the Kalinga War, coincides with the borders of modern-day Odisha. Konark Sun Temple is a 13th-century CE sun temple at Konark about 35 kilometres northeast from Puri on the coastline of Odisha, India. The temple is attributed to king Narasimhadeva I of the Eastern Ganga Dynasty about 1250 CE. Ganeshi Lal is current Governor of Odisha. Naveen Patnaik is the current and 14th Chief Minister of Odisha.

Centre launches portal for transgender persons

- The ministry of social justice and empowerment launched a portal that will allow transgender persons to apply online for certification of their self-perceived gender identity. Launched by Union minister Thawar Chand Gehlot, the portal will allow transgender persons to upload an affidavit declaring their gender identity, which will then become the basis for their identity certificates to be issued by the district magistrate.
- One is expected to get an identity card within 30 days of the district authorities reviewing the application. Following the passage of the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act 2019, the law allows for self-perceived identification by an applicant for an identity certificate. The ministry will also open shelter homes for trans people in each state. The first such home was inaugurated in Gujarat and will offer shelter and skill training to those in need.

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

Second edition of SITMEX-20 held in Andaman Sea

- Indian Navy Ships including indigenously built ASW corvette Kamorta and missile corvette Karmuk are participated in the 2nd edition of India, Singapore and Thailand Trilateral Maritime Exercise SITMEX-20 in Andaman Sea.
- First edition of SITMEX, hosted by Indian Navy, was conducted off Port Blair in September 2019. The SITMEX series of exercises are conducted to enhance mutual inter-operability and imbibing best practices between Indian Navy, Republic of Singapore Navy and Royal Thai Navy.
- The 2020 edition of the exercise is being hosted by Republic of Singapore Navy which is being represented by the 'Formidable' Class frigate 'Intrepid' and 'Endurance' Class Landing Ship Tank 'Endeavour'.

- **Royal Thai Navy is being represented by the ‘Chao Phraya’ Class frigate ‘Kraburi’ in the exercise.** The exercise, being conducted as a ‘non-contact, at sea only’ exercise in view of COVID-19 pandemic, highlights growing synergy, coordination and cooperation in the maritime domain between the three friendly navies and maritime neighbours. In September 2019, first edition of the SITMEX trilateral exercise was hosted by Indian Navy at the Port Blair

Ravi Shankar Prasad launches international version of UMANG App

- **To mark the occasion of 3 years of UMANG and 2000 plus services milestone**, an online conference was organized under the chairmanship of Minister for Electronics and Information Technology, Ravi Shankar Prasad.
- On this occasion, Mr Prasad launched the UMANG’s international version in coordination with Ministry of External Affairs for select countries that include USA, UK, Canada, Australia, UAE, Netherlands, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand.
- It will help **Indian international students, NRIs and Indian tourists abroad, to avail Government of India services, anytime.** It will also help in taking India to the world through ‘Indian Culture’ services available on UMANG and create interest amongst foreign tourists to visit India. It can be downloaded from Google play store.
- **The Union Minister also launched an e-Book which presents major milestones of UMANG and major services available on UMANG App** classified into various categories. Mr Prasad also unveiled the newly instituted UMANG Awards for Partner Departments of Centre and States based on the highest number of transactions across services.

UMANG or Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance, is a Government of India all-in-one single unified secure multi-channel multi-platform multi-lingual multi-service freeware mobile app for accessing over 1,200 central and state government services in multiple Indian languages over Android, iOS, Windows and services such as AADHAR, DigiLocker, Bharat Bill Payment System, PAN, EPFO services, PMKVY services, AICTE, CBSE, tax and fee or utilities bills payments, education, job search, tax, business, health, agriculture, travel, birth certificates, e-District, passport and much more. Conceived in 2016, this e-governance app was developed by Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and National e-Governance Division (NeGD), and went through several rounds of beta tests since November 2016 before its launch.

Agriculture Minister unveils ‘Sahakar Pragya’ to impart training to primary cooperative societies in rural areas

- **Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar unveiled Sahakar Pragya.** The 45 new training modules of Sahakar Pragya of the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) will impart training to primary cooperative societies in rural areas of the country along with Lakshmanrao Inamdar National Cooperative Research and Development Academy.
- On this occasion, Mr. Tomar called upon the cooperative sector to play a role in making the village-poor-farmers Atma Nirbhar. He said, **India boasts a huge network of over 8.50 lakh cooperative societies with about 290 million members and around 94 per cent of the farmers are member of at least one cooperative society.**

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.

Jagan Mohan Reddy launches interest-free loans scheme for Andhra street vendors

- The YSR Congress Party government in Andhra Pradesh launched yet another welfare scheme - Jagananna Thodu (Brother Jagan’s support) - aimed at providing interest-free loans to small traders and street vendors in the state.
- Through this scheme, the banks would provide loans to the tune of Rs 1,000 crore to nearly 10 lakh people and the government would bear the interest of Rs 60 crore to Rs 100 crore annually. Assuming that the loan repayment period is 10 years, the government will be spending Rs 1,000 crore towards reimbursement of interest.

Andhra Pradesh is the first state in India to have Five Deputy Chief Ministers one each from Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, backward, minority and Kapu communities. YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is the current Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. Andhra Pradesh is the first state in India to have three capital cities; there are Visakhapatnam (Executive capital), Amaravati (Legislative capital) and Kurnool (Judiciary). Andhra Pradesh High Court imposed a stay on implementation of 3 capitals. Andhra Pradesh is the first state to be formed on a linguistic basis in India on 1 October 1953. Biswabhusan Harichandan is the current Governor of Andhra Pradesh.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi chairs PRAGATI meeting

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired the PRAGATI meeting. It marked Prime Minister's thirty-third interaction through PRAGATI - the ICT based multi-modal platform for Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation, involving Central and State governments. The projects taken up were of the Ministry of Railways, MORTH, DPIIT and Power Ministry. These projects, with a total cost of 1.41 lakh crore rupees, were related to ten states and union territories, including Odisha, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Gujarat, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Dadra and Nagar Haveli.

India, Finland sign MoU in the field of Environment protection and biodiversity conservation

- India and Finland signed a MoU for developing cooperation between two countries in the field of Environment protection and biodiversity conservation.
- The MoU is a platform to further advance Indian and Finnish partnership and support, exchange best practices in areas like prevention of air and water pollution, waste management, and promotion of circular economy. The MoU was signed virtually by Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar from the Indian side and his Finnish counterpart Krista Mikkonen.

Finland is a Nordic country located in Northern Europe. Finland shares land borders with Sweden to the west, Russia to the east, and Norway to the north and is defined by the Gulf of Bothnia to the west and the Gulf of Finland to the south that are part of the Baltic Sea. Sanna Mirella Marin has been Prime Minister of Finland since 10 December 2019. At 35, she is the world's fourth-youngest serving state leader, the youngest female state leader, and Finland's youngest-ever prime minister. Sauli Niinisto is the current President of Finland, in office since 2012. Helsinki is the capital, primate and most populous city of Finland. Euro is the official currency of it.

Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad unveils newly instituted UMANG Awards

- On the occasion of completion of 3 years of UMANG App, Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad unveiled the newly instituted UMANG Awards for Partner Departments of Centre and States based on average transactions in the past six months across all services. Employees' Provident Fund Organisation has been conferred with Platinum Partner Award for registering more than 25 lakh transactions on UMANG App.
- As the majority of EPFO members are from the socio-economically disadvantaged sections, an accessible and affordable solution was needed to reach out to crores of EPFO subscribers. Considering the popularity and ease of usage of internet based devices like smartphones, tablets and desktop, EPFO aimed to harness the potential of UMANG app to enable easy and round-the-clock access to its services, especially to the subscribers residing in remotest of locations. This led to the launch of EPFO services on UMANG.

External Affairs Minister, S Jaishankar represented India at 15th East Asia Summit

- External Affairs Minister, S Jaishankar has represented India at the 15th East Asia Summit (EAS) which will discuss ways to strengthen the platform and to make it more responsive to emerging challenges on its 15th anniversary.
- The virtual summit was chaired by Vietnamese Prime Minister, Nguyen Xuan Phuc and has seen the participation of all eighteen East Asian countries. The External Affairs Ministry in a release said, the leaders at the summit will also exchange views on issues of international and regional interest including the COVID-19 pandemic and the cooperation among EAS participating countries to achieve an expeditious and sustainable economic recovery.

- **The EAS is a leaders-led forum** that provides a platform for discussion on important strategic issues in the Indo-Pacific region. It is a **regional grouping of 18 participating countries i.e. 10 ASEAN countries** that includes Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam), besides Australia, China, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Russia and the United States. India is a founding member of EAS.

East Asia Summit (EAS) is a regional forum held annually by leaders of, initially, 16 countries in the East Asian, Southeast Asian, South Asian and Oceanian regions, based on the ASEAN Plus Six mechanism. Membership expanded to 18 countries including Russia and the United States at the Sixth EAS in 2011. Since its establishment, ASEAN has held the central role and leadership in the forum. EAS meetings are held after the annual ASEAN leaders' meetings, and plays an important role in the regional architecture of Asia-Pacific. The first summit was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 14 December 2005.

Madhya Pradesh to set up Gau Cabinet for protection & promotion of cows in state

- In Madhya Pradesh, the state government has decided to set up a Gau Cabinet for the protection and promotion of cows in the state. The Chief Minister informed that we have been decided to constitute a gau cabinet for the protection and fostering of godhan, cow and its progeny in the state.
- Ministers of the animal husbandry, forest, panchayat and rural development, revenue, home and farmers' welfare departments will be included in this cabinet. **India's first cow sanctuary, Kamdhenu Gau Abhyaranya in Agar Malwa was set up by the state government** in September 2017. It was developed by the MP Gau Samvardhan Board by spending about Rs 32 crore. The sanctuary is spread across 472 hectares.

Madhya Pradesh (meaning Central Province) is a state in central India. Its capital is Bhopal. Nicknamed the "Heart of India" due to its geographical location in India. Madhya Pradesh is the second-largest state in the country by area after Rajasthan. This state was the largest in India by area until 2000, when its southeastern Chhattisgarh region was made as a separate state. MP has the largest reserves of diamond and copper in India. The current governor of Madhya Pradesh is Anandiben Patel. Shivraj Singh Chouhan is the current Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh.

Railway launches completely digitized online Human Resource Management System

- Indian Railway has launched a completely digitized online Human Resource Management System (HRMS). HRMS is a high thrust project for Indian Railways to leverage improved productivity and employee satisfaction.
- It is a move to improve efficiency and productivity of the Railway system. **Chairman and CEO of Railway Board launched HRMS modules of Employee Self Service, PF Advance and Retirement Settlement.**
- The modules will benefit over 27 lakh families of both serving and retired Railway employees. Several other modules of HRMS are already operational in the Indian Railways.

Indian Railways (IR) is the fourth-largest railway network in the world by size. There are a total of 18 Railway zones. South Coast Railway Zone is the newest and 18th railway zone, headquartered at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. Piyush Vedprakash Goyal is currently serving as the Minister of Railways and Commerce in the Government of India. He was elected as the BJP candidate from Maharashtra for the Rajya Sabha on 3 June 2016. The practice of a separate Railway Budget was started by the British in 1924 under the recommendation of a 10-member Acworth Committee headed by British economist William Mitchell Acworth in 1920-21. On 21 September 2016, Government of India approved the merger of the Railway Budget with the Union budget of India, and thus came to end — a 92-year-old practice of separate rail and general budgets.

UNDP, Invest India launched 'SDGs Investor Map' for India

- The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Invest India, the national investment promotion agency under the Commerce & Industry Ministry, have launched the 'SDG (sustainable development goals) Investor Map' for India with 18 Investment Opportunities Areas (IOAs) in six critical sectors such as education and healthcare to help the country achieve its development goals.

- It laid out 18 Investment Opportunities Areas in six critical SDG enabling sectors, that can help the country push forward on the trajectory of Sustainable Development.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the United Nations' global development network. Headquartered in New York City, UNDP advocates for change and connects countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. It provides expert advice, training and grants support to developing countries, with increasing emphasis on assistance to the least developed countries.

PM Modi inaugurates Global Renewable Energy Investment Meet and Expo 2020

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi said India's renewable power capacity is the 4th largest in the world and it is growing at the fastest speed among all major countries.
- The renewable energy capacity in India is currently 136 Giga Watts, which is about 36 percent of country's total capacity. Inaugurating the virtual 3rd Global Renewable Energy Investment Meeting and Expo, RE-Invest 2020, Mr Modi said, India is travelling on an unparalleled journey in the last 6 years.

Nagaland: KSCDL declared winner at ET Govt Global Smart Cities Forum 2020

- In Nagaland, Kohima Smart City Development Limited, KSCDL has been declared Winner at the ET Government Global Smart Cities Forum 2020 under the category Best Digital Initiative of the Year (Technology) for Kohima City Wifi Phase-I Project.
- IT infrastructure will enable Internet of Things and establish a platform for smart city with innovative smart solutions such as pan-city fire emergency solutions, smart offices, entertainment, smart street lighting, smart Kiosks, smart traffic management and others with the aim to turn Kohima into a more tourist-friendly place.

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

India records highest rate of bribery in Asia: survey

- India has the highest rate of bribery and use of personal links to access public services such as healthcare and education in Asia, according to a survey released by global civil society Transparency International.
- "India has the highest overall bribery rate (39%) and the highest rate of citizens using personal connections (46%), following India, Indonesia and China have the second and third highest rates of people using personal connections with 36% and 32% respectively." says the report titled "Global Corruption Barometer – Asia".
- It notes that in India, 50% of those involved in bribery are asked to bribe, while 32% of those who used personal connections say they will not receive the service otherwise.
- "Of the people surveyed in India, who came into contact with the police, 42% had paid bribes. The use of bribes was also rampant (41%) to obtain official documents such as identity papers. Use of personal connections was also largely made in dealings with the police (39%), procurement of identity documents (42%), and in relation to courts (38%)", it states.
- Across Asia, Transparency International surveyed 20,000 people in 17 countries- with six public services such as police, courts, public hospitals, procurement of identity documents, and utilities covered for the report. The survey was conducted between June-September last, recording their activities, perception, and experiences with corruption in the past 12 months.

Transparency International e.V. (TI) is a German non-governmental organization founded in 1993. Based in Berlin, its nonprofit purpose is to take action to combat global corruption with civil societal anti-corruption measures and to prevent criminal activities arising from corruption. Its most notable publications include the Global Corruption Barometer and the Corruption Perceptions Index.

International



Island nation of Palau is setting out to become the world's first carbon neutral country

- **The Republic of Palau, an archipelago of 500 islands** in the western Pacific, has plans to **become the world's first carbon neutral tourism destination**. (Bhutan is the world's only "carbon negative" country in the world, meaning it removes more CO₂ that it adds.)
- **The project aims to reduce Palau's carbon footprint** both domestically and by foreign tourism, while increasing the production of locally sourced and sustainable food.
- Launched in August, the initiative is **collaboration between Sustainable Travel International, Slow Food International, and the Palau Bureau of Tourism**. As a low-lying archipelago threatened by rising sea levels, the project poses a response to climate change that operates in tandem with the islands' key industry – tourism.
- **Pulau's tropical rainforests, mangrove forests, seagrass beds, coral reefs, and marine lakes** make it one of the most biologically rich island groups in Oceania, and a top destination for marine tourism.

Palau is an island country located in the western Pacific Ocean. The capital Ngerulmud is located on the nearby island of Babeldaob. Thomas Remengesau Jr is the current President of Palau. The United States dollar is the official currency of the United States and its territories per the Coinage Act of 1792. The U.S. dollar as a currency is sometimes referred to as the greenback by foreign exchange traders and the financial press in other countries, such as Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and India, due to the banknotes' predominantly green color.

Duarte Pacheco of Portugal elected as new President of Inter Parliamentary Union

- **Mr. Duarte Pacheco of Portugal** has been elected the new President of Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) for the period 2020-2023.
- The election process **to elect the new IPU President took place through remote electronic secret ballot**, with a 24 hour window for casting votes. Earlier, the Governing Council of IPU, Geneva resumed its business during the 206th Session in virtual format.
- **The Indian Parliamentary Delegation led by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla** and consisting of Poonamben Hematbhai Maadam, MP and Shri Swapan Dasgupta, MP attended the meeting of the IPU Governing Council. The Secretary General Lok Sabha, Snehlata Srivastava also attended the virtual meeting.

Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) is an international organization of national parliaments. Its primary purpose is to promote democratic governance, accountability, and cooperation among its members; other initiatives include advancing gender parity among legislatures, empowering youth participation in politics, and sustainable development. The organization was established in 1889 as the Inter-Parliamentary Congress. Its founders were statesmen Frederic Passy of France and William Randal Cremer of the United Kingdom, who sought to create the first permanent forum for political multilateral negotiations. It is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.

Georgia's ruling party wins vote

- **Georgia's ruling party won the country's highly contested parliamentary election**, according to preliminary results announced that the opposition refused to recognise as valid and used to call for protests, saying they were manipulated. Georgia's Central election commission said that with 95% of ballots counted, **the Georgian Dream party had received 48.1% of the vote in election.**

Georgia is a country in the Caucasus region of Eurasia. The capital and largest city is Tbilisi. Salome Zourabichvili has been the fifth President of Georgia since December 2018. She is the first woman to be elected as Georgia's president, a position she will occupy for a term of six years. The lari is the currency of Georgia.

Pakistan PM Imran Khan to launch 'CPEC City' project in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province

- Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan will launch work on a mega city development project under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in Rashakai town of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province on November 18.
- The city will be constructed under the CPEC (project) and will consist of education and commercial zones, public buildings, apartments, golf course, theme park and sports facilities.
- The \$60 billion CPEC connecting China's resource-rich Xinjiang province with Pakistan's strategic Gwadar port in Balochistan is regarded as the flagship project of the multi-billion BRI, the pet scheme of President Xi Jinping aimed at furthering China's influence globally with Chinese funded infrastructure projects.

Pakistan is a country in South Asia. It is the fifth-most populous country. Islamabad is the capital city of Pakistan. Pakistani rupee is the currency of Pakistan. Imran Ahmed Khan Niazi is the 22nd and current Prime Minister of Pakistan and the chairman of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). Before entering politics, Khan was an international cricketer and captain of the Pakistan national cricket team, which he led to victory in the 1992 Cricket World Cup. Arif-ur-Rehman Alvi is 13th and current President of Pakistan

Qatar Emir sets first national election for next October

- Qatar's ruler said that a long delayed vote for the country's policy reviewing chamber will be held in October 2021, marking the Gulf emirate's first national election.
- The currently un-elected Shura Council advises the absolute ruler, Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, on draft laws but does not create its own legislation and can be overruled by a simple decree.
- October's vote would be Qatar's first national election although Sheikh Tamim did not give details on who would be permitted to vote or who would be able to stand.

Qatar is a country located in Western Asia, occupying the small Qatar Peninsula on the northeastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula. Its sole land border is with neighbouring Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) monarchy Saudi Arabia to the south, with the rest of its territory surrounded by the Persian Gulf. Doha is the capital and most populous city of the State of Qatar. The Qatari riyal is the currency of the State of Qatar. Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani is the Emir of Qatar. Khalid bin Khalifa is serving as Prime Minister of Qatar and Minister of the Interior from 28 January 2020.

Interpol defers its General Assembly

- Interpol has, for the first time in its history, decided to postpone its General Assembly (GA), which had been scheduled to take place in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in December, 2020, because of the raging Covid-19 pandemic.
- The 89th General Assembly of all 194-member countries of Interpol was to discuss cooperation in tackling terrorism, organised crime and criminal networks, among other aspects of policing. Interpol's executive committee concluded that it is inadvisable and materially impossible to hold the GA anywhere in the world this year.

International Criminal Police Organization, commonly known as INTERPOL is an international organization that facilitates worldwide police cooperation and crime control. Headquartered in Lyon, it has seven regional bureaux worldwide and a National Central Bureau in all 194 member states, making it the world's largest police organization. INTERPOL originated with the first International Criminal Police Congress in 1914, which brought officials from 24 countries to discuss cooperation on law enforcement matters. Kim Jong Yang is a South Korean police officer and the President of Interpol. The Secretariat is led by the Secretary General, currently Jurgen Stock, the former deputy head of Germany's Federal Criminal Police Office. Pursuant to its charter, INTERPOL seeks to remain politically neutral in fulfilling its mandate.

Bangladesh, US launch joint naval exercise ‘CARAT Bangladesh 2020’

- The Bangladesh and US Navies launched the ‘Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) Bangladesh-2020’ to expand relationships and broaden maritime awareness between the two countries.
- The exercise demonstrates US’s continuing commitment to work with the Bangladesh military to address shared maritime security concerns in the region and strengthen partnership to ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

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

Ireland poised to be first in the world to map its entire seabed

- Ireland poised to be first in the world to map its entire seabed, its aim is to map Ireland’s entire seabed by 2026, becoming the first country in the world to have systematically mapped its marine territory. Ireland’s ocean territory area – at 880,000 sq km – is about 10 times the land mass of the country.
- This mammoth mapping task started with the Irish National Seabed Survey (1999-2005) which used remote sensing equipment, from multibeam to seismic, to survey vast stretches of offshore waters more than 200m deep beyond Ireland’s continental shelf.
- Ireland’s continental shelf includes the land which extends under the sea to 200 nautical miles from the coastline, giving Ireland one of the largest seabed territories in Europe as shown on the so-called Real Map of Ireland.

Ireland is an island in the North Atlantic. It is separated from Great Britain to its east by the North Channel, the Irish Sea, and St George’s Channel. Ireland is the second-largest island of the British Isles, the third-largest in Europe, and the twentieth-largest on Earth. The capital and largest city is Dublin. Leo Varadkar has been serving as Taoiseach, Minister for Defence and Leader of Fine Gael since June 2017. Ireland currency is euro.

Tanzania President John Pombe Magufuli sworn in for a second term

- The swearing-in ceremony of President John Pombe Magufuli is underway in Dodoma, Tanzania. Magufuli has taken an oath to serve Tanzania for another five years in his second term which will run from 2021 to 2025.
- The swearing-in came despite the opposition calling for a fresh election, the disbandment of the electoral commission and an “endless peaceful demonstration” over the October 28 vote.

Tanzania is a country in East Africa within the African Great Lakes region. Mount Kilimanjaro, Africa’s highest mountain, is in northeastern Tanzania. Dodoma is the national capital of Tanzania. John Pombe Magufuli is the fifth President of Tanzania, in office since 2015. The shilingi is the currency of Tanzania.

Gen. Naravane conferred the honorary rank of General of Nepali Army by President Bhandari

- Indian Army Chief General M. M. Naravane was conferred the honorary rank of General of the Nepali Army by President Bidya Devi Bhandari at a special ceremony, a decades old tradition that reflects the strong ties between the two militaries.
- He was also presented a sword and scroll during the function held at the President’s official residence ‘ShitalNiwas’ in Kathmandu. Prime Minister K. P. Sharma Oli, Indian Ambassador Vinay M Kwatra and other senior officials of both the countries attended the ceremony.
- The tradition, which started in 1950, reflects the strong ties between the two militaries. Gen. K. M. Cariappa was the first Indian Army chief to be decorated with the title in 1950.
- In January last year, Nepali Army chief General Purna Chandra Thapa was also made the honorary General of the Indian Army by President Ram Nath Kovind at a ceremony in New Delhi.

Nepal is a landlocked country in South Asia located in the Himalaya. Nepalese rupee is the official currency of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal. Constitution of Nepal is the present governing Constitution of Nepal. Nepal is governed according to the Constitution which came into effect on September 20, 2015, replacing the Interim Constitution of 2007. Khadga Prasad Sharma Oli is currently serving as the Prime Minister of Nepal. He was the first elected prime minister under the newly adopted Constitution of Nepal.

Scotland becomes first UK nation to ban smacking children

- Scotland has become the first country in the United Kingdom to impose a ban on smacking children. With the new legislation that came into force, children under 16 now have the same protection from assault as adults.
- Earlier parents and caregivers were allowed to use physical force to discipline their children as long as it was considered “reasonable chastisement”. But the new law means that the defence of “justifiable assault” can no longer be used. With this, Scotland has become the 58th nation in the world to outlaw corporal punishment. Sweden was the first country to outlaw smacking children in 1979.

Scotland is a country that is part of the United Kingdom. Edinburgh is the capital city of Scotland. Nicola Sturgeon is the current First Minister of Scotland.

Joe Biden to be next US President; Kamala Harris becomes first woman in American history to be elected as Vice President

- Democrat Joe Biden beat Republican Donald Trump to become the 46th President of the United States. In a very closely fought presidential election which witnessed many cliffhanger episodes, Biden clinched the race by securing 290 electoral votes. The winning moment was decided when the Democrats made a stamping lead in the state of Pennsylvania sealing their victory in one of the most crucial swing states.
- With the declaration of Joe Biden as the President-Elect based on the projections of the electoral votes, Democratic Party candidate Kamala Harris has also secured her position as the first woman to be the Vice President of the USA. Ms. Harris, is also credited to be the first woman of Indian-American and African-American origin to be a member of the United States Senate.

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

Kamala Devi Harris has served as the junior United States senator from California since 2017. She is the Democratic vice presidential nominee for the 2020 election. Born in Oakland, California, Harris began her career in the Alameda County District Attorney's Office, before being recruited to the San Francisco District Attorney's Office and later the City Attorney of San Francisco's office. In 2003, she was elected district attorney of San Francisco. She was elected attorney general of California in 2010, and re-elected in 2014. She defeated Loretta Sanchez in the 2016 Senate election to become the second African-American woman and the first South Asian American to serve in the United States Senate.

Annual SCO summit to be held under chairmanship of Russia

- The annual Heads of State-level meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation will be held under the chairmanship of Russia. The virtual meeting is being held in the backdrop of major regional and global developments.
- The SCO Summit of Heads of State is the main unit of the organisation that sets the agenda and gives political, security, trade, economic and cultural directions to the 8-member body.

- Apart from the members Russia, China, India, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, four Observer States — Iran, Afghanistan, Belarus and Mongolia — will also participate in the summit. According to sources, the summit is expected to adopt the Moscow Declaration under the Chairmanship of the Russian Federation.
- It has been learnt that there will also be statements on issues like the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the World War II, digital economy, COVID-19, countering the spread of terrorism including on the Internet and countering the drug threat.

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

Luis Arce sworn in as Bolivia's new President

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

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

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

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

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First flight carrying Israeli tourists to UAE land in Dubai

- The first flight carrying Israeli tourists to the UAE landed in the city-state of Dubai, the latest sign of the normalization deal reached between the two nations.

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

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

Armenia, Azerbaijan sign Russia brokered peace deal

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

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

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

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

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

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

15 Asia-Pacific nations sign trade agreement

- The **Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)**, a **mega trade bloc comprising 15 countries led by China that came into existence on 15 November 2020**, said India would have to write expressing “intention” to join the organisation to restart negotiation for membership.

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

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

Myanmar: Ruling NLD claims victory

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

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

Nepal President Bidhya Devi Bhandari releases special anthology on Mahatma Gandhi

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

Two day 15th G20 Summit chaired by Saudi Arabia begins

- **The 15th G20 Summit was held in a virtual format. The 15th G20 Summit was held under the chairmanship of Saudi Arabia. King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia chaired the Summit through video-conferencing, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.**
- **The theme is “Realising the Opportunities of the 21st Century for All”. The summit is the second G20 Leaders’ meeting this year. The focus of the G20 Summit was on an inclusive, resilient, and sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 and the leaders discussed pandemic preparedness and the ways and means to restore jobs.**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in the Summit along with the respective Heads of State/Government of 19 member countries, EU, other invited countries and international organizations. Italy will take over the Presidency of the 16th G20 on 1st December 2020.

The G20 or Group of Twenty is an international forum for the governments and central bank governors from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States and the European Union. It was founded in 1999; the G20 aims to discuss policy pertaining to the promotion of international financial stability. Membership of the G20 consists of 19 individual countries plus the European Union (EU). Collectively, the G20 economies account for around 90% of the gross world product (GWP), 80% of world trade (or, if excluding EU intra-trade, 75%), two-thirds of the world population, and approximately half of the world land area.

India to host G20 Summit in 2023

- G20 leaders announced that India will host the summit of the high-profile grouping in 2023 — a year later than what was decided earlier. However, no reason for this change has been given publicly. Indonesia was earlier scheduled to hold both G-20 and ASEAN summits in 2023.
- India was earlier slated to host the summit in 2022 with the Osaka declaration of the G20 stating last year that “we look forward to meeting again in Saudi Arabia in 2020, in Italy in 2021 and in India in 2022”.
- India had first got the chance to host the summit for 2021. But, during the 2018 summit in Argentina, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi had requested for a change so that its G-20 chairmanship would coincide with the 75th anniversary of Indian independence.

Second phase of Malabar Exercise held in Northern Arabian Sea

- The second phase of Exercise Malabar 2020 is held in the Northern Arabian Sea. Taking forward the synergy achieved in the recently concluded Phase One of Exercise Malabar 2020, which was conducted earlier this month, this second phase involved coordinated operations of increasing complexity between the navies of Australia, India, Japan and the United States.
- Phase Two witnessed joint operations, centered around the Vikramaditya Carrier Battle Group of the Indian Navy and Nimitz Carrier Strike Group of the US Navy. The two carriers, along with other ships, submarines and aircraft of the participating navies, would be engaged in high intensity naval operations over four days.
- These exercises include cross-deck flying operations and advanced air defence exercises by MIG 29K fighters of Vikramaditya and F-18 fighters and E2C Hawkeye from Nimitz.

Exercise Malabar is a trilateral naval exercise involving the United States, Japan and India as permanent partners. Originally begun in 1992 as a bilateral exercise between India and the United States, Japan became a permanent partner in 2015. Past non-permanent participants include Singapore and Australia. With Australia's participation in the drills in 2020, it will be the first time in 13 years that all members of the regional grouping known as the Quad will be engaging militarily.

Peru's interim President resigns as chaos embroils nation

- Peru's interim President Manuel Merino resigned as the nation plunged into its worst constitutional crisis in two decades following massive protests unleashed when Congress ousted the nation's popular leader.
- On November 9, 2020, Martin Vizcarra, predecessor of Manuel was impeached by the Peruvian Legislature. He was impeached on the grounds of unproven charges of corruption.
- Vizcarra had promised an anti-graft agenda that initiated reforms to tackle corruption in the judicial and legislative branches of the Peruvian Government. This was basically seen as threats by most of the political parties in the country. Vizcarra dissolved the 130-member unicameral legislative body in 2019 that triggered constitutional crisis in the country. This led to parliamentary elections in January 2020.

- In the elections, Peru saw historic division of parties. In the end, **no party received more than 11% vote in the elections. Since the elections, Peruvian Congress had sought to remove Vizcarra from power. The current constitution of Peru was drafted and enacted in 1993 after the constitutional crisis in 1992. The current constitution gives more powers to the president.**

Peru is a country in western South America. Lima is the capital and the largest city of Peru and sol is the currency of Peru. César Villanueva has been the Prime Minister of Peru since April 2018.

Tristan Da Cunha Island creates massive marine protection zone

- **Tristan da Cunha, an island with 245 permanent residents, is creating a marine protection zone to safeguard endangered rockhopper penguins, yellow-nosed albatross and other wildlife in an area of the South Atlantic three times the size of the United Kingdom.**
- **The government of the British overseas territory, which calls itself the most remote inhabited island on Earth, that fishing and other “extractive activities” will be banned from 627,247 square kilometers of ocean around Tristan da Cunha and the archipelago’s three other major islands.**
- **The sanctuary will be the biggest “no-take zone” in the Atlantic Ocean and the fourth biggest anywhere in the world, protecting fish that live in the waters and tens of millions of seabirds that feed on them.**

‘Five Eyes’ alliance urges China to reconsider their decision on Hong Kong legislators

- **Foreign ministers from the United States, Australia, Britain, Canada and New Zealand have urged China to reconsider its actions against Hong Kong’s elected legislature and immediately reinstate the Legislative Council members.**
- **The group of five countries also known as ‘Five Eyes’ alliance said that China’s imposition of new rules to disqualify elected legislators in Hong Kong appeared to be part of a campaign to silence critics. They have called on Beijing to reverse its decision.**
- **China has rebuked the United States and its ‘Five eyes’ alliance over their demands and termed the National People’s Congress Standing Committee resolution, legitimate.**
- **The alliance said that China’s action is a clear breach of its international obligations under the legally binding, UN-registered Sino-British Joint Declaration. It breaches both China’s commitment that Hong Kong will enjoy a ‘high degree of autonomy’, and the right to freedom of speech.**

Hong Kong is a special administrative region of the People’s Republic of China on the eastern Pearl River Delta of the South China Sea. Hong Kong became a colony of the British Empire after the Qing Empire ceded Hong Kong Island at the end of the First Opium War in 1842. The colony expanded to the Kowloon Peninsula in 1860 after the Second Opium War and was further extended when Britain obtained a 99-year lease of the New Territories in 1898. The whole territory was transferred to China in 1997 after obtaining guarantees to preserve its systems, freedoms, and way of life for at least 50 years in Hong Kong under the Basic Law. As a special administrative region, Hong Kong maintains separate governing and economic systems from that of mainland China under the principle of “one country, two systems”. Umbrella Movement was a political movement that emerged during the Hong Kong democracy protests of 2014. In June 2019, mass protests erupted in response to a proposed extradition amendment bill permitting extradition of fugitives to mainland China.

Japan & Australia sign landmark defence deal to counter China’s growing influence in South China Sea

- **Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga and his Australian counterpart Scott Morrison have signed a landmark defence deal in a bid to counter China’s growing influence in the South China Sea and over the Pacific island nations.**
- **Reciprocal Access Agreement (RAA) comes weeks after foreign ministers of the Quad alliance, which includes the US and India, met in Tokyo. The pact allows Japanese and Australian troops to visit each other’s countries and conduct training and joint operations.**

- Australian Prime Minister said that the treaty will strengthen their security ties and facilitate cooperation between defence forces. The joint statement said, **the two sides also agreed on the need for a framework to allow Japanese military to protect Australian forces if needed.**

Naruhito is the Emperor of Japan. He acceded to the Chrysanthemum Throne on 1 May 2019, beginning the Reiwa era, following the abdication of his father, Emperor Akihito, on 30 April 2019. He is the 126th monarch according to Japan's traditional order of succession. Yoshihide Suga is serving as Prime Minister of Japan. He was the chief cabinet secretary under Prime Minister Shinzo Abe from 2012 to 2020. Tokyo is the capital city of Japan and yen is the official currency of Japan and it is the third most traded currency in the foreign exchange market after the United States dollar and the euro.

Australia is the largest country in Oceania and the world's sixth-largest country by total area. Australia's capital is Canberra, and its largest city is Sydney. Scott Morrison is serving as the current Prime Minister of Australia. Elizabeth II is the Head of the Commonwealth and queen regnant of seven independent Commonwealth countries: the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Pakistan, and Ceylon. The country's other major metropolitan areas are Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, and Adelaide. Australia is a highly developed country, with the world's fourteenth-largest economy.

World's first hydrogen powered double-decker buses

- **The world's first hydrogen-powered double decker bus was launched in Aberdeen, Scotland which showcases the city as a trailblazer in hydrogen technologies. The arrival of the first of the zero emission buses underlines the city's role as the energy capital of Europe and shows its commitment to the transition of green energy from oil and gas as part of the Net Zero Vision.**
- **It is an attempt to reduce air pollution and transform the city into a green economy. A fleet of 15 such buses have been launched as part of the trial. These buses emit water vapour instead of carbon monoxide. The UK's first hydrogen production and bus refuelling station was opened in Aberdeen in 2015, as part of a £19 million green transport demonstration project.**

Scotland is a country that is part of the United Kingdom. Edinburgh is the capital city of Scotland. Nicola Sturgeon is the current First Minister of Scotland.

Green Climate Fund approves USD 256 million for Bangladesh

- **The Green Climate Fund has approved dollar 256 million for Bangladesh in grants and loans to meet its Green House Gas (GHG) emission reduction targets under the Paris agreement.**
- **The financing is provided as an integrated package for textile and Ready Made Garments (RMG) sectors of Bangladesh are the largest industrial contributors in carbon emission.**
- **The two sectors combined together contribute more than 27 percent of the industrial carbon emission as they are working with old and outdated machines with poor energy management. By 2030, Bangladesh is committed to reduce its GHG emission by 15 percent compared to business-as-usual scenario.**

Green Climate Fund (GCF) is a fund established within the framework of the UNFCCC as an operating entity of the Financial Mechanism to assist developing countries in adaptation and mitigation practices to counter climate change. The GCF is based in Incheon, South Korea. It is governed by a Board of 24 members and supported by a Secretariat. The current executive director is Yannick Glemarec. The objective of the Green Climate Fund is to "support projects, programmes, policies and other activities in developing country Parties using thematic funding windows".

Australia to temporarily host ISRO satellite tracking facilities

- **As part of steps to deepen cooperation in civil space activities, the space agencies of India and Australia were working together to position temporarily Indian tracking facilities in Australia.**

- “These include earth observation and data analytics, robotics, and space life sciences. **This mission will see India become just the fourth nation to send a crew into space.** The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has embarked on an **ambitious plan to put an Indian in space by 2022 under Gaganyaan mission.**

Britain, Canada ink rollover trade deal

- **Britain and Canada struck a rollover trade deal to protect the flow of 27 billion dollar-worth of goods and services between them after Brexit.** British Prime Minister Boris Johnson joined Canada’s Justin Trudeau and their respective trade ministers on an online call to mark the trade deal.
- The deal paves the way for a tailor-made **agreement covering more areas such as digital trade, small businesses, the environment and women’s economic empowerment.** UK’s international trade secretary, said that the agreement underpins 20 billion pounds worth of trade and locks in certainty for thousands of jobs. **Britain is Canada’s fifth largest trading partner after the United States, China, Mexico and Japan.**

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

Face-to-face negotiations between UK, EU over trade deal restart in London

- **Face-to-face negotiations between the United Kingdom (UK) and the European Union (EU) over a trade deal have restarted in London** in a last-ditch attempt to find agreement with just **five weeks to go before their current relationship ends.**
- **EU negotiator Michel Barnier and the UK’s chief negotiator David Frost are working to secure a deal before the UK’s transition period with the EU ends on December 31.**
- **It is the first time they have met face-to-face since Barnier went into self-isolation after a member of his team caught the novel coronavirus.** Both sides are calling for the other to compromise on the three main issues of contention - fishing, state aid and how to resolve any future disputes.
- **The UK left the bloc on January 31 this year and a “no-deal” final exit would snarl borders, spook financial markets and disrupt delicate supply chains that stretch across Europe and beyond.** A no-deal scenario is widely expected to cause economic chaos, with customs checks required at the borders.

Brexit (“British” and “exit”) is the withdrawal of the United Kingdom (UK) from the European Union (EU) and the European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC or Euratom) on 31 January 2020. The UK is to date the first and only country to formally leave the EU after 47 years of membership and cautious integration within the bloc after it first joined its predecessor, the European Communities (EC), on 1 January 1973. It is also thought to be the first country to voluntarily withdraw from an economic and monetary union of countries (although the UK never adopted the Euro). In July 2016, following a Brexit referendum in which a majority of those voting supported leaving the European Union. In a referendum on 23 June 2016, 51.9% of the participating UK electorate voted to leave the EU. On 29 March 2017, the United Kingdom (UK) invoked Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) which began the member state’s withdrawal, commonly known as Brexit. After the three subsequent extensions of the Article 50 process, the deadlock was resolved after a subsequent general election was held in December 2019, resulting in the Conservatives who campaigned in support of a “revised” withdrawal agreement led by the current Prime Minister Boris Johnson winning an overall majority of 80 seats. Following the outcome, the UK Parliament finally ratified the withdrawal agreement, and the UK left the EU at 11 p.m. GMT on 31 January 2020.

New Zealand declared a climate emergency

- **New Zealand has declared a “climate emergency” and promised to make its public sector carbon neutral by 2025.**

- Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern told legislators that the climate emergency declaration was “an acknowledgement of the next generation – an acknowledgement of the burden that they will carry if we do not get this right and do not take action now”.
- New Zealand now joins 32 other countries that have declared a climate emergency. They include Japan, Canada, France and the United Kingdom.
- Ardern Labour Party won nearly 49 per cent of the votes in the general elections last month, which was the biggest victory for her party in about 50 years. As Prime Minister, Ardern has been vocal about climate change and last November, the parliament passed the Zero-Carbon Act, which commits New Zealand to zero carbon emissions by 2050 or sooner.

New Zealand is an island country in the southwestern Pacific Ocean. Wellington is the capital city. Jacinda Ardern is the current Prime Minister. The New Zealand dollar is the official currency and legal tender of New Zealand, the Cook Islands, Niue, the Ross Dependency, Tokelau, and a British territory, the Pitcairn Islands.

US CDC releases first blueprint for initial vaccine allocation

- America's top public health agency - the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has released its first blueprint of a four-pronged ethical basis which will determine how the coronavirus vaccine could be released to reach more than 261 million people who fall into the category of essential workers.
- A high-powered Advisory Committee on Immunisation Practices responsible for making vaccine recommendations while supply is limited laid out four principles that will guide allocation: Maximise benefits and minimise harms; Promote justice; Mitigate health inequities; Promote transparency.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is a national public health institute in the United States. It is a United States federal agency, under the Department of Health and Human Services, and is headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia.

Priyanka Radhakrishnan becomes New Zealand's first-ever Indian-origin minister

- Priyanka Radhakrishnan became New Zealand's first-ever Indian-origin minister after Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern brought five new ministers into her executive.
- Her new role of Minister for Diversity, Inclusion and Ethnic Communities. In addition to this, she has become the Minister for the Community and Voluntary Sector and Associate Minister for Social Development and Employment.

Christchurch Airport becomes world's first to achieve Level 4 Transformation of Airport Carbon Accreditation

- Christchurch Airport in New Zealand has taken a major step forward in its commitment to fight against climate change, becoming the first airport in the Asia-Pacific region and in the world to reach Level 4 Transformation of Airport Carbon Accreditation.
- This high achievement is evidence of the airport's continued efforts to align its carbon management strategy with the global climate goals. It also follows ACI's recent announcement of the introduction of two further levels of accreditation in its global Airport Carbon Accreditation programme (Level 4 Transformation and Level 4+ Transition) to mark the industry's ongoing commitment to 'Build Back Better'.
- Christchurch Airport, which was previously accredited at Level 2 Reduction of Airport Carbon Accreditation, has successfully upgraded to Level 4 Transformation, one of the highest levels of accreditation, by taking swift and concrete actions to transform its operations to achieve CO₂ emissions reduction in alignment with the Paris Agreement (global warming limited to below 2°C and ideally 1.5°C).

China's first domestically made nuclear reactor goes online

- China has powered up its first domestically developed nuclear reactor — the Hualong One — a significant step in Beijing's attempts to become less dependent on Western allies for energy security and critical technology.

- The reactor, which was connected to the national grid, can generate 10 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity each year and cut carbon emissions by 8.16 million tons.
- China has 47 nuclear plants with a total generation capacity of 48.75 million kilowatts — the world's third highest after the U.S. and France.

China is a country in East Asia and the world's most populous country, with a population of around 1.404 billion. Beijing is the capital of the People's Republic of China. Xi Jinping is serving as president of the People's Republic of China. National People's Congress is the national legislature of the People's Republic of China. With 2,980 members in 2018, it is the largest parliamentary body in the world. China's currency yuan joins the International Monetary Fund's basket of reserve currencies.

India to set up Drug Detox Centre in the Maldives

- The Drug Detoxification Centre in Hulhudhoo, Addu, the Maldives is being set up with the help of India. Tailored to meet the requirements of the local community, the project is funded through an MVR 8 million grant assistance from India. And is going to be steered and executed by the Ministry of National Planning, Housing and Infrastructure of that country.
- This is in line with India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy and the Maldives' 'India First' policy. The two countries have been working together to fight the global pandemic of COVID-19.

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

Shanghai rises to become world's most connected city

- Shanghai has dethroned London to become the world's most connected city as the coronavirus shakes up international travel. London has seen a 67% fall in connectivity in air travel, according to airline industry body IATA. Shanghai has risen up the ranks, and the world's four most connected cities are now all in China. The top four most connected cities in the world are now Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou, and Chengdu.

China Hydropower Company plans first downstream dam on Brahmaputra

- Authorities have given the go-ahead for a Chinese hydropower company to construct the first downstream dam on the lower reaches of the Brahmaputra River, or Yarlung Zangbo as it is known in Tibet, marking a new phase in China's hydropower exploitation of the river with potential ramifications for India.
- A report in the Chinese media said the State-owned hydropower company POWERCHINA had last month signed "a strategic cooperation agreement" with the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) government to "implement hydropower exploitation in the downstream of the Yarlung Zangbo River" as part of the new Five-Year Plan (2021-2025).
- China in 2015 operationalised its first hydropower project at Zangmu in Tibet, while three other dams at Dagu, Jiexu and Jiacha are being developed, all on the upper and middle reaches of the river. The report said this will be the first time the downstream sections of the river will be tapped.

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

Saudi Arabia Opens Its First UNESCO World Heritage Site 'Hegra' After 2,000 Years

- Nestled on a massive boulder in the desert, the 'masterpiece' resort Qasr al-Farid, or "The Lonely Castle," in the UNESCO archaeological site in the north of AlUla in Saudi Arabia is now open to tourists.

- **Built-in the 1century CE**, the tomb carved in the sandstone in Hegra also known as the Madain Saleh is among other iconic structures **constructed by the Nabateans in a unique style** which has been **undisturbed for nearly 2,000 years**. However, **the Saudi Arabia government recently opened the site ‘Hegra’ for the general public** which bears testimony to the Nabataean civilization from 2 and 3 centuries BC.

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



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ECONOMY AND FINANCE



Economy News

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

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

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

Narendra Modi addressed Bloomberg New Economy Forum

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the Bloomberg New Economy Forum.** The forum witnessed discussions centered on refuelling the economy and charting a course for the future as the global economy grapples with the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **The Bloomberg New Economy Forum**, it added, was established in 2018 by Michael Bloomberg. It seeks to build a community of leaders to engage in real conversations leading to actionable solutions about the critical challenges facing a world economy in the throes of a historic transition. **The inaugural forum was held in Singapore, and the second annual forum was hosted in Beijing.**

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

- **A remote island in Wales is set to become the first in the world to be powered entirely by 'blue energy'** as the nation looks to respond to the challenges posed by climate change.
- **The £1.2 million project will see Bardsey Island off North Wales** - which has a population of just four- powered entirely by waves and could also generate electricity for mainland Wales.

- Nova Innovation, who secured the investment from the Welsh Government, say the project will **switch the area from a dependency on diesel generation to ‘the world’s first blue energy island’**. The island, which was a **Christian pilgrimage site in the Middle Ages**, is a wildlife haven and home to puffins, seals, and manx shearwaters but currently relies on diesel to power its handful of buildings.

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

Centre sets up committee for ‘transparent’ TRPs amid manipulation row

- The information and broadcasting ministry has set up a four-member committee to make “recommendations for a robust, transparent and accountable ratings system (for television) in India”.
- The committee consists of **Prasar Bharti CEO Shashi V Vempatti, Dr Shailabh from IIT Kanpur, Rajkumar Upadhyay from C-DOT and Professor Pulak Ghosh from the Centre for Public Policy.** It has to submit its report in two months.
- The decision comes a little over two weeks after the **Parliamentary panel on Information Technology, chaired by Congress leader Shashi Tharoor, took up the issue of Television Rating Points (TRPs).** The panel had noted that TRPs can be “easily manipulated”, amid allegations of a scam involving certain news channels.

TRP stands for Television Rating Point. TRP of any channel or programme depends upon the programme that is displayed. The TRP rate is one on which the TRP of a TV channel is calculated. **TRP is calculated by Indian agency the Broadcast Audience Research Council using “BAR-O-meters.”** The BARC releases weekly TRP results every Thursday ranking all TV channels and TV programmes.

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

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

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

Finance Ministry moves to set up database of migrant workers

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

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

DIPAM inks agreement with World Bank

- Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) signed an agreement with World Bank. Under the agreement, World Bank is to provide advisory services to DIPAM for asset monetization.
- DIPAM is mandated with facilitating monetization of non-core assets of government CPSEs under strategic disinvestment or closure and enemy property of value of Rs. 100 crore and above. DIPAM has a framework for monetizing non-core assets.
- The World Bank advisory project, approved by the Finance Minister, is aimed at analyzing public asset monetization in India and benchmarking its institutional and business models against international best practices as well as supporting development of operational guidelines and capacity building for their implementation.

The Department of Disinvestment was one of the Departments under the Ministry of Finance. It was renamed as Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) from 14th April, 2016. According to the government, strategic disinvestment would imply the sale of a substantial portion of the Government shareholding of a central public sector enterprises (CPSE) of upto 50%, or such higher percentage as the competent authority may determine, along with transfer of management control.

PMs of India and Bhutan virtually launched RuPay Card phase-2 in Bhutan

- Prime Ministers of India and Bhutan virtually launched RuPay Card phase-2 in Bhutan. The two Prime Ministers had jointly launched phase-1 of the project during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Bhutan in August last year.
- The implementation of phase-1 of RuPay cards in Bhutan has enabled Indian visitors in Bhutan to access ATMs and points of sale terminals across Bhutan. Bhutanese cardholders to access RuPay network in India.

RuPay is a domestic card payment service conceived and launched by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) on 26 March 2012. It was created to fulfil the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) vision of establishing a domestic, open and multilateral system of payments. RuPay facilitates electronic payment at all Indian banks and financial institutions. RuPay cards were officially launched in Bhutan on 17 August 2019 with Prime Minister Modi making the first RuPay transaction in the country with a purchase from Simtokha Dzong.

India ranks 77 in global bribery risk matrix

- India is at 77th position with a score of 45 in a global list that measures business bribery risks of 2020. The list by TRACE, an anti-bribery standard setting organisation, measures business bribery risk in 194 countries, territories, and autonomous and semi-autonomous regions.
- According to this year's data, North Korea, Turkmenistan, South Sudan, Venezuela and Eritrea present the highest commercial bribery risk, while Denmark, Norway, Finland, Sweden and New Zealand present the lowest. In 2019, India's rank stood 78 position with a score of 48 while in 2020 the country was ranked 77 with a score of 45, the data showed.
- The score is based on four factors -- business interactions with government, anti-bribery deterrence and enforcement, government and civil service transparency, and capacity for civil society oversight, including the role of the media.

Nirmala Sitharaman attends G20 Finance Ministers' virtual meeting

- Minister for Finance Nirmala Sitharaman virtually participated in the G20 Finance Ministers meeting in New Delhi.

- Finance Ministers of the G20 countries gathered to discuss their views on the global economic outlook and downside risks in wake of the COVID-19 crisis and how G20 could carry forward the collective global action initiated during the crisis.
- Ms Sitharaman also congratulated the Saudi Arabian Presidency for their tireless efforts and exceptional leadership to steer the G20 agenda in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Finance Minister shared that India looks forward to work with the Italian Presidency as a Troika member from December 2020.

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

Economic cooperation will be the focus at the SCO Council of Heads of Government on 30th Nov: Secretary General Vladimir Norov

- SCO Secretary General Vladimir Norov has said that economic cooperation will be in focus at the upcoming SCO Council of Heads of Government under India's chairmanship on 30th November. The SCO countries will be able to overcome the crisis of economic losses caused by the pandemic.
- SCO as a grouping is paying special attention to measures to restore national economies in the post-Pandemic period. SCO acted as a strong platform in cooperation against COVID-19 and highlighted the importance of the international community's efforts in strengthening the WHO's capacity

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

132 countries attend 4th Global meet on criminal finances

- Over 2,000 representatives from 132 countries attended the virtual 4th Global Conference on Criminal Finances and Cryptocurrencies organised by the Interpol, Europol and the Basel Institute on Governance from November 18 to 19.
- "Representatives from law enforcement and the judiciary, Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs), international organisations and the private sector have met virtually to shape international cross-sector solutions against the criminal use of cryptocurrencies," said the Interpol.
- The conference is an initiative of the Working Group on Cryptocurrencies and Money Laundering established in 2016 by the three organisations, launched with an objective of strengthening knowledge, expertise and best practices for investigations into financial crimes and intelligence on virtual assets and cryptocurrencies.

Four Indian cities figured among the 36 cities all over the world as part of the G20 Global Smart Cities Alliance

- The four Indian cities- Indore, Faridabad, Bengaluru, and Hyderabad, figured among the 36 cities all over the world that have agreed to pioneer a roadmap for safely adopting new technology as part of the G20 Global Smart Cities Alliance.
- According to the statement released by World Economic Forum (WEF) on November 17, 2020, COVID-19 has been accelerating the adoption of new technology by the cities as the governments struggle for managing the growing pandemic with limited resources.

The World Economic Forum (WEF), based in Cologny, Geneva Canton, Switzerland, is an international NGO, founded in 1971. The WEF's mission is stated as "committed to improving the state of the world by engaging business, political, academic, and other leaders of society to shape global, regional, and industry agendas". The WEF

hosts an annual meeting at the end of January in Davos, a mountain resort in Graubunden, in the eastern Alps region of Switzerland. The WEF was founded in 1971 by Klaus Schwab.

NCRTC and NDB sign USD 500m for Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut Rapid Transit System Project

- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, National Capital Region Transport Corporation Limited and the New Development Bank signed a loan agreement for lending 500 million dollars for the ‘Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System Project’.
- The Rapid Transit System will provide a fast, reliable, safe and comfortable public transport system in the National Capital Region. Due to lack of efficient public transport options, the number of private vehicles in NCR has increased. It can take about 3 to 4 hours to travel between Delhi and Meerut in Uttar Pradesh by road during peak hours.
- Rapid growth in vehicular traffic has made NCR one of the most polluted regions in the world. Fast transit system will support in achieving the goal of sustainable urban development in NCR region including National Capital Territory of Delhi. It will activate processes which will enable sustainable economic and social development with environmental protection, for future generations.

New Development Bank (NDB), formerly referred to as the BRICS Development Bank, is a multilateral development bank established by the BRICS states (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). The bank is headquartered in Shanghai, China. The first regional office of the NDB is in Johannesburg, South Africa. Marcos Troyjo is the chief of the New Development Bank of BRICS countries.

UP selects 58K banking Sakhis through tech-driven process, CM gives nod for training

- Uttar Pradesh chief minister Adityanath asked the rural development and panchayati raj departments to go ahead with the training of 58,000 women banking correspondent (BC) Sakhis before they begin their job.
- The direction came as the Uttar Pradesh government completed the first-of-its-kind technology driven process for selecting 58,000 women for as many posts of banking correspondent Sakhis. A total of 58,000 gram panchayats in the state will have a BC Sakhi each. “Once the BC Sakhis begin working, it will help a lot of the villagers in their banking related needs. BC Sakhis will function from their village’s panchayat bhavan,”.

Uttar Pradesh is the most populous state in India as well as the most populous country subdivision in the world. It was created on 1 April 1937 as the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh during British rule, and was renamed Uttar Pradesh in 1950, giving the acronym UP. The state is divided into 18 divisions and 75 districts with the capital being Lucknow. On 9 November 2000, a new state, Uttarakhand, was carved out from the state’s Himalayan hill region. The two major rivers of the state, the Ganges and Yamuna, join at Allahabad and flow further east as Ganges. The state contributes 80 seats to the lower house of the Indian Parliament, Lok Sabha and 31 seats to the upper house of the Indian Parliament, Rajya Sabha.

US is second biggest FDI source for India during April-September 2020

- The US has emerged as the second biggest source of foreign direct investment (FDI) into India, replacing Mauritius, during the first half of the current financial year, according to data of the commerce and industry ministry. The US was also India’s top trading partner in 2019-20.
- The DPIIT (Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade) data showed that during April-September 2020, India attracted FDI worth USD 7.12 billion from the US and USD 2 billion from Mauritius, which slipped to fourth position.
- Mauritius was the second biggest FDI source during the same period previous year. The US was the fourth biggest investor during that period. Singapore with USD 8.3 billion foreign inflows continued to be the top source of FDI for India in April-September 2020-21.
- Foreign inflows into India grew by 15 per cent to USD 30 billion during the first half of the current fiscal. In August, the country had attracted USD 17.5 billion worth of foreign investments.

Foreign direct investment (FDI) is an investment in a business by an investor from another country for which the foreign investor has control over the company purchased. Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) are those institutional investors which invest in the assets belonging to a different country other than that where these organizations are based. FDI is an investment that a parent company makes in a foreign country. On the contrary, FII is an investment made by an investor in the markets of a foreign nation. The FDI flows into the primary market, while the FII flows into secondary market. While FIIs are short-term investments, the FDI's are long term investment. FII can enter the stock market easily and also withdraw from it easily. But FDI cannot enter and exit that easily. The Foreign Direct Investment is considered to be more stable than Foreign Institutional Investor.

India 4th major host of Greenfield FDI projects during 2004-2015: Report

- India was the fourth major host of Greenfield foreign direct investment (FDI) projects and eight major host of cross-border M&A deals between 2004 to 2015, according to a research paper released.
- The paper, titled 'Future of Regional Cooperation in Asia and Pacific', pointed out that India received 8,004 Greenfield FDI projects and 4,918 counts of merger and acquisition (M&A) deals between 2004-2015.
- According to the paper, posted on the Asian Development Bank (ADB) website, the US received the most Greenfield FDI projects between 2004 to 2015, followed by China and the UK.

Cabinet approves equity infusion of 6000 crore rupees into NIIF

- Union Cabinet has approved equity infusion by Government of 6000 crore rupees in NIIF Debt Platform sponsored by National Investment and Infrastructure Fund, comprising Aseem Infrastructure Finance Limited and NIIF Infrastructure Finance Limited.
- This was one of the twelve key measures made by the Finance Minister as part of Government's stimulus to the economy, under AatmaNirbhar Bharat 3.0. NIIF Infrastructure Debt Financing Platform is expected to contribute nearly one lakh crore rupees in debt to the infrastructure sector over the next five years. This will act as a catalyst in attracting more investments into the infrastructure sector as envisaged in the National Infrastructure Pipeline. It has outlined plans to invest more than Rs.102 lakh crore on infrastructure projects by 2024-25, with the Centre, States and the private sector to share the capital expenditure in a 39:39:22 formula.

National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) is India's first infrastructure specific investment fund or a sovereign wealth fund that was set up by the Government of India in February 2015. The objective behind creating this fund was to maximize economic impact mainly through infrastructure investment in commercially viable projects, both Greenfield and Brownfield. On 22nd November 2020, the Union Cabinet has approved Rs. 6000 crore investment as a part of Atma Nirbar Bharat Abhiyan.

Banks in News

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

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

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

RBI announces co-lending scheme for banks, NBFCs for priority sector

- The Reserve Bank came out with a Co-Lending Model (CLM) scheme under which banks can provide loans along with NBFCs to priority sector borrowers based on a prior agreement. The CLM, which is an improvement over the co-origination of loan scheme announced by the RBI in September 2018, seeks to provide greater flexibility to the lending institutions.
- Under the CLM, RBI said, adding that "the co-lending banks will take their share of the individual loans on a back-to-back basis in their books". "However, NBFCs shall be required to retain a minimum of 20% share of the individual loans on their books."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

RBI sets up innovation hub for financial sector under Kris Gopalakrishnan

- **The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has set up an Innovation Hub for the financial sector and appointed Senapathy (Kris) Gopalakrishnan, co-founder and former co-chairman of Infosys, as the chairperson of the governing council for the entity.**
- **The central bank had said in its August monetary policy that it was going to set up a Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH) to promote innovation across the financial sector by leveraging on technology and creating an environment which would facilitate and foster innovation.**
- **The aim of the RBIH is to create an eco-system that would “focus on promoting access to financial services and products. This will also promote financial inclusion.”**

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**.

RBI names 2 startups as a part of its regulatory sandbox programme

- Reserve Bank of India has announced the names of two startups that have been selected as a part of its regulatory sandbox programme. RBI has shortlisted six companies out of 32 entities that had applied for the 'Test Phase' of the first cohort.
- The two companies are Jaipur based Natural Support Consultancy Services Private Limited and New Delhi based Nucleus Software Exports Limited.
- While the former has named its product 'eRupaya', which will facilitate offline Person-to-Merchant transactions and offline digital payments in remote locations; the second company's product 'PaySe', proposes to help in digitisation of payments in rural areas, starting with Self Help Groups, through an offline payment solution and a digitised SHG-centered ecosystem.
- The regulatory sandbox is a protected environment within which the selected companies will operate. They will have to show their system's preparedness while dealing with dummy data. Once they achieve success within the protected environment, the systems will be allowed to be tested in the live environment with actual banks and consumer data.

SBI Signs Pact with Luxembourg Stock Exchange

- State Bank of India (SBI) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Luxembourg Stock Exchange (LuxSe).
- The MoU will help SBI and LuxSE set up a long-term cooperation mechanism, and promote ESG (Environmental, Social, and Corporate Governance) and green finance.
- Through this MoU, the Luxembourg Stock Exchange would work towards creating a sustainable environment for issuers, asset managers, and investors in terms of ESG focused funds and bonds.
- SBI was the first Public Sector Bank in India to publish its Sustainability Report as per Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) framework."

On April 1, 2017, the State Bank of India, which was India's largest bank, merged with five of its associate banks (State Bank of Bikaner & Jaipur, State Bank of Hyderabad, State Bank of Mysore, State Bank of Patiala and State Bank of Travancore), and with the Bharatiya Mahila Bank. Rajnish Kumar is the current chairman of the State Bank of India (SBI). Imperial Bank of India was the oldest and the largest commercial bank of the Indian subcontinent, and was subsequently transformed into State Bank of India in 1955.

ICICI Bank launches banking stack for millennial customers

- ICICI Bank has launched a banking stack for millennial customers which offers an instant savings account, a feature-driven iMobile application that offers investment guidance, curated credit and debit card, instant personal loans and overdrafts, and an experiential branch with social engagement space.
- Called ICICI Bank Mine, any millennial-aged up to 35 years can apply digitally for the account from November 6 through the bank's website or the app.

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

Reserve Bank places Lakshmi Vilas Bank Ltd under moratorium

- In view of its weak financials, the Reserve Bank has placed the Lakshmi Vilas Bank Limited under moratorium with immediate effect.

- Accordingly, RBI has capped all cash withdrawals from the bank to twenty five thousand rupees. According to the banking regulator, the private sector lender has seen a steady decline in its financials with it incurring losses over the last three years.
- It may be recalled that the Karur based bank was placed under the Prompt Corrective Action framework in September 2019 and yet there was no improvement in its position with declining advances and mounting non-performing assets.
- Meanwhile, RBI has appointed the former Non-Executive Chairman of Canara Bank, T. N. Manoharan as the banks' administrator for the moratorium period.

Lakshmi Vilas Bank Limited was an Indian private sector bank established in 1926 in Karur, Tamil Nadu. As of November 2020, the bank has 566 branches in 19 states and 1 union territory. On 27 November 2020, the bank was merged into DBS Bank.

RBI committee for conversion of large NBFCs into banks, entry of corporates

- In a series of proposals, an Internal Working Group (IWG) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has recommended the guarded entry of corporates into the banking space, conversion of big NBFCs into banks and hike in promoters' stake to 26 per cent from 15 per cent.
- The group also proposed a hike in minimum capital for new banks from Rs 500 crore to Rs 1,000 crore. "The cap on promoters' stake in the long run — 15 years — may be raised from the current level of 15 per cent to 26 per cent of the paid-up voting equity share capital of the bank," the group proposed.
- This stipulation should be uniform for all types of promoters and would mean that promoters, who have already diluted their holdings to below 26 per cent, will be permitted to raise it to 26 per cent of the paid-up voting equity share capital of the bank.
- The committee, headed by PK Mohanty, has said "large corporates and industrial houses may be allowed as promoters of banks only after necessary amendments to the Banking Regulation Act, 1949" and strengthening of the supervisory mechanism for large conglomerates, including consolidated supervision. This is to prevent connected lending and exposures between the banks and other financial and non-financial group entities.

A Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) is a company registered under the Companies Act, 2013 of India, engaged in the business of loans and advances, acquisition of shares, stock, bonds, hire-purchase insurance business or chit-fund business, but does not include any institution whose principal business is that of agriculture, industrial activity, purchase or sale of any goods (other than securities) or providing any services and sale/purchase/construction of immovable property. NBFC is a company registered under the Companies Act, 1956 before 2013 act. The working and operations of NBFCs are regulated by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) within the framework of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934 (Chapter III-B) and the directions issued by it. NBFC cannot accept demand deposits. NBFCs do not form part of the payment and settlement system and cannot issue cheques drawn on itself. Deposit insurance facility of Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation is not available to depositors of NBFCs.

RBI Guv Shaktikanta Das chaired SAARC FINANCE Governors' Group

- Reserve Bank of India Governor Shaktikanta Das and other central bank governors in the South East Asian nations vowed to work in tandem to fight against the Coronavirus pandemic.
- At the 40th meeting of the SAARC FINANCE Governors' Group, they reaffirmed their commitment to continued co-operation and sharing of central bank experiences. Shaktikanta Das chaired the meeting and highlighted the close partnership and co-operation among the member countries.

Reserve Bank of India reaches 1 million Twitter followers; first central bank globally to achieve

- In less than nine years, India's Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has become the first central bank in the world to achieve the 1-million-follower mark on the microblogging network Twitter. The central bank had joined the networking site back in January 2012, according to its profile

India Post Payments Bank launches Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana

- India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) has joined hands with PNB MetLife India Insurance Company Limited to launch Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana. The unique scheme offers life cover on death of the insured member due to any reason.

Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (Prime Minister Jeevan Jyoti Insurance Scheme) is a government-backed Life insurance scheme in India. It was formally launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 9 May 2015 in Kolkata. Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana is available to people between 18 and 50 years of age with bank accounts. It has an annual premium of Rs.330. In case of death due to any cause, the payment to the nominee will be Rs.2 lakh. This scheme will be linked also to the bank accounts opened under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana scheme.

Lakshmi Vilas Bank to operate as customers of DBS Bank India

- Lakshmi Vilas Bank (LVB) is now amalgamated with DBS Bank India Limited (DBIL), the wholly owned subsidiary of DBS Group Holdings Ltd. The scheme of amalgamation is under the special powers of the Government of India and Reserve Bank of India under Section 45 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, India, and came into effect on 27 November 2020.
- The moratorium imposed on LVB was lifted from 27 November 2020 and banking services were restored immediately with all branches, digital channels and ATMs functioning as usual. LVB customers can continue to access all banking services. All LVB employees will continue in service and are now employees of DBIL on the same terms & conditions of service as under LVB.

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Firms in News

Facebook launches how-to guide for Indian small businesses to promote on its platforms

- Facebook has rolled out a how-to guide for small- and medium-sized businesses (SMB) in India to help them move from offline to the social network-owned online platforms. The technology company's SMB Guide is a step-by-step manual on how firms can build a digital presence and reach potential customers on Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp.
- The guide includes themes like mobile storytelling, social media advertising, and creative performance strategies. The manual is available in English and Hindi. Additionally, Facebook is also advancing its skill-building programme for young businesses. The programme went virtual earlier this year, and will now be delivered via Facebook Live sessions, primarily in Hindi.

Facebook is an American online social media and social networking service company based in Menlo Park, California. Its website was launched on February 4, 2004, by Mark Zuckerberg along with Eduardo Saverin, Andrew McCollum, Dustin Moskovitz, and Chris Hughes. WhatsApp was founded in 2009 by Brian Acton and Jan Koum, both former employees of Yahoo!. WhatsApp Inc., based in Mountain View, California, which was acquired by Facebook in February 2014 for approximately US\$19.3 billion.

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

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

mCaffeine, India's First Caffeinated Personal Care Brand is now PETA certified Cruelty-Free and Vegan

- On the backdrop of World Vegan Day which is celebrated on 1st November every year, mCaffeine, India's first caffeinated personal care brand which has led the coffee revolution in the personal care space since 2016, has been declared cruelty-free and vegan by PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals).
- This certification testifies that mCaffeine does not conduct or commission the tests of any of its ingredients, formulations or finished products on animals. It also represents mCaffeine's pledge that they would not carry out such tests in the future either.
- With this certification, mCaffeine will now sit squarely among other personal care brand and products known for ethical and environmentally sustainable practices and be a part of India's growing movement for ethical and eco-friendly personal care brands.

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) is an American animal rights organization based in Norfolk, Virginia, and led by Ingrid Newkirk, its international president. The nonprofit corporation claims 6.5 million supporters. Its slogan is "Animals are not ours to experiment on, eat, wear, use for entertainment, or abuse in any other way." Founded in March 1980 by Ingrid Newkirk and fellow animal rights activist Alex Pacheco.

L&T emerges lowest bidder for Vadodara-Ahmedabad section of the bullet train corridor

- After bagging the tender for the largest section of the Mumbai-Ahmedabad Bullet Train Project, Larsen and Toubro emerged as the lowest bidder for another package connecting Vadodara with Ahmedabad.

- **L&T quoted Rs 7,289 crore to emerge as the L1 bidder.** Tata Projects-J Kumar Infrastructure Projects Ltd-NCC Ltd. consortium and AFCONS Infrastructure Ltd.-Ircon International-JMC Projects consortium were among the other bidders for the project.

Larsen & Toubro Limited, commonly known as L&T, is an Indian technology, engineering, construction, manufacturing and financial services conglomerate, with global operations, headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra, India. It was founded by two Danish engineers taking refuge in India. The company has business interests in basic and heavy engineering, construction, realty, manufacturing of capital goods, information technology, and financial services. Anil Manibhai Naik is the Group Chairman of Larsen & Toubro Limited.

Former HDFC Bank MD Aditya Puri joins Carlyle

- **Former HDFC Bank managing director Aditya Puri has joined U.S.-based global investment firm the Carlyle Group as a senior advisor. The Carlyle Group said Mr. Puri will advise the Carlyle team on investment opportunities across Asia.**
- **Mr. Puri will provide guidance on the evolving market landscape and new investment opportunities, while also advising Carlyle's investment professionals and portfolio management teams on building differentiated high quality businesses.**

The Carlyle Group is an American multinational private equity, alternative asset management and financial services corporation. It specializes in corporate private equity, real assets, and private credit. It was founded in 1987 in Washington, D.C., by William E. Conway Jr., Daniel A. D'Aniello, and David Rubenstein.

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

IFSCA approves draft Banking regulations for banking operations at IFSCs

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

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

Visa partners with DigitSecure and HDFC Bank for global-first live deployment of PCI certified Tap to Phone card acceptance solution

- **Visa recently announced the first successful live deployment of a PCI certified Tap to Phone card acceptance solution, in partnership with DigitSecure and HDFC Bank. DeliveryPlus is the first merchant to go live with HDFC Bank as acquirer.**
- **This solution enables merchants to securely accept contactless card payments in seconds through an app on their NFC-enabled Android smartphones, and without having dedicated card acceptance**

devices. In line with the ‘Make in India’ goal of local innovation, DigitSecure is the first company based in Asia Pacific to receive PCI security certification for deploying this technology.

- As per a recent Visa study, about 55% of consumers surveyed in India during the pandemic mentioned that they would likely use the Tap to Phone payment method due to its ease of use, saving of time and eliminating the need to carry cash.

Visa Inc. (VISA) is an American multinational financial services corporation headquartered in Foster City, California, United States. It facilitates electronic funds transfers throughout the world, most commonly through Visa-branded credit cards, debit cards and prepaid cards. Dee Ward Hock is the founder of the Visa.

Dissolution of UPSMDC an example for all PSUs

- The Uttar Pradesh State Mineral Development Corporation (UPSMDC) has become the first state public sector undertaking in India that has been dissolved as per law by the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT). It has laid out a roadmap for several public sector undertakings in UP and elsewhere that have been lying defunct after having accumulated losses, becoming non-productive and yet, their dissolution has not been successful.

Wipro's Premji emerges as most generous Indian in FY20

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

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

Facebook cryptocurrency Libra to launch as early as January but scaled back

- Facebook's Libra cryptocurrency is readying to launch as early as January citing three unidentified people involved in the project. The Geneva-based Libra Association that will issue and govern Libra plans to launch a single digital coin backed by the dollar.
- The move would represent an even bigger scaling-back of the project's ambitions than that proposed in April in response to a regulatory and political backlash against the project. Libra, unveiled by Facebook Inc last year, was relaunched in slimmed-down form after regulators and central banks across the world raised concerns it could upset financial stability and erode mainstream power over money.

Facebook is an American online social media and social networking service company based in Menlo Park, California. Its website was launched on February 4, 2004, by Mark Zuckerberg along with Eduardo Saverin, Andrew McCollum, Dustin Moskovitz, and Chris Hughes. WhatsApp was founded in 2009 by Brian Acton and Jan Koum, both former employees of Yahoo!. WhatsApp Inc., based in Mountain View, California, which was acquired by Facebook in February 2014 for approximately US\$19.3 billion.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



India test-fires air launched version of BrahMos supersonic cruise missile

- In a display of its growing combat prowess, **the Indian Air Force successfully test-fired an air launched version of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile** from a Sukhoi fighter aircraft in the Bay of Bengal.
- The missile hit a sinking ship with deadly accuracy and the test-firing produced desired results. **The aircraft, belonging to the Thanjavur-based Tigersharks squadron**, took off from a frontline airbase in Punjab, and it was refuelled mid-air before the missile was released.

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

ISRO launched Earth Observation Satellite EOS01

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

ISRO is the space agency of India headquartered in the city of Bangalore. ISRO was formed in 1969. ISRO built India's first satellite, Aryabhata, which was launched by the Soviet Union on 19 April 1975. Dr Kailasavadivoo Sivan is current the chairperson of the ISRO. Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) or Sriharikota Range (SHAR) is a rocket launch centre operated by ISRO. It is located in Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.

IIT Madras Clean Water Centre joins hands with Japanese Firm TAKANO to bring new water technologies to India

- **The International Centre for Clean Water (ICCW) is going to collaborate with DG TAKANO, a Japanese firm, to introduce new clean water technologies in India.**
- A memorandum of understanding (MoU) to the partnership between ICCW and DG TAKANO was signed recently to collaborate on projects on clean water and to develop innovative products that will solve existing societal and environmental challenges in the area of clean and safe drinking water globally. India is one of the world's most water-stressed countries. According to UNICEF, due to waterborne diseases, India is facing an economic burden of approximately \$600 million per year.

22 IIT Guwahati researchers featured in list of world's top scientists

- Twenty two faculty members and researchers of Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati were featured in the list of the world's top two per cent scientists created by Stanford University of the USA.
- The list prepared by experts at Stanford University has names of over 1,00,000 scientists, whose published research manuscripts have accelerated progress in their respective fields and influenced productivity of other researchers as well. The institute's Director T G Sitharam and other faculty members were listed and ranked for their research publications citations for the year 2019 and their lifetime contribution to their specific fields of research.

World's First 6G Satellite Sent Into Orbit by China

- On November 6, 2020, China successfully launched the "world's first 6G satellite" into orbit, along with 12 other satellites using a single Long March 6 launch vehicle rocket from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center in the Shanxi Province.
- The aim of the launch is to test the technology. The satellite will "verify the terahertz (THz) communication technology in space, a breakthrough in space communication".

In telecommunications, 6G will be the sixth generation standard for wireless communications technologies supporting cellular data networks. It is the planned successor to 5G and will be likely to be significantly faster, at speeds of ~95 Gb/s. Like its predecessors, 6G networks will be broadband cellular networks, in which the service area is divided into small geographical areas called cells.

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The first iodine satellite of the world

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

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

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

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) is charged with coordinating and supervising all agencies and functions of the government relating directly to national security and the Indian armed forces. The President of India is the ceremonial commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the country. The Indian Armed Forces (including Indian Army, Indian Air Force, and Indian Navy) and Indian Coast Guard under the Ministry of Defence are primarily responsible for ensuring the territorial integrity of the nation. A military department was created by the supreme government of the British East India Company at Kolkata in the year 1776. Rajnath Singh is currently serving as the Defence Minister of India.

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

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

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

Team from Odisha selected for NASA Human Exploration Rover Challenge 2021

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

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

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

QRSAM Missile System Achieves Major Milestone

- Quick Reaction Surface to Air Missile (QRSAM) System has achieved a major milestone by a direct hit on to a Banshee Pilotless target aircraft at medium range and medium altitude. Ministry of Defence in a statement said that the missile launch took place from ITR Chandipur off the Odisha Coast.

- The missile is propelled by a single stage solid propellant rocket motor and uses all indigenous subsystems. The Missile is canisterised for transportation and launch using a mobile launcher capable of carrying 6 canisterised missiles.
- All QRSAM weapon system elements like Battery Multifunction Radar, Battery Surveillance Radar, Battery Command Post Vehicle and Mobile Launcher were deployed in the flight test.
- The system is capable of detecting and tracking targets on the move and engaging target with short halts and is designed to give air defence coverage against strike columns of Indian Army.
- Quick Reaction Surface-to-Air Missile (QRSAM) is a missile developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in association with Bharat Electronics Limited and Bharat Dynamics Limited for the Indian Army.

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

Indian Navy's fifth Scorpene class submarine Vagir launched

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

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

Indian astronomers collaborated with Nobel laureate on Thirty Meter Telescope project

- 2020 Physics Nobel Laureate Prof. Andrea Ghez had worked closely with Indian astronomers on the design of back-end instruments and possible science prospects of the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) project being installed at Maunakea in Hawaii, which can revolutionized the understanding of the universe and the enigmas in it.
- Besides, Prof. Ghez's remarkable contribution in the discovery of a super massive compact object at the center of our Galaxy along with Prof. Roger Penrose and Prof. Reinhard Genzel for which they shared the Nobel prize in physics, Prof. Ghez was deeply involved in the development of the related instrumentation and possible science prospects for the TMT, the next-generation observatory.

India's Param Siddhi bags 63rd rank in list of 500 most powerful supercomputers in world: DST

- Param Siddhi, the supercomputer established under the National Supercomputing Mission (NSM), has achieved 63rd rank in the list of 500 most powerful supercomputers in the world.
- "It is a historic first. India has one of the largest supercomputer infrastructures in the world and that is evidenced by the ranking that Param Siddhi-AI has received,"

The Government of India created an indigenous development programme as they had difficulty purchasing foreign supercomputers. As of June 2020, when ranking by number of supercomputer systems in the TOP500 list, India is ranked 23rd in the world. Pratyush and Mihir are the supercomputers established at Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune and National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecast (NCMRWF), Noida respectively. Pratyush and Mihir are the fastest supercomputer in India with a maximum speed of 6.8 PetaFlops at a total cost of INR 438.9 Crore.

L&T delivers first hardware for Gaganyaan to ISRO

- Larsen & Toubro Ltd. (L&T) has delivered the first hardware, a booster segment, for Gaganyaan Launch Vehicle to ISRO ahead of schedule.
- The segment was produced at L&T's Powai Aerospace Manufacturing Facility, in Mumbai meeting the enhanced quality and timeline requirements for India's maiden manned mission.

Gaganyaan is the Rs. 10,000-crore Indian human space flight scheduled for 2022. It is designed to have 3-7 crew members spend 3-7 days in space in a 400-km orbit. The first of the two pre-Gaganyaan flights with a humanoid will be launched in 2020-end along with some of the six shortlisted microgravity experiments. Four Indian Air Force (IAF) pilots, chosen as candidate-astronauts for India's first manned mission Gaganyaan, have begun training at the Gagarin Research and Test Cosmonaut Training Centre (GCTC) in Moscow, Russia.

Chandigarh PGIMER to get India's first dedicated animal house laboratory with advanced research facility

- The department of radiodiagnosis and imaging at the Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research is installing the country's first digital subtraction angiography (DSA) facility dedicated to basic research in animals.
- Professor MS Sandhu, head of the department of radiodiagnosis, said the facility will aim at testing new drugs and hardware that can potentially be used for the treatment of human disorders.
- The DSA machine is a sophisticated digital X-ray emitting machine, which helps in the precise evaluation of vessels inside the human or animal body once an iodine-based contrast is injected into a specific vessel; it gives an exquisite display of the vascular system of that particular organ and the blood flow pattern.

Delhi-born MIT grad's headset makes it to Time's 100 Best Inventions of 2020

- An AI-enabled 'mind-reading' headset designed by Arnav Kapur, an MIT graduate who grew up in Delhi, has been named as Time's 100 Best Inventions of 2020.
- A postdoctoral student at MIT, the 25-year-old Kapur has made the list in the experimental category for AlterEgo, an AI-enabled headset designed by him, his brother Shreyas and fellow researchers at the MIT Media Lab.
- The wearable device can be a boon for those with communication problems such as those with cerebral palsy and ALS by letting them communicate with the computer without saying a word, just by thinking of the instruction in their mind.
- "A major focus of this venture is to assist communication for folks with speech problems together with circumstances like ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis) and MS (several cases of sclerosis)," reads the overview of the venture on MIT's web site.

Sweden getting on board India's Venus mission with payload to explore planet

- Sweden is getting on board India's Venus orbiter mission 'Shukrayaan' with a scientific instrument to explore the planet. Swedish Institute of Space Physics (IRF) is engaged in the venture, its second collaborative project with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).
- "IRF's satellite instrument Venusian Neutrals Analyzer [VNA] will study how the charged particles from the Sun interact with the atmosphere and exosphere of the planet". "The new Venus mission means that the collaboration between IRF and ISRO continues".

- The VNA would be the **ninth generation of IRFs series of miniaturized ion and ENA (Energetic Neutral Atoms) instruments. The first generation was named SARA (Sub-keV Atom Reflecting Analyser) and was launched on board the Indian spacecraft Chandrayaan-1 that explored the Moon in 2008-2009.**
- **SARA consisted of two sensors.** One was a detector for energetic neutral atoms and the other was an instrument to measure the flow of ions in the solar wind.
- **The instrument studied how the plasma around the Moon interacts with the moon** where the surface is not protected by an atmosphere or a magnetic field.

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

SpaceX's Dragon docks at Space Station with four astronauts

- **The International Space Station welcomed four additional crew members with the arrival and docking of the SpaceX Dragon capsule after a 27-hour voyage.**
- **The spacecraft, dubbed "Resilience," made a so-called soft capture docking at 11:01 p.m. U.S. Eastern time.** The hard capture sequence completed about 15 minutes later, **setting the stage for the crew to enter the space station in a few hours to begin a six-month science mission aboard the orbiting lab.**
- **The mission, which followed a successful test flight by SpaceX earlier this year with two astronauts, is the first in the history of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration with a full crew ferried by a commercial transporter.** A second NASA vendor, Boeing Co., is working to **overcome delays caused by software flaws before shuttling astronauts to the space station, possibly in 2021.**
- **The crew is comprised of NASA astronauts Michael Hopkins, Shannon Walker and Victor Glover, and Japanese astronaut Soichi Noguchi. They will join two Russian cosmonauts, Sergey Kud-Sverchikov and Sergey Ryzhikov, and NASA astronaut Kate Rubins. That trio arrived last month on Russia's Soyuz spacecraft.**

Space Exploration Technologies Corp. (SpaceX) is an American aerospace manufacturer and space transportation services company headquartered in Hawthorne, California. SpaceX has developed several launch vehicles, the Starlink satellite constellation, the Dragon cargo spacecraft, and flown humans to the International Space Station on the SpaceX Dragon 2. Elon Reeve Musk is a business magnate and investor. He holds South African, Canadian, and U.S. citizenship and is the founder, CEO, and lead designer of SpaceX; co-founder, CEO, and product architect of Tesla, Inc.; co-founder and CEO of Neuralink; and co-founder of PayPal. As of October 2018, he has a net worth of \$19.8 billion and is listed by Forbes as the 46th-richest person in the world.

China launches robotic spacecraft to retrieve rocks from the moon

- **China launched a robotic spacecraft to bring back rocks from the moon in the first bid by any country to retrieve samples from the lunar surface since the 1970s, a mission that underscores Chinese ambitions in space.**
- **The Chang'e-5 mission, named after the ancient Chinese goddess of the moon, will seek to collect lunar material to help scientists understand more about the moon's origins and formation. The mission will test China's ability to remotely acquire samples from space, ahead of more complex missions.**

Europe signs \$102 million deal to bring space trash home

- **The European Space Agency says it is signing a 86 million-euro (USD 102 million) contract with a Swiss start-up company to bring a large piece of orbital trash back to Earth.**

- The deal with ClearSpace SA will lead to the “first active debris removal mission” in 2025, in which a custom-made spacecraft will capture and bring down part of a rocket once used to deliver a satellite into orbit.
- Experts have long warned that **hundreds of thousands of pieces of space debris circling the planet — including an astronaut’s lost mirror — pose a threat to functioning satellites and even the International Space Station.** Several teams are working on ways to tackle the problem.
- The object being removed from orbit is a so-called **Vespa payload adapter** that was used to hold and then release a satellite in 2013. It weighs about 112 kilograms (247 pounds).

DRDO flags off first Varunastra, a heavy weight torpedo

- **Bharat Dynamics announced that Dr G. Satheesh Reddy, Secretary, Department of Defence R&D and Chairman, DRDO flagged off the first Varunastra, the Heavy Weight Torpedo, being delivered to the Indian Navy, at a ceremony held at BDL, Visakhapatnam Unit on 21 November 2020.**
- Foundation stone was also laid by Secretary, Department of Defence R&D and Chairman, **DRDO for setting up of state-of-the-art Central Stores at BDL, Visakhapatnam Unit.**
- **Varunastra or the Heavy Weight Torpedo has been designed and developed by NSTL, Visakhapatnam. BDL, being the Production Agency, is manufacturing Varunastra at its Visakhapatnam Unit for the Indian Navy. This product is also being offered for export.**

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.**

Inventions/Discoveries

Earth-sized rogue planet found floating in the Milky Way

- Scientists have discovered in the Milky Way an Earth-sized free-floating rogue planet which does not orbit any star. Rogue planets are a bit uncommon as although many of the known exoplanets discovered so far do not resemble those in our solar system, they have one thing in common -- they all orbit a star.
- However, theories of planet formation and evolution predict the existence of free-floating (rogue) planets, gravitationally unattached to any star. Polish astronomers from the Astronomical Observatory of the University of Warsaw provided the first evidence for the existence of such planets in the Milky Way a few years ago.
- However, the newly-detected planet, detailed in the Astrophysical Journal Letters, is the smallest rogue world ever found, according to the scientists.
- “Our discovery demonstrates that low-mass free-floating planets can be detected and characterised using ground-based telescopes,” said study co-author Andrzej Udalski, Professor at University of Warsaw in Poland. Exoplanets can be only rarely directly observed. Usually, astronomers find planets using observations of the light from the planet’s host star.

All of the planets in our solar system orbit around the Sun. Planets that orbit around other stars are called exoplanets. Exoplanets are very hard to see directly with telescopes. They are hidden by the bright glare of the stars they orbit. An exoplanet or extrasolar planet is a planet outside the Solar System. The first possible evidence of an exoplanet was noted in 1917, but was not recognized as such. The first confirmation of detection occurred in 1992. As of 1 November 2020, there are 4,370 confirmed exoplanets in 3,230 systems, with 715 systems having more than one planet.

Scientists develop faster way of detecting antibiotic resistance in bacteria

- Researchers from the University College London in the UK have developed a new, quicker way of detecting drug resistance in bacteria, taking about 45 minutes, an advance that may help clinicians prescribe antibiotics correctly and reduce their misuse.
- According to the researchers, including those from the University of Sheffield in the UK, the standard method for detecting antibiotic resistance in bacterial samples is a relatively slow process that typically takes between 12 and 24 hours.

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

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

Scientists are developing emergency tools inspired by mysterious glowing rocks

- The mystery of illuminating rocks has intrigued scientists for centuries. The 1800s was the first time when geologists were enlightened about the afterglow of the hackmanite mineral or tenebrescent sodalite that causes bright pink glow when broken or in the dark.
- A new study around the same mystery details how certain hackmanites retain their natural lumination when they move into darker surroundings. The study was published in Chemistry of Materials, a peer-reviewed scientific journal, published by the American Chemical Society. The study is important as it helps understand the illumination of the rock in the dark to develop synthetic materials that can glow without any source of power and be used as emergency signals.

- A lot of research has been done with synthetic hackmanites that has **led to the creation of a material, which can emit a light longer than natural hackmanite**. However, the conditions affecting the glow are yet to be discovered, said materials chemist Isabella Norrbo from the University of Turku in Finland.

IIT Guwahati scientists make breakthrough in developing efficient catalytic systems for biofuel, lactic acid production

- **IIT Guwahati Scientists make Breakthrough in Developing Efficient Catalytic Systems for Biofuel and Lactic Acid Production**
- **A research team led by IIT Guwahati Professors, Dr. Akshai Kumar Alape Seetharam**, of the Department of Chemistry and Centre for Nanotechnology, **Dr. Hemant Kumar Srivastava**, currently at **National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER) Guwahati**, research scholars Kanu Das, Moumita Dutta, Srimyati Jagannatha Prathapa, Eileen Yasmin and Dr. Babulal Das, have **formulated efficient “pincer” catalytic systems that transform industrial/biomass wastes into valuable chemicals**.
- Tiny amounts of these **“pincer catalysts” repeatedly convert large amounts of industrial waste such as glycerol into lactic acid and hydrogen**. Such catalysts also efficiently convert bioethanol, a low-energy density fuel, into high-energy density butanol.

‘Super Planet’ discovered by scientists using radio telescope for the first time

- In a recent study, astronomers have **discovered a cold ‘brown dwarf’ also known as a ‘super planet’-BDR J1750+3809** with the help of a radio telescope. Scientists have **nicknamed the faint super-planet as ‘Elegast’** that has remained elusive to standard infrared survey methods. It was **first identified by using data from the Low-Frequency Array (LOFAR) radio telescope in the Netherlands**.
- **Generally, brown dwarfs are referred to as failed stars or super planets** because they are too small to be considered stars, yet too big to be considered planets. The substellar object is **usually discovered by infrared sky surveys**, however, **Elegast was the first substellar object to be detected** using a radio telescope, according to a statement from the University of Hawaii.
- **After discovering Elegast using the LOFAR radio telescope**, scientists later **confirmed their observations using the International Gemini Observatory in Hawaii and Chile and the NASA Infrared Telescope Facility**, which is operated by the University of Hawaii.

A super-Earth is an extrasolar planet with a mass higher than Earth's, but substantially below those of the Solar System's ice giants, Uranus and Neptune, which are 14.5 and 17 times Earth's, respectively. The term “super-Earth” refers only to the mass of the planet, and so does not imply anything about the surface conditions or habitability. The Solar System contains no known super-Earths, because Earth is the largest terrestrial planet in the Solar System.

‘World’s smallest atom-memory unit created’

- **Researchers have created the smallest memory device yet**, an advance that may lead to **faster, smaller, and more energy-efficient electronic chips for consumer electronics and brain-inspired computing**.
- **The scientists from the University of Texas at Austin in the US also found the physics that unlocks dense memory storage capabilities for these tiny devices**. **Though they used the compound molybdenum disulfide -- also known as MoS₂ -- as the primary nanomaterial in their study**, the researchers believe the discovery could apply to hundreds of related atomically thin materials.
- **The original device -- dubbed “atomristor” by the researchers -- was at the time the thinnest memory storage device ever recorded**, with a single atomic layer of thickness. However, shrinking the memory device is not just about making it thinner but also building it with a smaller cross-sectional area, they added.
- **The new device falls under the category of memristors -- an area of memory research, centred around electrical components with the ability to modify resistance between its two terminals without a need for a third terminal in the middle**. According to the researchers, these can be smaller than currently used memory devices and boast more storage capacity.

IIT Guwahati develops free-space optical communication system

- A research team led by IIT Guwahati faculty, Dr. Bosanta Ranjan Boruah, Department of Physics, IIT Guwahati, and Dr. Santanu Konwar, presently an Assistant Professor at the Department of Physics, Abhayapuri College, Assam, has developed a novel free-space optical communication system for information transfer.
- In free-space communication, data in the form of voice, text or image is transmitted using light wirelessly rather than through optical fibres and it represents the next generation of communications technology. The results of this pathbreaking work has recently been published in communications Physics.

Free-space optical communication (FSO) is an optical communication technology that uses light propagating in free space to wirelessly transmit data for telecommunications or computer networking. “Free space” means air, outer space, vacuum, or something similar. This contrasts with using solids such as optical fiber cable. The technology is useful where the physical connections are impractical due to high costs or other considerations.

NASA’s Parker Solar Probe Captures Sungrazing Comet for the First Time

- NASA’s Parker Solar Probe, which is designed to image Sun’s outer atmosphere and the solar wind, has recently captured a sungrazing comet, confirming the ability of the spacecraft to observe “hard-to-see” comets.
- The image of the sungrazing comet was captured from the Parker Solar Probe’s WISPR instrument. These kinds of comets are hard to observe from Earth or observatories other than NASA and ESA’s Solar and Heliospheric Observatory (SOHO), which was launched in 1995 to study the Sun.

Parker Solar Probe (Solar Probe, Solar Probe Plus or Solar Probe+) is a NASA Space Probe launched in 2018 with the mission of making observations of the outer corona of the Sun. It became the first NASA spacecraft named after a living person, honoring physicist Eugene Newman Parker, professor at the University of Chicago.

Health/Disease

First ever vaccine listed under WHO emergency use

- WHO listed the nOPV2 vaccine (Bio Farma, Indonesia) for emergency use to address the rising cases of a vaccine-derived polio strain in a number of African and East Mediterranean countries.
- Countries in WHO's Western Pacific and South-East Asia regions are also affected by these outbreaks. The emergency use listing, or EUL, is the first of its kind for a vaccine and paves the way for potential listing of COVID-19 vaccines.
- The world has made incredible progress toward polio eradication, reducing polio cases by 99.9% in the last 30 years. But the last steps to ending this disease are proving the most difficult, particularly with continuing outbreaks of circulating vaccine-derived polio viruses (cVDPVs).
- cVDPVs are rare and occur if the weakened strain of the poliovirus contained in the oral polio vaccine (OPV) circulates among under-immunized populations for a long time. If not enough children are immunized against polio, the weakened virus can pass between individuals and over time genetically revert to a form that can cause paralysis. Type 2 cVDPVs are currently the most prevalent form of the vaccine-derived virus.

Poliomyelitis, commonly shortened to polio, is an infectious disease caused by the poliovirus. In about 0.5 percent of cases, it moves from the gut to affect the central nervous system and there is muscle weakness resulting in a flaccid paralysis. This can occur over a few hours to a few days. The first polio vaccine was developed in the 1950s by Jonas Salk. Soon after, Albert Sabin developed an oral vaccine, which has become the world standard. Only two countries worldwide continue to see wild poliovirus transmission: Pakistan and Afghanistan.

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

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

India's first child to have undergone liver transplant set to become doctor

- Doctors at Indraprastha Apollo Hospital in the national capital are eagerly waiting for the coming April, as Kandasamy, who had made history to undergo the country's first paediatric liver transplant as a 20-month child in 1998, will take the Hippocratic oath.
- Kandasamy, who belongs to Kanchipuram in Tamil Nadu, is full of beans about his feat.

Thane: Jupiter Hospital performs India's first intestine transplant

- Jupiter Hospital in Thane has successfully conducted India's first pediatric living donor small intestinal transplant on a Covid-19 patient whose intestine had been affected by the viral infection.
 - The transplant was performed on nine-year-old Om after his intestines were found to be affected by thrombosis and gangrene. According to the hospital management, the boy was referred to Jupiter Hospital in Thane after removal of his intestine.
 - An antibodies test and a bowel RT-PCR had showed Covid infection in the removed organ. This brought to light the fact that the boy and his father had tested positive for Covid-19 with mild symptoms a month ago.
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ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT



30 Indian cities will face ‘water risk’ by 2050: report

- Nearly a third of the 100 cities in the world susceptible to ‘water risk’ — defined as losses from battling droughts to flooding — are in India, according to the WWF Water Risk Filter. **Jaipur topped the list of Indian cities, followed by Indore and Thane. Mumbai, Kolkata and Delhi also featured on the list.**
- This is an online tool, co-developed by the Worldwide Fund for Nature that helps evaluate the severity of risk places faced by graphically illustrating various factors that can contribute to water risk. **The global list includes cities such as Beijing, Jakarta, Johannesburg, Istanbul, Hong Kong, Mecca and Rio de Janeiro. China accounts for almost half the cities.**
- According to the scenarios in the WWF Water Risk Filter, **the 100 cities that are expected to suffer the greatest rise in water risk by 2050 are home to at least 350 million people** as well as nationally and globally important economies. **Globally, populations in areas of high-water risk could rise from 17% in 2020 to 51% by 2050.**

Wildlife Board clears plan for vulture conservation

- The National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) has cleared a plan for conserving vultures. Saliiently, **the drugs that are used to treat cattle and known to poison vultures will be banned** by the Drugs Controller General of India.
- **Diclofenac, a drug used to treat cattle, was linked to kidney failure in vultures** and a decline in the bird’s population. Though the drug was banned in 2006, it is reportedly still available for use.
- A study by the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds’ Centre for Conservation Science **found that along with Diclofenac, there were several other drugs that were potentially toxic to vultures being used by vets for treating cattle.** The drugs make their way into the vulture’s system as they feed on carcasses.
- Three of India’s vulture species of the genus ‘Gyps’— **the long-billed (Gyps indicus) and the slender-billed (G. tenuirostris) had declined by 97%, while in the white-rumped (G. bengalensis) declined nearly 99% between 1992 and 2007,** according to an earlier estimate by the BNHS
- The ‘Action Plan for Vulture Conservation 2020-2025’ also proposes to establish Vulture Conservation Breeding Centres in Uttar Pradesh, Tripura, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. There would also be a conservation breeding programme for the Red Headed vulture and Egyptian vulture, and **at least one “Vulture Safe Zone” in every State** for the conservation of the remnant populations.

States to get air pollution funds based on meeting ‘performance targets’

- The Central government’s decision to release only half of its budgetary allotment for combating air pollution was **because of its plan to link the money disbursed to the States achieving certain ‘performance targets’.** Allocation for this purpose is **Rupees 4,400 crore for 2020-2021** and **parameters for the incentives would be notified by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate change.”**

- However, the Centre, based on the recommendations of the 15th Finance Commission, released exactly half — **Rs. 2200 crore—to 15 States**. The States, in turn, have to release money to local municipal bodies in 42 cities to take steps to monitor and mitigate air pollution.

Australia is Building the World's First Coral Conservation Facility

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

Union Government five-year action plan to save vultures, conservation centers in 5 states among host of ideas to protect vultures

- **Union government five-year action plan to save vultures, conservation centers in 5 states** among host of ideas to protect vultures.
- **Nine species of vultures are recorded from India. Out of these, five belong to the genus Gyps:** the Oriental White-backed (OWBV) *Gyps bengalensis*, the Long-billed (LBV) *G. indicus*, the Slender-billed (SBV) *G. tenuirostris*, the Himalayan Vulture (HV) *Gyps himalayensis*, and the Eurasian Griffon (EG) *Gyps fulvus*. OWBV, LBV and SBV are residents, HV is largely wintering and EG is strictly wintering.
- **The other four genera are monotypic.** These include the Red-headed Vulture (RHV) *Sarcogyps calvus*, the Egyptian Vulture (EV) *Neophron percnopterus*, the Bearded Vulture (BV) *Gypaetus barbatus*, and the Cinereous vulture (CV) *Aegypius calvus*. RHV, EV and BV are residents while CV is strictly wintering. A sub-species of EV *Neophron percnopterus percnopterus* is largely wintering.
- **Vultures were very common in India till the 1980s.** During this period, the population of the three resident Gyps species of vultures (OWBV, LBV and SBV) in the country was estimated at 40 million individuals.
- **But their populations crashed** in the last couple of decades and the **most common vultures - Oriental white-backed, Longbilled, and Slender-billed - declined by more than 96 percent** in just a single decade (1993-2003).

New species of burrowing frog named after Bengaluru

- A group of researchers documenting “**Amphibians in the Deccan Plateau parts of Karnataka**” encountered a **new species of frog** and published the findings in a journal. **This new species — Sphaerotheca Bengaluru — is being named after the city to highlight the lacunae** in documentation of amphibians from non-forested areas and to restore frog habitats in Bengaluru.
- The researchers said in a press release that the **new species was described based “on the morphological differences and molecular approach with the known species of the borrowing frogs (across the distribution range, South Asia)”**.

New species of gecko found in the Eastern Ghats

- **A new species of lizard, the smallest known Indian gekkonid, has been discovered in the Eastern Ghats.** Studies show that the species belonged to the genus *Cnemaspis*.
- **In India, 45 diverse species of Cnemaspis have been found, of which 34 are from the Western Ghats.** The newly discovered dwarf gecko - *Cnemaspis avasabinae* is the twelfth species to be discovered outside the Western Ghats and also the **first species reported from the Velikonda Range in Andhra Pradesh**. This discovery suggests that the genus may be even more widely distributed than previously thought.

- The new species was sighted in a dry evergreen forest among the rocks beneath a small stream at a height of less than 200 metres above sea level and measured less than 2.9 cm (snout to vent length).

Eastern Ghats are discontinuous range of mountain set along Eastern coast. Starting at West Bengal, Eastern Ghats pass through states like Odisha, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. These Ghats are ripped through by rivers like Godawari, Mahanadi, Krishna and Kaveri, the four major rivers of South India.

New species of vine snakes discovered

- A team of researchers from the Centre for Ecological Sciences (CES), Indian Institute of Science (IISc), after extensive sampling across peninsular India, have discovered new species of vine snakes in the region.
- Led by former IISc student Ashok Mallik, working as part of his doctoral research, the team carried out field visits across India to collect morphological data, tissue samples and specimens to understand the patterns of distribution and diversification of vine snakes.
- Vine snakes are known to be among the most common snakes in peninsular India, found even in many peri-urban areas wherever there is some greenery, and in the Western Ghats.

Maharashtra's proposal to study distribution, population of Arabian Sea humpback whales

- Maharashtra is the third state along the country's west coast, which will join the studies on the distribution and population of Arabian Sea humpback whales. The initiative has already been undertaken by Karnataka and Goa, as part of the Union Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change's (MoEFCC) endangered species recovery programme.
- The MoEFCC said they had approved a proposal to support Maharashtra's plans to use a combination of acoustic and visual monitoring methods to bridge the information gap for the whale species in the Indian waters. Maharashtra seeks to implement a community-based monitoring network to report sightings and strandings of such marine species.

Nagpur's Gorewada zoo gets first tiger for Indian safari

- The Gorewada International Zoo in Nagpur got its first tiger for the Indian safari, work for which has almost been completed. Rajkumar, a 5.5-year-old male captured from Tumsar in Bhandara district last year, was transferred to the new zoo from Gorewada Rescue Centre, where it has been staying since its capture.
- The Central Zoo Authority (CZA) has granted permission for two tigers, seven leopards and six sloth bears initially for the Indian safari, which is likely to be inaugurated next month.

New Chinese submersible reaches Earth's deepest ocean trench

- China livestreamed footage of its new manned submersible parked at the bottom of the Mariana Trench part of a historic mission into the deepest underwater valley on the planet.
- The "Fendouzhe", or "Striver", descended more than 10,000 metres (about 33,000 feet) into the submarine trench in the western Pacific Ocean with three researchers on board.

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

- A team of Indian, Chinese, Indonesian and Thai researchers have found a new genus of frogs in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and India's northeast, according to Zootaxa, an international animal taxonomy journal. The genus has been named Rohanixalus after Sri Lankan taxonomist Rohan Pethiyagoda.
- A genus is a category of classification of animals, plants above a species and below a family. It can include one or many similar species.
- Rohanixalus is the 20th recognised genus of the Rhacophoridae family and comprises eight out of the 422 known Old World Tree Frog species in Asia and Africa.
- The researchers studied aspects such as external morphology, calls, breeding biology; etc of tree frog species distributed across South, Southeast, and East Asia and confirmed that they represent a new genus.

- Frogs from the genus are characterised by a small and slender body (about 2 cm to 3 cm long), a pair of contrastingly coloured lateral lines on either side of the body, and other distinct behavioural traits.

Desert finch sighted for the first time in India

- Birdwatchers photographed a desert finch in Sirsa district, marking what is possibly the first sighting of this avian species in the country.
- As a passerine bird, native to southern Eurasia, the finch typically resides at higher altitudes in south-west Pakistan, particularly Balochistan. However, it has not been previously reported from India.

Two white snakes, first of their species in the world, found in Nepal

- Two white-coloured kraits (of the genus **Bungarus**) discovered during rescue calls in Nepal's southeastern region of Province No. 2, are the first such recorded cases in their species. Kraits are known to be some of the most venomous snakes found in the Indian subcontinent.

Maharashtra: Uran to get its first mangrove park by June 2021

- The Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT), the largest port container terminal in India, plans to build a 200-hectare (ha) mangrove park at Belpada in Navi Mumbai's Uran by June 2021. The area, along with other eco-sensitive zones in Uran, has faced the problem of debris dumping that has threatened mangrove patches in the Raigad district.
- The development of a mangrove park, the first in Uran, has been a longstanding demand by environmentalists. It has also been suggested by the State Wetland and Mangrove Grievance Redressal Committee appointed by the Bombay high court in January 2019.

Lonar Lake, Sur Sarovar declared as Ramsar sites

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

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

SPORTS



Sports Personalities in News

MotoGP 2020: Joan Mir wins European MotoGP

- Spain's Joan Mir won European MotoGP in Valencia, his first victory in the premier category, to close in on the title after rival Fabio Quartararo crashed on the opening lap.
- Mir took advantage of Quartararo's spill to widen his lead to 37 points with just two races left as compatriot Alex Rins ensured a one-two finish for Suzuki, the first for the Japanese manufacturer since 1982.

Daniil Medvedev defeats Alexander Zverev in Paris Masters final to clinch his 8th ATP title

- In Tennis, world number five Daniil Medvedev defeated Alexander Zverev 5-7, 6-4, 6-1 in the Paris Masters final to clinch his eighth ATP title.
- World number seven, Zverev of Germany, who beat World number two Rafael Nadal in semi-finals, took an early advantage. But Russian third seed Medvedev rallied to win in two hours seven minutes. He became the fourth Russian to capture the Paris Masters title after Marat Safin, Nikolay Davydenko and Karen Khachanov.

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

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

ATP Finals: Dominic Thiem defeats 20-time Grand Slam champion Rafael Nadal

- In tennis, Dominic Thiem defeated 20-time Grand Slam champion Rafael Nadal in straight sets at the ATP Finals in London.
- World number three Thiem of Austria clinched victory over world number two Spaniard Nadal.

India's first professional para badminton academy to open in Lucknow

- Dronacharya award winner Gaurav Khanna is credited with bringing para badminton into the spotlight in India. So, it's only fitting that the country's first professional academy for para badminton is named after him.
- Called Gaurav Khanna Excellia Badminton Academy (GKBA), this is India's first professional academy dedicated to para badminton and will formally open in December this year.

Diego Maradona, Argentine football's greatest icon, dies at 60

- Argentinian football legend and winner of the 1986 World Cup, Diego Maradona, has passed away at home in Tigre after suffering a heart attack. Widely regarded as one of the greatest players of all time, he was one of the two joint winners of the FIFA Player of the 20th Century award.
- A precocious talent, Maradona was given the nickname “El Pibe de Oro” (“The Golden Boy”), a name that stuck with him throughout his career. In his international career with Argentina, he earned 91 caps and scored 34 goals. Maradona played in four FIFA World Cups, including the 1986 World Cup in Mexico, where he captained Argentina and led them to victory over West Germany in the final, and won the Golden Ball as the tournament's best player. In the 1986 World Cup quarter final, he scored both goals in a 2–1 victory over England that entered football history for two different reasons. The first goal was an unpenalized handling foul known as the “Hand of God”, while the second goal followed a 60 m (66 yd) dribble past five England players, voted “Goal of the Century” by FIFA.com voters in 2002. He made his full international debut at age 16, against Hungary, on 27 February 1977.

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

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

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

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

Daniil Medvedev beat Dominic Thiem to win ATP Tour Finals in London

- In Tennis, Daniil Medvedev beat Dominic Thiem to win ATP Tour Finals held in London, the biggest title of his career. Thiem was denied the title second year in a row.

ICC nominates Kohli, Ashwin for Men's Player of the Decade Award

- The talismanic Virat Kohli and Ravichandran Ashwin were nominated for the coveted ICC Men's Player of the Decade Award with the Indian captain featuring in all five men's categories for his incredible run in the last 10 years. Besides the Indian duo, Joe Root (England), Kane Williamson (New Zealand), Steve Smith (Australia), AB de Villiers (South Africa), and Kumar Sangakkara (Sri Lanka) are the other contenders in this category. Kohli and Rohit also featured in the Men's T20I Player of the Decade category.
- Kohli has also been nominated in the Men's Test Player of the Decade and ICC Spirit of Cricket Award of the Decade categories. Besides Kohli, Dhoni also found a place in the ICC Spirit of Cricket Award of the Decade award category.

New Zealand's Greg Barclay elected as new chairman of International Cricket Council

- New Zealand's Greg Barclay has been elected as the new independent chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC). The head of the New Zealand Cricket team, NZC, Barclay beat Imran Khwaja in the second round of voting. Imran was interim chairman after Shashank Manohar stepped down from the post in July this year. Barclay is the second independent chairman of the world body, after Shashank Manohar of India.

International Cricket Council was founded as the Imperial Cricket Conference in 1909 by representatives from England, Australia and South Africa, renamed the International Cricket Conference in 1965.

Sport Events

BCCI announces Jio as title sponsor of Women's T20 Challenge 2020

- Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has announced Reliance Jio as the title sponsor of the Women's T20 Challenge 2020.
- This is the first time a sponsor is partnering with the BCCI exclusively for the women's counterpart to the IPL. The Board announced the development in a post on the IPL T20 website. BCCI Chairman Sourav Ganguly said the Board grows the game of cricket across all formats, one key area of focus has been to grow the women's game.

The 2020 Women's T20 Challenge, branded as Jio Women's T20 Challenge, was the third season of the Women's T20 Challenge, a Twenty20 cricket tournament established by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) in 2018. Like the previous edition, it was a three-team tournament consisting of a group stage of three matches, followed by a final. The tournament was held from 4 to 9 November 2020 in Sharjah Cricket Stadium in the UAE. IPL Trailblazers beat IPL Supernovas by 16 runs in the final and won their maiden title.

Ladakh to set up snow ski institute in Kargil to promote winter sports

- The Ladakh administration will be setting up a snow ski institute along with other adventure sports facilities in Kargil district similar to Gulmarg's Institute of Skiing and Mountaineering (IISM) to promote winter sports in the Union Territory.

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

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

FIFA cancels Women's Under-17 football World Cup; India to host 2022 edition

- The Women's Under-17 football World Cup in India, which was initially postponed to next year due to COVID-19 pandemic, was cancelled by FIFA but India was handed the hosting rights of the 2022 edition.
- The FIFA cancelled both the women's U-17 World Cup and U-20 World Cup which were scheduled to be held in India and Costa Rica respectively but handed both the countries the hosting rights of the 2022 editions.
- All India Football Federation (AIFF) president Praful Patel said the local organising committee is ready to start afresh for hosting the 2022 edition.

ICC postpones women's T20 World Cup from 2022 to 2023

- The ICC had postponed the 50 over Women's World Cup slated in New Zealand from 2021 to 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and women's T20 cricket is also set to make its debut in the 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games.

AWARDS



First Indian Law Student Awarded US and Indian Patents

- In an unprecedented development, **an Indian law student of O.P. Jindal Global University (JGU)** has received **both the Indian and the US Patent for a technology he invented entitled ‘Method and System for Managing the Usage of a Plurality of Battery Units to Power an Electric Vehicle’.**
- **This technology aims to make the usage of electric vehicles more practical, flexible and economical in India and other developing countries. Mr. Devansh Manoj Jalan is currently pursuing his law degree at the Jindal Global Law School.**
- **Mr. Devansh worked on developing this technology for a while and in July 2019, filed for a provisional patent with the Indian Patent Office.** After fine-tuning of the technology, he applied for patents in the Indian Patent Office and in the United States Patent and Trademark Office. After due process and hearings, Devansh received the US Patent in September 2020 and the Indian Patent in October 2020.

Karsh Kale, Salvage Audio Collective win best music for “Gully Boy” at Asian Film Awards

- **Filmmaker Zoya Akhtar’s drama “Gully Boy” has bagged the best original music award for musician Karsh Kale and the Salvage Audio Collective at the 14th Annual Asian Film Awards.**
- **“Gully Boy” featured Ranveer Singh as an up-and-coming rapper who sets out to achieve his dream by rhyming about his life on the Mumbai streets. The film, also starring Alia Bhatt, Kalki Koechlin, Siddhant Chaturvedi and Vijay Verma, released to critical acclaim last year and was one of the biggest hits of 2019.**

Six women led startups win COVID-19 Shri Shakti Challenge organized by MyGov

- **Six women led startups have won COVID-19 Shri Shakti Challenge organized by MyGov in collaboration with UN Women.**
- **MyGov launched the COVID-19 Shri Shakti Challenge in April this year in collaboration with UN Women with an objective to encourage and involve women led startups to come up with innovative solutions that can help in the fight against COVID-19.**
- **The challenge received an overwhelming response with a total of 1 thousand 265 entries, from across the nation. After thorough screening, 25 startups were shortlisted for presentations to the Jury.** All the 25 selected startups presented their solutions to the Jury which evaluated the solutions proposed by the startups on the parameters that included innovation, usability, relevance and impact of their idea on the society.
- **11 finalists were chosen for the next stage who were all provided a prize money of 75 thousand rupees each to further develop their ideas.**
- **The Jury selected top 3 entries as winners, and in view of the high quality of solutions presented, decided to recognize 3 additional entries as ‘Promising Solutions’.** In addition to the earlier announced reward of Rs. 5 lakh for the top 3 winners, UN Women also rewarded Rs. 2 lakh each to the 3 startups chosen for their promising solutions.

Pune tech expert wins Emmett Leahy award

- The Emmett Leahy award for 2020 was conferred on Dinesh Katre from the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), Pune.
- Katre, who heads the Human-Centered Design and Computing Group at C-DAC, is the first Indian to bag this award. Established in the US in 1967, this international award recognises contributions of persons in the field of records and information management.
- Among the many works involving e-library and archiving systems, Katre led the team that developed Digitalaya. It is a tool using which, a repository comprising over 2 Petaflop audio-visual content comprising dance, music, drama and cinema was created.

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

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

Kenya-based teacher awarded 2020 Ahimsa Award in UK

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

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

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

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

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

Scottish writer Douglas Stuart wins Booker prize for novel Shuggie Bain

- Scottish writer Douglas Stuart has won the 2020 Booker Prize for fiction with his debut novel Shuggie Bain, which described a boy growing up in Glasgow in the 1980s with a mother battling addiction.

- The awards ceremony saw six shortlisted authors joining virtually and included messages from former US President Barack Obama, the Duchess of Cornwall and former Booker winners Kazuo Ishiguro, Margaret Atwood and Bernardine Evaristo.
- Stuart, 44, won the prestigious 50,000 pound (\$66,000) award for his first published novel, the product of a decade of work. He was the only U.K.-born author on a U.S.-dominated list of six finalists for the prize, which is open to English-language novels from around the world.

Man Booker Prize for Fiction (formerly known as the Booker–McConnell Prize and commonly known simply as the Booker Prize) is a literary prize awarded each year for the best original novel written in the English language and published in the UK. The prize was originally known as the Booker–McConnell Prize, after the company Booker, McConnell Ltd began sponsoring the event in 1968; it became commonly known as the “Booker Prize” or simply “the Booker”. In 1970, Bernice Rubens became the first woman to win the Booker Prize, for *The Elected Member*.

NFDB confers four awards to Assam for success in fishery sector

- The National Fisheries Development Board has conferred four awards to Assam for the success in the fishery sector. Assam has got the best state award under the category of best hilly and North Eastern state.
- Assam Apex Cooperative Fish Marketing and Processing Federation Limited (FISHFED) has been selected under the category of best hilly and North eastern government organization.
- On the other hand, Nagaon district has been selected under best hilly and North Eastern district category while a Nalbari based farmer Amal Medhi is selected under hilly and North Eastern fish farmer category.

Karnataka Governor presents Doctor of Science honorary doctorate upon ISRO Chairman

- Karnataka Governor Vajubhai Vala presented Doctor of Science honorary doctorate upon ISRO Chairman K Sivan. In a simple ceremony in Bengaluru, the Doctorate was conferred on the ISRO chief. The Visvesvaraya Technological University has conferred the doctorate to him.
- The Governor highly praised the role of ISRO in defining our Space programme and the social role that it has played in the country.

“My Octopus Teacher” bags top tve global sustainability film award

- Documentary “My Octopus Teacher”, which reinforces the importance of staying in touch with nature, has won the founder’s prize at the ninth tve Global Sustainability Film Awards.
- The film, directed by Pippa Ehrlich and James Reed, vividly relates the bonding and the experiences that filmmaker and diver Craig Foster had in the one year he spent in swimming in the company of an octopus.
- This year, Difficult Dialogues, an international forum that discusses pressing issues of worldwide importance each year, partnered with tve Global Sustainability Film Awards for a five-day summit from November 16 that included dialogues, debates and movies and focused on sustainability.
- The tve GSFA Founder’s Award for Sustainability on the Big Screen is a nominated category award and was instituted by Surina Narula in 2017.

Wildlife preserve straddling Assam, Bhutan gets tiger conservation award

- A 1,500-sq. km. conservation area straddling the India-Bhutan border has received the TX2 Conservation Excellence Award for 2020. TX2 stands for “Tigers times two”, signalling the goal to double the population of wild tigers by 2022.
- The recognition was for the Transboundary Manas Conservation Area or TraMCA comprising the 500 sq. km. Manas National Park in Assam and the 1,057-sq. km. Royal Manas National Park in Bhutan.
- India and Bhutan are among 13 countries working towards TX2, a goal that the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) had set through the Global Tiger Initiative, Global Tiger Forum and other critical platforms.

- The award recognises a site that has achieved excellence in two or more of five themes: Tiger and prey population monitoring and research (tiger translocation/prey augmentation); effective site management; enhanced law enforcement, protection and ranger welfare improvement; community-based conservation, benefits and human-wildlife conflict mitigation and habitat and prey management.
- According to a WWF statement, the award was given to TraMCA for efforts to increase the tiger population. The number of the striped cat in the Indian Manas increased from nine in 2010 to 25 in 2018 while that in the Bhutan Manas more than doubled from 12 in 2008 to 26 in 2018.

Education Minister inaugurated Lilavati Awards, 2020

- Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal “Nishank” virtually launched Lilavati Award-2020: AICTE’s Innovative education program to empower women. With women empowerment as the theme, the objective of the award is to create awareness about issues like sanitation, hygiene, health, nutrition, literacy, and employment among women.
- He said that the theme of the award -‘women empowerment’ has always been the top priority of the government. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Government has launched several welfare schemes for the overall development of girl child and women such as Sukanya Samridhi Yojana, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, and CBSE Udaan Scheme.
- The Minister added that with the Lilavati Award-2020, AICTE has once again championed the cause of women empowerment and paved a way towards equality in education and innovation.

Education Minister RP Nishank receives Vatayan Lifetime Achievement Award

- Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank has been conferred with the Vatayan Lifetime Achievement Award for his contribution in the field of literature.
- Mr Pokhriyal received the award at Vatayan-UK felicitation ceremony organised through video conferencing by the British Institution Group in England.
- The Vatayan International Awards are presented by the Vatayan-UK organization in London to honor poets, writers, and artists for their works in the respective fields.

‘Jallikattu’ is India’s official Oscar entry in the International Feature Film category

- Malayalam feature “Jallikattu”, directed by Lijo Jose Pellissery, has been selected as India’s official entry for the International Feature Film category at the 93rd Academy Awards, the Film Federation of India (FFI) announced. Jallikattu is the third Malayalam film after Guru (1997) and Adaminte Makan Abu (2011) to be chosen as the country’s official entry for the Oscars.
- Jallikattu will certainly face stiff competition at the Oscars, but do not be surprised if it becomes the first Indian film to get that honour after Lagaan in 2001. Before that, Mother India (1957) and Salaam Bombay! (1988) had made the grade.
- Based on writer S. Hareesh’s acclaimed story Maoist, the film that explores the human psyche follows a buffalo that escapes the butcher’s hold when he is about to slaughter it. The beast runs helter-skelter, leaving a trail of destruction in its wake.

Academy Awards, also known as the Oscars are a set of 24 awards for artistic and technical merit in the American film industry, given annually by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS), to recognize excellence in cinematic achievements as assessed by the Academy’s voting membership. The awards were first presented in 1929 at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, USA.

Delhi Crime is India’s First Winner at International Emmys

- India has won its first International Emmy. Delhi Crime — the Netflix police procedural series created by Richie Mehta — was awarded Best Drama Series at the 2020 International Emmy Awards, which took place socially distanced and from the comfort of everyone’s homes due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. Delhi Crime triumphed over UK’s Criminal UK, Germany’s Charité, and Argentina’s The Bronze Garden.

- Netflix's India Original series "Delhi Crime", helmed by Indian-Canadian director Richie Mehta, has bagged the best drama series honour at the 48th International Emmy Awards.
- Delhi Crime season 1 — released in March last year — is, in my opinion, the best Indian original series on Netflix, and it's only fitting that it would be the first Indian series to win an International Emmy.

An Emmy Award, or simply Emmy, is an American award that recognizes excellence in the television industry, and is the equivalent of an Academy Award (for film), the Tony Award (for theater), and the Grammy Award (for music). The first Emmy Awards ceremony took place on January 25, 1949, at the Hollywood Athletic Club, but solely to honor shows produced and aired locally in the Los Angeles area. Shirley Dinsdale has the distinction of receiving the very first Emmy Award for Most Outstanding Television Personality, during that first awards ceremony. The term "Emmy" is a French alteration of the television crew slang term "Immy", the nickname for an "image orthicon", a camera tube used in TV production.

UN award for Bhutan's Queen Mother

- In a first for the Himalayan Kingdom, and a rare honour in the sub-continent, Bhutan's Queen Mother Gyalyum Sangay Choden Wangchuck has been awarded the United Nations Population Award in the individual category for 2020 for her work on sexual health and ending gender violence.
- The awardee in the organisational category is HelpAge India that works on elder care. Only two Indians have been awarded in the past four decades since the award was established in 1981: former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1983 and industrialist-philanthropist J.R.D.Tata in 1992.

PERSONS IN NEWS

Priyanka Radhakrishnan has become the first person of Indian origin to become a Minister of the Crown

- Priyanka Radhakrishnan has become the first person of Indian origin to become a Minister of the Crown under the new Cabinet line-up announced by Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern.
- Although outside the Cabinet, Ms Radhakrishnan has been appointed Minister for Diversity, Inclusion and Ethnic Communities, Minister for Youth, Minister of Community and Voluntary Sector and Associated Minister for Social Development and Employment.

India garners big victory at the UN, candidate secures position in key committee

- In a tightly contested election at the United Nations(UN) in New York, Indian diplomat Vidisha Maitra was elected to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ).
- Maitra was India's candidate for the only post in the committee from the Asia Pacific Group. The other candidate was from Iraq. Maitra clinched victory by a 126-64 vote count.

Indian-American lawyer becomes first South Asian woman to be elected to New York State Assembly

- A 38-year-old Indian-American lawyer, Jenifer Rajkumar has become the first South Asian woman to be elected to the New York State Assembly. Jenifer Rajkumar, a Democrat, defeated her Republican rival Giovanni Perna.

Niraj Antani becomes first Indian-American to be elected to Ohio state Senate

- Niraj Antani, a 29-year-old Republican, has created history by becoming the first Indian-American to be elected to the Ohio state Senate.
- Antani, currently the State Representative, defeated Mark Fogel of the Democratic Party and was elected as the state Senator for the Ohio Senate's 6th District, which encompasses most of Montgomery County.

Shah Rukh Khan, Kajol's statue to be unveiled in London to mark 25 years of Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge

- A bronze statue of Shah Rukh Khan and Kajol will be unveiled at London's Leicester Square to mark 25 years of their cult-hit romantic comedy film Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge (DDLJ).
- The 1995 release was produced by Yash Chopra and directed by Aditya Chopra. According to the announcement, the bronze statue of the lead pair of DDLJ will be unveiled in Spring 2021. It will be the first-ever Bollywood film statue to be put up in the United Kingdom.

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

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

publishers from her country, but later it was the French ambassador in India Alexander Ziegler, who completed the award ceremony.

Pune engineer is first Indian to ride hyperloop

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

Joe Biden chooses longtime adviser Ron Klain as chief of staff

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

Election Commission names Sonu Sood as Punjab icon for ethical voting

- The Election Commission of India (ECI) has appointed actor Sonu Sood as the Punjab state icon to make people aware about ethical voting, an official statement in Chandigarh said.
- Punjab Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) S Karuna Raju said his office had sent a proposal to the ECI in this regard and they approved the same.
- Belonging to Punjab Moga's district, the actor became a national hero as he helped transport thousands of migrants stuck at various places to their homes during the Covid-19 induced lockdown.
- On September 30, he was honoured with the Special Humanitarian Action Award by the United Nations Development Programme for his efforts to help people in times of Covid-19.

Uttarakhand's climate change activist Ridhima Pandey in BBC's list of 100 most influential women globally

- Thirteen-year-old Uttarakhand-based climate activist Ridhima Pandey has featured in the BBC's list of 100 inspiring and influential women from around the world for 2020.
- The list, according to the BBC website, highlights those who are leading change and making a difference during these turbulent times. "Ridhima Pandey is a climate activist who, at the age of nine, filed a petition against the Government of India in response to its inaction to mitigate climate change.

Joe Biden appoints Indian-American Mala Adiga as soon-to-be First Lady's policy director

- US President-elect Joe Biden has appointed Indian-American Mala Adiga as the policy director of his wife Jill, choosing an experienced education policy hand as the incoming First Lady focuses on education and plans to continue teaching community college classes.
- Adiga was a senior adviser to Jill and senior policy adviser for Biden's 2020 campaign. She previously worked for the Biden Foundation as director for higher education and military families.

US President-elect Joe Biden announces key figures for his cabinet

- US President-elect Joe Biden has announced key figures for his cabinet, picking longtime foreign policy advisor Antony Blinken to be his secretary of state and former US chief diplomat John Kerry as his special climate envoy.
- Mr Biden also nominated the Cuba-born lawyer Alejandro Mayorkas, to lead the Department of Homeland Security, which oversees immigration. He picked Avril Haines, the former deputy CIA director, as his director of national intelligence, the first woman to ever hold that position.

- Mr Biden also said that long-time diplomat **Linda Thomas-Greenfield** will be **nominated to serve as his ambassador to the United Nations**, with status as a cabinet member.
- **Jake Sullivan**, who was a security aide to Mr Biden when he was vice president, was appointed White House national security advisor. All are veterans of the former 2009-2017 Obama-Biden administration and deeply experienced in their fields.

Former Delhi chief secretary MM Kuty to be chairperson of Air Quality Commission

- The Centre has notified the Commission for Air Quality Management for the National Capital Region (NCR) to set up the new agency with sweeping powers to monitor and act against sources of air pollution across five north Indian states.
- The ordinance empowers the agency to make rules, set emission standards, and slap fines of up to Rs1 crore or imprison violators for up to five years. The Centre said **former Delhi chief secretary MM Kuty** will be the Commission's first chairperson. Kuty is also ex-secretary, ministry of petroleum and natural gas.

CAG Girish Chandra Murmu elected to Geneva body

- The Comptroller and Auditor General of India, **Girish Chandra Murmu**, has been elected **External Auditor of Inter Parliamentary Union, Geneva**, for a three-year term. He will take charge of this position from the Supreme Audit Institution of Switzerland.

Rajat Sharma re-elected as president of News Broadcasters Association

- The News Broadcasters Association elected **India TV Editor-in-Chief Rajat Sharma** as the **president for another term in 2020-21**. At the NBA board meeting, the members unanimously asked Sharma, the chairman and editor-in-chief of India TV, to continue as the president.
- The board also elected **Anuradha Prasad Shukla**, chairperson-cum-managing director - **News24 Broadcast India Ltd**, as the vice president and **M K Anand**, managing director & chief executive officer - **Times Network - Bennett, Coleman and Co. Ltd**, Honorary Treasurer of the NBA for the year 2020-2021.

Janet Yellen as treasury secretary

- **US President-elect Joe Biden** has named **ex-Federal Reserve chair Janet Yellen** as his nominee for treasury secretary. If confirmed by the Senate, she would be the first woman ever to hold the post.
- **Janet L. Yellen** became an economist at a time when few women entered the profession and fewer still rose in a male-dominated environment. She is now poised to become the first female Treasury secretary and one of few people to ever have wielded economic power from the White House, the Federal Reserve and the president's cabinet.

James Wolfensohn, former World Bank president, passes away

- **James Wolfensohn**, who served as the president of the World Bank for 10 years and was a guiding force for a couple of the most well-known cultural institutions in the US, has died.

Indian-origin New Zealand MP takes the oath in Sanskrit

- **Dr. Gaurav Sharma**, who was elected as a Member of Parliament in New Zealand, took oath in New Zealand's indigenous Maori language and Sanskrit, a classical language from India.
- A doctor-turned-politician **Dr. Sharma**, hails from Hamirpur district in Himachal Pradesh. He had won the election from Hamilton West as the ruling Labour Party candidate. He had defeated **Tim Macindoe** of the National Party by over 4,386 votes.

MISCELLANEOUS

FIP organises virtual version of Delhi Book Fair this year

- **The Federation of Indian Publishers (FIP) has organised a virtual version of Delhi Book Fair this year in light of the Corona pandemic.** The book fair organised in partnership with PragatiE is a two day online event which will culminate.
- **Nearly 120 publications covering 12 wide categories including Gandhian literature, Art and Culture, Children literature and Speeches of Prime Minister and President among others have been put up for sale and displayed by the Publications Division.**

PM Narendra Modi is the chief guest at IIT Delhi's 51st Annual Convocation Ceremony

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi was the Chief Guest at IIT Delhi's 51st Annual Convocation Ceremony** held on 7 November 2020. Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank and Minister of State for Education, Sanjay Dhotre were graced the occasion in-person as Guests of Honour. The Convocation was conducted in a hybrid mode with a physical in-person ceremony with limited attendance in the Institute's Dogra Hall.

Change of name of Shipping Ministry to Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways

- **The Prime Minister said, Government is changing the name of the Ministry of Shipping and it will be known as the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.** Mr.Modi has said that to reduce the expenditure on logistics, India is fast developing multimodal connectivity.

Union minister Hardeep Singh Puri, 9 others elected unopposed to Rajya Sabha from Uttar Pradesh

- **Union minister Hardeep Singh Puri and nine others were elected unopposed to the Rajya Sabha from Uttar Pradesh.** Eight of them belonged to the BJP while one each from the Samajwadi Party and the BSP.
- **Besides Puri, those elected to the upper house of Parliament are BJP's Neeraj Shekhar, Arun Singh, Geeta Shakya, Haridwar Dubey, Brijlal, B L Varma and Seema Dwivedi; Samajwadi Party's Ram Gopal Yadav; and BSP's Ramji Gautam.**

Ganga Utsav-2020 begins virtually with COVID-19 precautions

- **The much-awaited Ganga Utsav-2020 began virtually amidst COVID-19 precautions.** The festival was continued till 4th of November. Ministry of Jal Shakti in a statement said that several programmes were also held in districts as a part of Ganga Utsav celebrations. Ganga Task Force conducted afforestation drive with NCC cadets and educational tour for youth in project area.

Department of Posts releases special cover to commemorate Golden Jubilee of DST

- **Science and Technology Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan and Minister of State for Posts Sanjay Dhotre released the Special Cover of Department of Posts for commemorating the Golden Jubilee of Department of Science and Technology at a function in New Delhi.**

India's first 'Tyre Park' to come up in West Bengal

- **West Bengal will soon feature "India's first" 'Tyre Park', where artworks made from scrap and defective parts will be on display. The Tyre Park, which will come up at Esplanade area, would have a small cafe where people can sit, relax and enjoy the craftsmanship made from tyres.**

IIM Udaipur is the First Indian B-School to set up a Consumer Culture Lab

- **Indian Institute of Management Udaipur announced the virtual launch of its 'Consumer Culture Lab' to foster consumer culture research in India. The launch of the Consumer Culture Lab and webinar on "Return to Laughter: Comedy Culture in India" is held for 7th November 2020.**

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

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

PM Modi: Shipping ministry to be renamed

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

Assam government started Aadhaar enrolment drive for 70 lakh students

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

Bhavan Chandigarh ranked first in the country in academic reputation

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

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

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

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

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

India’s First Sandalwood Museum

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

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

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

World's First Tramcar for Young Readers in Kolkata

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

Double Decker Viaduct of Nagpur Metro Inaugurated

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

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

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

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

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

Madhya Pradesh: Digital museum opens at Maharaj Bada in Gwalior

- In Madhya Pradesh, a digital museum has been opened at Maharaj Bada in Gwalior for the public. The museum is developed by Gwalior Smart City and entry for the public is being made free for a few days.
- It is the first center of its kind in Gwalior and Bundelkhand area and will play a role in educating school students. In the Digital Museum, the architectural styles, objects, costumes, lifestyle, musical instruments, jewelry, handicrafts, cultural tradition, painting and many genres of paintings have been digitally displayed in a modern way.

Operation 'Calypso': DRI busts international cocaine smuggling racket

- The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has busted an international drug smuggling racket with the seizure of over half a kg of cocaine couriered from Trinidad & Tobago to Mumbai. Codenamed 'Calypso', the operation spanning three days was carried out in Mumbai and Rajasthan's Udaipur.

BSF organizes Para-Cycling expedition 'Infinity Ride 2020'

- Border Security Force (BSF) is being organized a Para-Cycling expedition "Infinity Ride 2020", in association with Aditya Mehta Foundation. The expedition commenced from Srinagar and will culminate at Southern tip of India at Kanyakumari Tamil Nadu on 31st December this year. The expedition was flagged off by Rakesh Asthana, Director General of BSF at Nishat Bagh in Srinagar.

- The expedition is a part of national campaign to psychologically empower BSF's operational amputees and other Divyangjan (specially-abled). This venture is being conducted under the aegis of BSF's Divyang Skill Development Centre (DSDC), New Delhi.
- 28 participants are taking part in more than 3800 kms cycling, traversing the entire country. All the BSF Divyang riders underwent pre-expedition training at BSF Institute of Adventure & Advance Training (BIAAT), Dehradun. Aditya Mehta Foundation (AMF) has been a pioneer in raising awareness about para-sports in every nook and cranny of India.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh unveils two books

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh unveiled two books 'The Republican Ethic Volume III' and 'Loktantra Ke Swar' which are collections of selected speeches of President Ram Nath Kovind during the third year of his presidency. Information and Broadcasting Prakash Javadekar unveiled the e-book versions of the two books.

Madhya Pradesh conducts 'Poshit Parivar-Suposhit Madhya Pradesh' campaign in all districts

- In Madhya Pradesh, a community-based nutrition management programme of very severely malnourished children is being conducted in all districts under the nurtured families - well nurtured Madhya Pradesh i.e. 'Poshit Parivar-Suposhit Madhya Pradesh' campaign.
- Under this campaign, very serious malnourished children are identified and after 12 weeks or 3 months of continuous effort after their registration, they are brought to normal nutrition level. Now, families, whose efforts have led to a change in the nutrition level of the severely malnourished children, will also be honoured under the campaign.

Amazon's Jeff Bezos names 16 beneficiaries to his \$10 bn climate fund

- Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos has revealed the names of 16 environmental organisations that will receive a share of his \$10 billion fund for climate action.
- This is the first time the world's richest man has named the beneficiaries to the climate action fund since its announcement in February. The lists of grantees include international NGOs and climate justice groups, among others.
- They include: The Climate and Clean Energy Equity Fund, ClimateWorks Foundation, Dream Corps Green For All, Eden Reforestation Projects, Energy Foundation, Environmental Defense Fund, The Hive Fund for Climate and Gender Justice, Natural Resources Defense Council, The Nature Conservancy, NDN Collective, Rocky Mountain Institute, Salk Institute for Biological Studies, The Solutions Project, Union of Concerned Scientists, World Resources Institute and World Wildlife Fund. Collectively, these 16 organisations will receive \$791 million in donations.

Himachal Pradesh CM flags off Medical Mobile Unit Jeevan Dhara

- In order to provide complete range of health care services for people living in remote and inaccessible areas of Himachal Pradesh, the state government flagged off Medical Mobile Unit Jeevan Dhara, from the Ridge in Shimla.
- While flagging off this Mobile Health and Wellness Unit, Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur said the van would function as a Mobile Primary Health Centre.

Supreme Court judge recuses himself in pleas against Andhra CM

- Supreme Court justice UU Lalit, 16 November recused himself from hearing pleas seeking to initiate proceedings of criminal contempt against Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Jaganmohan Reddy for levelling allegations against a judge of the top court.
- "As a lawyer, I had represented these parties in litigation. I cannot take up this matter. Let this matter be listed at the earliest before any other judge decided by the CJI."
- CM Jagan in a letter to CJI SA Bobde on October 6, alleged that many judges of the Andhra Pradesh high court were biased against the state government and that Justice Ramana was influencing the HC roster and getting cases against the state government listed before such judges.

- **Attorney General KK Venugopal on November 2 refused to grant consent for initiating contempt against Jagan and his advisor over the issue, partly because the matter was already before CJI Bobde (in the form of the CM's letter).** However, he held that the conduct of the two to be "contumacious" and called the timing of the letter "suspect".

PM Narendra Modi lay foundation stone of rural drinking water supply projects in UP

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of rural drinking water supply projects in Mirzapur and Sonbhadra districts of Vindhyachal region of Uttar Pradesh on 22nd November through video conferencing.**
- **The total estimated cost of the projects is over five thousand 555 crore rupees.** The projects are planned to be completed in 24 months. The projects will **provide household tap water connections in all rural households of 2,995 villages** and will benefit about 42 lakh population of these districts.

First cow hospital of Northeast inaugurated in Assam's Dibrugarh

- **A cow shelter in Assam's Dibrugarh inaugurated Northeast's first-ever cow hospital on the occasion of Gopashtami.** The hospital, Surbhi Aarogyashala, is set up by Shree Gopal Gaushala at a cost of Rs 17 lakh.

Annual India International Cherry Blossom Festival in Shillong cancelled due to COVID-19 pandemic

- **India International Cherry Blossom Festival, the calendar event of Meghalaya which attracts record number of tourists annually in Shillong, has been cancelled this year in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic.**
- **The capital, Shillong hosts the only Cherry Blossoms festival in India.** These beautiful flowers can be spotted across Meghalaya during this time of the year. It is expected that the flowers will continue to bloom till the end of November. **But people of Meghalaya celebrate festivals through virtual mode.**

India's first moss garden comes up near Nainital

- **India's first moss garden has been set up in Lingadhar village, Khurpatal area of Nainital district.** The garden, which is built in an area of about half a hectare, houses different species of moss.
- **Approved in July last year under the CAMPA scheme by the Research Advisory Committee of Uttarakhand Forest Department, the moss garden, the first in the country, was inaugurated by renowned water conservation activist Rajendra Singh.**
- **Mosses are small plants found all over the world. Their habitats range from the humid tropics to the polar regions, fallen logs to lakes, rivers and streams.**

2-day All India Presiding Officers' Conference to be organized at Kevadia in Gujarat on Nov. 25

- **A two-day All India Presiding Officers' Conference was organized at Kevadia in Gujarat on 25th of November.** President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated the two day conference.
- **Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said that the theme of this year conference is Harmonious Coordination of Legislative, Executive and Judiciary - Key to a Vibrant Democracy.** The two-day Conference is being organized by the Lok Sabha.
- **The All India Presiding Officers Conference began in 1921 and this year is also being celebrated as the centenary year of the Presiding Officers Conference.** To celebrate the centenary year, the two day Conference is being held in Kevadia in Gujarat.

Health Minister Harsh Vardhan addresses Boston Center of Excellence for Health & Human Development

- **Health Minister Harsh Vardhan addressed the Boston Center of Excellence for Health and Human Development through Video Conference.** Saluting millions of front-line health workers who bravely carried on with their duty in spite of risk and adversity, including professionals other than doctors and nurses, Dr. Vardhan elaborated India's strategy to contain COVID-19.

HP govt launches 'Him Suraksha Abhiyan' to sensitize people about Covid-19 pandemic

- In Himachal Pradesh, the state government launched 'Him Suraksha Abhiyan' to sensitize the people regarding Covid-19 pandemic and also to collect information regarding symptoms of diseases like TB, Leprosy, sugar and blood pressure by door to door campaign throughout the State.

Nutrition portal to monitor services at anganwadis down for nearly three months

- A massive nutrition portal developed by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), which is used by the Centre as well as most States, and touted as the world's biggest nutrition system, to record and monitor delivery of services to children and mothers across nearly seven lakh anganwadis has been down for nearly three months, several State governments have confirmed. The snag comes as a setback at a time there is a call for the need to intensify efforts to identify mothers and children in need of nutritional interventions due to rising levels of hunger and poverty.

Ladakh ranks 3rd among UTs in implementing PM SVANidhi Yojana

- Ladakh has ranked third among the Union Territories in implementing PM SVANidhi Yojana. Ladakh's performance was reviewed by the Prime Minister on Pragati of Housing and Urban Affairs schemes recently.
- The PM SVANidhi Scheme was launched on 1st June this year, under Atma-Nirbhar Bharat initiative to support the Street vendors due to adverse effect of COVID-19.
- The scheme aims to facilitate collateral free working capital loan up to Ten thousand rupees of one year tenure, subsidized repayments and rewards on digital transactions.

Tamil Nadu: Karthigai Deepam festival being celebrated

- In Tamil Nadu, the famous Kartikai Deepam festival is being celebrated. In the famous Thiruvannamalai Sri Arunachaleswarar temple, the Bharani dweep was lit up. The Maha Dweep will be lit up after pujas at the summit of the mountain in a copper urn with ghee and wicks of cotton threads.
- In view of the prevailing pandemic, devotees from other places have been barred entry though the major events are being live streamed and telecast. The famous temple at Tiruvannamalai is in honour of the five elements. Besides, most houses in Tamil Nadu will be lit up with diya's or agal vilakku this evening in view of the Kartikai Deepam festival.

Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar launches Nafed's Honey FPO Programme

- Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar launched five Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) for producing honey which will be set up with the help of NAFED in East Champaran (Bihar), Morena (Madhya Pradesh), Bharatpur (Rajasthan), Mathura (Uttar Pradesh) and Sunderbans (West Bengal).

PM Modi inaugurated six-lane widening project of Varanasi-Prayagraj section of NH-19

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Varanasi and dedicated to the nation the six-lane widening project of the Handia (Prayagraj) - Rajatalab (Varanasi) section of National Highway 19.
- During the tour, the Prime Minister attended Dev Deepawali, undertake a site visit of Kashi Vishwanath Temple Corridor Project and also visit the Sarnath Archaeological Site.
- The 73 Kilometers stretch of the newly widened and six laned NH-19, made with a total outlay of 2 thousand 4 hundred 47 crore rupees is expected to reduce the travel time between Prayagraj and Varanasi by one hour.
- Dev Deepawali, which has become a world famous festival of light and fervour in Varanasi, is celebrated on Kartik Poornima every year. The festival was started by the Prime Minister by lighting a diya on the Raj Ghat of Varanasi, which was followed by lighting of 11 lakh diyas on both sides of River Ganges.

Constitution Day celebrated

- Constitution Day is being celebrated across the country to mark the adopting of the Indian Constitution by the Constituent Assembly. The day is also known as National Law Day and commemorates the adoption of the Constitution in India.

- On 26th November in 1949, the Constituent Assembly of the country formally adopted the Constitution of India which came into force on 26th January 1950.
- Constitution Day was first celebrated in 2015, when NDA Government decided to mark the day as a tribute to Dr B R Ambedkar who played an important role in its framing as the Chairman of the Drafting Committee.
- The constituent assembly took two years, eleven months and seventeen days to accomplish the stupendous task of drafting the historic document. The Constitution declares India a sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic republic, assuring its citizens justice, equality and liberty and endeavours to promote fraternity. It is also the longest written constitution of any sovereign country in the world.
- 26 January was chosen as the date for Republic day because it was on this day in 1929 when the Declaration of Indian Independence (Purna Swaraj) was proclaimed by the Indian National Congress as opposed to the Dominion status offered by the British Regime.

Obama's "A Promised Land" sells more than 1.7 million copies in its first week

- Former President Obama's memoir, "A Promised Land," has sold more than 1.7 million copies in its first week — breaking records for publisher Penguin Random House.

PM Modi releases book on life and ideals of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a book on the life and ideals of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. The book has been penned by Kirpal Singh, who is based in Chandigarh.



IMPORTANT DAYS

Punjab launches 'Tobacco Free Workplace' campaign on Punjab State No Tobacco Day

- Punjab Government initiated a drive to eradicate tobacco use to save children & youth as well as tobacco free work place on the occasion of Punjab State No Tobacco Day.
- Punjab is the first State in the country to celebrate a state specific “Punjab State No Tobacco Day” on 1st November.
- The theme of campaign is “Tobacco Free Workplaces”. Punjab is also a pioneer state to focus on youth by timely ban on E cigarettes, hookah bars and by declaring hostels of Colleges/Universities as Tobacco Free.
- State will continue making efforts to curb this menace of Tobacco as this will go a long way in deterring young children & youth from initiation & also motivate current users to quit.

International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists, 2 November

- The World Press Freedom Conference 2020 on 9 and 10 December 2020, convened by UNESCO and the Kingdom of the Netherlands celebrates jointly World Press Freedom Day (3 May) and the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists (2 November) in a new, innovative format, merging digital and in-person elements.
- The session on 10 December 2020, entitled “Strengthening investigations and prosecutions to end impunity for crimes against journalists” will include the presentation of guidelines for prosecutors on investigating and prosecuting crimes and attacks against journalists, developed in partnership with the International Association of Prosecutors.

International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict 6 November

- On 5 November 2001, the UN General Assembly declared 6 November of each year as the International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict.
- Six United Nations agencies and departments (UNEP, UNDP, UNHABITAT, PBSO, DPA and DESA), coordinated by the UN Framework Team for Preventive Action, have partnered with the European Union (EU) to help countries identify, prevent and transform tensions over natural resource as part of conflict prevention and peacebuilding programmes.

World Science Day for Peace and Development, 10 November

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

National Education Day

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

Public Service Broadcasting Day

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

World Pneumonia Day

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

World Diabetes Day 14 November

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

International Day for Tolerance

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

Health Minister chairs an event to mark National New-born Week 2020

- **Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan chaired an event to mark the National Newborn Week 2020**, being observed from 15th to 21st November to reinforce the importance of newborn health as a key priority area of the health sector and to reiterate the commitment at the highest level.
- This year, **the theme of National Newborn Week is ‘Quality, Equity, Dignity for every newborn at every health facility and everywhere’.**
- Dr Vardhan said that the vision of the government is that **every child should survive, thrive, and reach their full potential.** He added that the Government is committed to work towards the health and development of all newborns.

World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims

- **The World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims takes place on the third Sunday (15 November, 2020) in November** every year as the appropriate acknowledgment of victims of road traffic crashes and their families.

World Toilet Day: 19 November

- **World Toilet Day (WTD) is an official United Nations international observance day on 19 November to inspire action to tackle the global sanitation crisis.** It is about taking action to tackle the global sanitation crisis and achieve Sustainable Development Goal 6: water and sanitation for all by 2030.
- This year the theme remarks the importance of **“Sustainable sanitation and climate change”.**

World Children’s Day: 20 November

- **World Children’s Day was first established in 1954 as Universal Children’s Day** and is **celebrated on 20 November** each year to **promote international togetherness**, awareness among children worldwide, and improving children’s welfare.
- **The theme of International children day 2020 is “Investing in our future means investing in our children”**

World Television Day: 21 November

- In recognition of the increasing impact television has on decision-making by bringing world attention to conflicts and threats to peace and security and its potential role in sharpening the focus on other major issues, including economic and social issues, the United Nations General Assembly **proclaimed 21 November as World Television Day.**

International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People: 29 November

- In 1977, the General Assembly called for the **annual observance of 29 November as the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People**. On that day, in 1947, the Assembly adopted the resolution on the partition of Palestine.

World AIDS Day: 1 December

- **Every year, on 1 December, the world commemorates World AIDS Day.** People around the world unite to show support for people living with and affected by HIV and to remember those who lost their lives to AIDS. In 2020, the world's attention has been focused by the COVID-19 pandemic on health and how pandemics affect lives and livelihoods.
- COVID-19 is showing once again how health is interlinked with other critical issues, such as reducing inequality, human rights, gender equality, social protection and economic growth. With this in mind, this year the **theme of World AIDS Day** is “Global solidarity, shared responsibility”.



Career
Launcher

QUESTIONS

1. Which of the following states revamped “Dharani” portal to end corruption during land registration?
(a) Telangana (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Madhya Pradesh
2. The Federation of Indian Publishers (FIP) has organised a virtual version of _____ this year in light of the Corona pandemic.
(a) Mumbai Book Fair (b) Meerut Book Fair (c) Delhi Book Fair (d) Lucknow Book Fair
3. Which of the following has been recently declared a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, a site that will serve as a lab to test innovative approaches to eco-conservation and sustainability?
(a) Bandhavgarh National Park (b) Panna National Park
(c) Jim Corbett National Park (d) Pench Tiger Reserve
4. The _____ and M/s Invest India will form a collaboration to set up a “Strategic Policy & Facilitation Bureau”.
(a) Ministry of Finance (b) Ministry of HEALTH
(c) Ministry of AYUSH (d) Ministry of Home
5. Who has become the first person of Indian origin to become a Minister of the Crown under the new Cabinet line-up announced by Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern?
(a) Anamika Roy (b) Priyanka Radhakrishnan
(c) Sujata Sircar (d) Deepa Shahi
6. Recently, Former HDFC Bank managing director Aditya Puri has joined U.S.-based global investment firm the _____ as a senior advisor.
(a) Deollite (b) E & Y (c) Carlyle Group (d) Blackstone Group
7. In a display of its growing combat prowess, the Indian Air Force successfully test-fired an air launched version of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile from a Sukhoi fighter aircraft in the _____.
(a) Thar Desert (b) Bay of Bengal (c) Arabian Sea (d) Indian Ocean
8. Which of the following Indian states will soon feature “India’s first” ‘Tyre Park’, where artworks made from scrap and defective parts will be on display?
(a) West Bengal (b) Maharashtra (c) Assam (d) Gujarat
9. Recently, Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has announced _____ as the title sponsor of the Women’s T20 Challenge 2020.
(a) Reliance Jio (b) Byju’s (c) Unacademy (d) Nike
10. The International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists is observed on:
(a) 29th October (b) 31st October (c) 1st November (d) 2nd November
11. Recently, Union minister Hardeep Singh Puri and nine others were elected unopposed to the Rajya Sabha from _____.
(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Maharashtra (c) Karnataka (d) Uttar Pradesh
12. Recently, A solar energy-driven miniature train, billed as India’s first of its kind, was inaugurated at the Veli Tourist Village in _____.
(a) Himachal Pradesh (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Kerala (d) Goa
13. In 2020, World Tsunami Awareness Day is celebrated on:
(a) 5th November (b) 7th November (c) 9th November (d) 13th November

14. The much-awaited Ganga Utsav-2020 began virtually amidst COVID-19 precautions. The length of river Ganga in India is (Approx):
(a) 1860 kms (b) 2170 kms (c) 2520 kms (d) 3250 kms
15. Recently, Duarte Pacheco of _____ has been elected the new President of Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) for the period 2020-2023.
(a) Suriname (b) Portugal (c) Chile (d) Argentina
16. Recently, Georgia's ruling party won the country's highly contested parliamentary election. Georgia is in:
(a) Eurasia (b) South America (c) Africa (d) North America
17. Who among the following launched work on a mega city development project under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in Rashakai town of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province?
(a) Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan (b) Pakistan President Arif Alvi
(c) China President Xi Jinping (d) China Prime Minister Li Keqiang
18. According to the WWF Water Risk Filter, which of the following cities topped the list of Indian cities?
(a) Jaipur (b) Bhopal (c) Indore (d) Thane
19. Name India's first caffeinated personal care brand which has been declared cruelty-free and vegan by PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals).
(a) eCaffeine (b) mCaffeine (c) zCaffeine (d) nCaffeine
20. Recently, The Emmett Leahy award for 2020 was conferred on _____ from the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), Pune.
(a) Dinesh Katre (b) Mahesh Surve (c) Vimal Rastogi (d) Anunaya Jha
21. Which of the following states became the first State to provide tap water connections in all rural homes in October 2020?
(a) Goa (b) Haryana (c) Maharashtra (d) Punjab
22. Recently, Six women led startups have won COVID-19 Shri Shakti Challenge organized by MyGov in collaboration with _____.
(a) AIIB (b) UN Women (c) NDB (d) World Bank
23. Which is the first Indian state in the country to celebrate a state specific "No Tobacco Day" on 1st November?
(a) Haryana (b) Punjab (c) Madhya Pradesh (d) Maharashtra
24. Recently, Indian Naval Ship, Airavat reached Port Sudan as a part of Mission Sagar-II. As part of Mission Sagar-II, INS Airavat will not deliver food aid to which of the following countries?
(a) Sudan (b) Djibouti (c) Mali (d) Eritrea
25. Which of the following countries policy reviewing chamber will be held in October 2021, marking the Gulf emirate's first national election?
(a) UAE (b) Qatar (c) Saudi Arabia (d) Oman
26. Interpol has, for the first time in its history, decided to postpone its General Assembly (GA), which had been scheduled to take place in the _____ in December, because of the raging Covid-19 pandemic.
(a) United Arab Emirates (b) Abu Dhabi
(c) Qatar (d) South Africa
27. According to the researchers, including those from the University of Sheffield in the UK, the standard method for detecting antibiotic resistance in _____ is a relatively slow process that typically takes between 12 and 24 hours.
(a) Bacterial samples (b) Viral samples (c) Protozoan samples (d) Fungal samples

28. International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict is celebrated on:
(a) 2nd November (b) 4th November (c) 6th November (d) 8th November
29. The Ladakh administration will be setting up a snow ski institute along with other adventure sports facilities in _____.
(a) Kargil district (b) Leh district (c) Zaskar district (d) Nubra district
30. Which of the following films has bagged the best original music award for musician Karsh Kale and the Salvage Audio Collective at the 14th Annual Asian Film Awards?
(a) Andhadhun (b) Uri- The Surgical Strike
(c) Dream Girl (d) Gully Boy
31. Recently, The information and broadcasting ministry has set up a _____ member committee to make “recommendations for a robust, transparent and accountable ratings system (for television) in India”.
(a) Two (b) Three (c) Four (d) Seven
32. Recently, President Ram Nath Kovind promulgated the Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020 to further amend _____.
(a) Arbitration and Conciliation Act 1996 (b) Arbitration and Conciliation Act 1999
(c) Arbitration and Conciliation Act 2005 (d) Arbitration and Conciliation Act 2010
33. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has chaired the Virtual Global Investor Roundtable Conference. The Roundtable is being organized by the _____ and National Investment and Infrastructure Fund.
(a) Ministry of Finance (b) Ministry of Corporate Affairs
(c) Ministry of Home Affairs (d) NITI Aayog
34. Name the Indian-American lawyer who has become the first South Asian woman to be elected to the New York State Assembly.
(a) Alankrita Bannerjee (b) Jenifer Rajkumar (c) Dolly Mehra (d) Aditi Rajamannar
35. Recently, Visa, the global leader in payments technology, announced the first successful live deployment of a PCI certified Tap to Phonecard acceptance solution, in partnership with Digit Secure and _____ Bank.
(a) ICICI (b) Axis (c) HDFC (d) RBL
36. The Indian Space Research organisation has scheduled the launch of the Earth Observation Satellite _____.
(a) EOS04 (b) COS07 (c) EOS01 (d) FOS09
37. Recently, The _____ Navies launched the ‘Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT)-2020’ to expand relationships and broaden maritime awareness between the two countries.
(a) Bangladesh and US (b) Myanmar and Canada (c) China and Thailand (d) Japan and Indonesia
38. Recently, The National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) has cleared a plan for conserving vultures. Name the drug used to treat cattle that was linked to kidney failure in vultures and a decline in the bird’s population?
(a) Methonoc (b) Diclofenac (c) Deependol (d) Septonol
39. Who has created history by becoming the first Indian-American to be elected to the Ohio state Senate recently?
(a) Saumyo Dutta (b) Akhil Mehta (c) Niraj Antani (d) Dheeraj Mahajan
40. Who among the following launched Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge focusing on shaping cities for young children and their families?
(a) Hardeep Singh Puri (b) Narendra Modi (c) Amit Shah (d) Peeyush Goyal
41. Which is the first state in India to launch royalty for paddy fields in order to promote paddy cultivation?
(a) Karnataka (b) Kerala (c) Gujarat (d) Maharashtra

42. Which is the first country in world to systematically map its entire seabed?
(a) Iceland (b) Sweden (c) Ireland (d) Maldives
43. Recently, John Pombe Magufuli sworn in for a second term as the President of:
(a) South Sudan (b) Tanzania (c) Madagascar (d) Eritrea
44. Recently, Indian Army Chief General M. M. Naravane was conferred the honorary rank of General of the _____, decades old tradition that reflects the strong ties between the two militaries.
(a) Myanmar Army (b) Nepal Army (c) Bhutan Army (d) Bangladesh Army
45. Recently, The _____ came out with a Co-Lending Model (CLM) scheme under which banks can provide loans along with NBFCs to priority sector borrowers based on a prior agreement.
(a) Reserve Bank of India (b) NABARD
(c) SIDBI (d) Ministry of Finance
46. Which bank has recently launched a banking stack for millennial customers which offers an instant savings account, a feature-driven iMobile application that offers investment guidance?
(a) Axis Bank (b) HDFC Bank (c) ICICI Bank (d) Axis Bank
47. The International Centre for Clean Water (ICCW) is going to collaborate with DG TAKANO, a _____ firm, to introduce new clean water technologies in India.
(a) Japanese (b) Chinese (c) South Korean (d) Indonesian
48. Recently, _____ Parker Solar Probe, which is designed to image Sun's outer atmosphere and the solar wind, has recently captured a sungrazing comet, confirming the ability of the spacecraft to observe "hard-to-see" comets.
(a) ISRO (b) NASA (c) CERN (d) JAXA
49. A bronze statue of Shah Rukh Khan and Kajol will be unveiled at _____ Leicester Square to mark 25 years of their cult-hit romantic comedy film Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge (DDLJ).
(a) London's (b) Paris's (c) Madrid's (d) New York's
50. Which of the following nations is setting out to become the world's first carbon neutral country?
(a) Papua New Guinea (b) San Marino (c) Monaco (d) Republic of Palau
51. Which of the following has become the first state public sector undertaking in India that has been dissolved as per law by the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT)?
(a) Uttar Pradesh State Mineral Development Corporation
(b) Chennai Petroleum Corporation
(c) Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited
(d) Kudremukh Iron Ore Company
52. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the Ro-Pax terminal at Hazira and flag off Ro-Pax service between Hazira and Ghogha in _____ through video conferencing.
(a) West Bengal (b) Gujarat (c) Odisha (d) Goa
53. India and Italy signed _____ agreements in various sectors following a Virtual Bilateral Summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Italian counterpart Giuseppe Conte.
(a) 6 (b) 9 (c) 15 (d) 21
54. Who among the following led the Indian delegation to the 20th Summit of SCO Council of Heads of States, which was held virtually on 10th of November 2020?
(a) Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman (b) Home Minister Amit Shah
(c) Defence Minister Rajnath Singh (d) Prime Minister Narendra Modi

55. Recently, The Haryana Assembly passed a Bill to reserve _____ per cent of private sector jobs in the state for residents of Haryana.
(a) 30% (b) 50% (c) 75% (d) 85%
56. Recently, External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar addressed the first India -Nordic - Baltic Conclave. Which among the following is not a Nordic country?
(a) Iceland (b) Ireland (c) Norway (d) Denmark
57. At the United Nations (UN) in New York, Indian diplomat _____ was elected to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ).
(a) Riddhima Garg (b) Anupama Parekh (c) Vidisha Maitra (d) Arti Kakkar
58. Recently, _____ has rolled out a how-to guide for small- and medium-sized businesses (SMB) in India to help them move from offline to the social network-owned online platforms.
(a) Facebook (b) Google (c) Adobe (d) Oracle
59. Recently, Twenty two faculty members and researchers of _____ were featured in the list of the world's top two per cent scientists created by Stanford University of the USA.
(a) Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad
(b) Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati
(c) Indian Institute of Technology Jammu
(d) Indian Institute of Technology Mandi
60. Who has been administered as the Chief Information Commissioner (CIC)?
(a) Saroj Punhani (b) Heera Lal Samariya
(c) Yashvardhan Kumar Sinha (d) Uday Mahurkar
61. Recently, India's longest single-lane motorable suspension bridge was inaugurated in:
(a) Himachal Pradesh (b) Uttarakhand (c) Arunachal Pradesh (d) Jammu & Kashmir
62. Recently, Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat launched India's first solar-based Integrated Multi-Village Water Supply Project (IMVWSP) in _____.
(a) Himachal Pradesh (b) Rajasthan (c) Arunachal Pradesh (d) Jammu & Kashmir
63. Recently, Government is changing the name of the Ministry of Shipping and it will be known as the _____.
(a) Ministry of Ports and Shipping (b) Ministry of Shipping and Waterways
(c) Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (d) Ministry of Ports and Waterways
64. Name an Indian law student of O.P. Jindal Global University (JGU) who has received both the Indian and the US Patent for a technology he invented entitled 'Method and System for Managing the Usage of a Plurality of Battery Units to Power an Electric Vehicle'.
(a) Devansh Manoj Jalan (b) Devraj Chauhan
(c) Mahesh Dinkar Bharadwaj (d) Ajit Kumar SenS
65. Which of the following has become the first country in the United Kingdom to impose a ban on smacking children?
(a) Wales (b) England (c) Northern Ireland (d) Scotland
66. Recently, Democrat Joe Biden beat Republican Donald Trump to become the _____ President of the United States.
(a) 44th (b) 45th (c) 46th (d) 47th
67. Recently, a US President-elect Joe Biden has announced a 12-member coronavirus task force to mount an effective response to the pandemic. The task force will be co-chaired by former Surgeon General _____.
(a) Nitin Ashok (b) Chetan Mehra (c) Vivek Murthy (d) Avinash Shetty

68. Which of the following Asian countries has successfully launched what has been described as “the world’s first 6G satellite” into orbit?
(a) Japan (b) China (c) South Korea (d) India
69. Which is the First Indian B-School to set up a Consumer Culture Lab?
(a) Indian Institute of Management Indore
(b) Indian Institute of Management Ahmadabad
(c) Indian Institute of Management Bodhgaya
(d) Indian Institute of Management Udaipur
70. In Tennis, who won the Paris Masters final to clinch his eighth ATP title recently?
(a) Daniil Medvedev (b) Alexander Zverev (c) Andy Murray (d) Rafael Nadal
71. Who among the following inaugurated a model of the anti-satellite missile system, which is seen as a symbol of national technological advancement?
(a) Defence Minister Rajnath Singh
(b) ISRO Chief K. Sivan
(c) Home Minister Amit Shah
(d) Prime Minister Narendra Modi
72. The armed forces conducted a joint tri-service exercise ‘Bull Strike’ at the Teresa Island in the Nicobar group of islands located close to the strategic Strait of _____.
(a) Hormuz (b) Gibraltar (c) Bering (d) Malacca
73. Luis Arce took office as the new President of the _____.
(a) Brazil (b) Chile (c) Mexico (d) Bolivia
74. US President-elect Joe Biden has announced a _____ member coronavirus task force to mount an effective response to the pandemic that has infected millions and damaged the US economy.
(a) 7 (b) 10 (c) 12 (d) 15
75. The first flight carrying _____ tourists to the UAE landed in the city-state of Dubai, the latest sign of the normalization deal reached between the two nations.
(a) Israel (b) Bahrain (c) Saudi Arabia (d) Palestine
76. Satish Dhawan Space Centre is located in which of the following states of India?
(a) Telangana (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Kerala (d) Tamil Nadu
77. In a first of its kind policy consultation, Science and Technology Minister _____ interacted with the highly-skilled Indian diaspora to facilitate channels for them to contribute to India’s Science Technology and Innovation Policy (STIP) 2020.
(a) Harsh Vardhan (b) Piyush Goyal (c) Jairam Ramesh (d) Ravi Shankar Prasad
78. Manipur’s Gyanendro Ningombam has been elected as the _____.
(a) Football India President (b) Hockey India President
(c) Badminton India President (d) Koko India President
79. Which of the following state governments has informed that the state government decided to celebrate the Hornbill Festival 2020 in a complete virtual mode only?
(a) Tripura (b) Assam (c) Goa (d) Nagaland
80. Which of the following state governments has started an Aadhaar enrolment drive for nearly 70 lakh students from 9 November, 2020?
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Assam (c) Goa (d) Maharashtra

81. Which of the following states has bagged the first place under the 'Best State' category under the National Water Awards (NWAs) 2019, presented by the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti, Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation?
(a) Telangana (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Madhya Pradesh (d) Andhra Pradesh
82. According to the Interstate Migrant Policy Index that seeks to measure integration of interstate migrants, Which of the following states has been most successful in integrating migrant workers?
(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Tamil Nadu (c) Karnataka (d) Kerala
83. Recently, Fifteenth Finance Commission submitted its report for the period of 2021-26 to President Ram Nath Kovind. The Finance Commission led by its Chairman _____ called on the President and submitted the report.
(a) Ramesh Chand (b) N.K. Singh (c) Ajay Narayan Jha (d) Prof. Anoop Singh
84. The annual Heads of State-level meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation will be held under the chairmanship of _____.
(a) Russia (b) China (c) India (d) Turkmenistan
85. Which of the following countries has recently released a special anthology on Mahatma Gandhi- 'My understanding about Gandhi'?
(a) Bhutan (b) Nepal (c) Maldives (d) Mauritius
86. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman participated in the 1st BRICS Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors' Meeting under the _____ Chairmanship to discuss the BRICS Economic and Financial Cooperation agenda for 2020.
(a) Russian (b) South African (c) Chinese (d) Brazilian
87. Which of the following is India's first ever Anti-Satellite (A-SAT) Missile Test successfully conducted from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island in Odisha?
(a) 'Mission Shakti' (b) 'Mission Power' (c) 'Mission Taqat' (d) 'Mission Sarthak'
88. In November, World Science Day for Peace and Development was celebrated on:
(a) 5th November (b) 10th November (c) 12th November (d) 15th November
89. Which of the following countries based teacher Peter Tabichi has been conferred the 2020 Ahimsa Award by the Trustees of the Institute of Jainology in London recently?
(a) Sudan (b) Kenya (c) Tanzania (d) Nigeria
90. The first Indian to ride the futuristic mode of transport "Hyper loop" is
(a) Mrunal Thakur (b) Akshay Viraj (c) Tanay Manjrekar (d) Sai Tendulkar
91. The construction work of India's first Vertical Lift Railway Sea Bridge is going in full swing, which will be linking Mandapam in the state of _____ to Rameswaram at the Pamban Island.
(a) Kerala (b) Maharashtra (c) Karnataka (d) Tamil Nadu
92. Maharashtra Government has given a green signal to distribute _____ of the budgetary fund for the capital expenditure to the department which are at the forefront in generating wealth and employment.
(a) 25 percent (b) 50 percent (c) 75 percent (d) 85 percent
93. Recently, _____ has once again been ranked first in the country in the Academic Reputation category in the 2020-21 School Rankings by Education World.
(a) Bhavan Vidyalaya Chandigarh
(b) Delhi Public School, Mathura Road Delhi
(c) Mahogany School, Raipur Chhattisgarh
(d) Bristol School, Mumbai

94. Recently, Armenia and _____ have signed an agreement to end military conflict over the disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh.
(a) Azerbaijan (b) Turkmenistan (c) Kazakhstan (d) Kyrgyzstan
95. The famous litchis of _____ got the geographical indication (GI) tags, making the item an incontrovertible proof of their origins in the state and protecting them from production elsewhere.
(a) Pratapgarh, Uttar Pradesh (b) Tezpur, Assam
(c) Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh (d) Mysuru, Karnataka
96. Who among the following topped the list of “India’s most generous” released by Hurun India and EdelGive?
(a) Mukesh Ambani (b) Azim Premji (c) Shiv Nadar (d) Gautam Adani
97. Recently, A team of researchers at _____ in Pennsylvania have developed the world’s fastest open-source intrusion detection system.
(a) Carnegie Mellon University (b) Trinity University
(c) Christ Global University (d) George Mgellon University
98. The world’s first satellite equipped with an electric iodine Ion, called NPT30-I2 is
(a) Beihang Somushi 2 (b) Beihang Kongshi 1 (c) Sihang Juho 3 (d) Xiang Juro 6
99. Who won her maiden ITTF Women’s World Cup title in Weihai in November 2020?
(a) Sun Yingsha (b) Suni Hian (c) Susin Hiangse (d) Chen Meng
100. Which of the following teams clinched their record-extending fifth IPL title at Dubai recently?
(a) Mumbai Indians (b) Rajasthan Royals (c) Delhi Capitals (d) Sunrisers Hyderabad
101. The World’s First Coral Conservation Facility is building up in:
(a) New Zealand (b) Australia (c) Mauritius (d) Maldives
102. Prime Minister Narendra Modi co-chaired the 17th ASEAN-India Summit along with Prime Minister of _____
Nguyen Xuan Phuc.
(a) Vietnam (b) Laos (c) Cambodia (d) Thailand
103. Recently President-elect Joe Biden has chosen his longtime adviser _____ to reprise his role as his chief of staff, installing an aide with decades of experience in the top role in his White House.
(a) Thiman Jack (b) Rob Cinan (c) Ron Klain (d) Sam Johnston
104. Recently, Indian Navy’s fifth Scorpene class submarine _____ was launched at Mumbai’s Mazagon Dock.
(a) ‘Vageor’ (b) ‘Vijay’ (c) ‘Vagir’ (d) ‘Vakiry’
105. Recently, A team from _____ has been selected for NASA Human Exploration Rover Challenge 2021.
(a) Telangana (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Odisha (d) Haryana
106. Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated “Sarhad VistarVikasotsav 2020” in _____ of Gujarat.
(a) Ahmadabad district (b) Kutch district (c) Surat district (d) Navasari district
107. At least 14 scientists from the _____ have figured among the top two per cent scientists in a global list compiled by the prestigious Stanford University.
(a) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras
(b) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay
(c) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) - Banaras Hindu University
(d) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) - Roorkee

108. In a first for India, the _____ will be laid vibration-absorbing tracks.
(a) Kochi Metro Rail Corporation Ltd. (b) Delhi Metro Rail Corporation Ltd.
(c) Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation Ltd. (d) Pune Metro Rail Corporation Ltd.
109. Recently, Public Service Broadcasting Day is observed on _____.
(a) 10th November (b) 11th November (c) 12th November (d) 14th November
110. Recently, Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa passed away. He was the world's longest serving Prime Minister of:
(a) Oman (b) Saudi Arabia (c) United Arab Emirates (d) Bahrain
111. Recently, which state assembly passed a resolution for the provision of a separate 'Sarna Code' for tribals?
(a) Jharkhand (b) Odisha (c) Madhya Pradesh (d) Chhattisgarh
112. Recently, Jammu and Kashmir government has launched an e-Auction portal to promote trading of GI tagged _____ across the country.
(a) 'Kashmir Saffron' (b) 'Kashmir Willow' (c) 'Kashmir Pashmina' (d) 'Kashmir Kahwa'
113. Recently, _____ have successfully launched the initiative of doorstep service for submission of Digital Life Certificate through Postman.
(a) India Post Payments Bank (b) Reserve Bank of India
(c) NITI Aayog (d) NABARD
114. Recently, The ruling National League for Democracy (NLD) has claimed victory in the general elections held in:
(a) Maldives (b) Myanmar (c) Mauritius (d) Thailand
115. Recently, International Financial Services Centres Authority, IFSCA has approved draft Banking regulations for banking operations at IFSCs with headquarters in :
(a) Mumbai (Maharashtra) (b) Gandhinagar (Gujarat)
(c) Gurugram (Haryana) (d) Jaipur (Rajasthan)
116. Recently, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced _____ key stimulus measures to boost the economy saying that it is emerging strong amid the Covid-19 pandemic as key parameters of the economy are in the positive trajectory.
(a) 5 (b) 8 (c) 10 (d) 12
117. Recently, The first commercial shipment from Bangladesh to _____ on the Protocol for Inland Water Trade and Transit (PIWTT) route was received.
(a) Kandla, West Bengal (b) Shillong, Meghalaya
(c) Karimganj, Assam (d) Dispur, Assam
118. Recently, Kabartal in _____ has been recognised as a wetland of international importance, the first such wetland in the state under the Ramsar Convention, according to the Union Environment Ministry.
(a) Assam's Guwahati district (b) Meghalaya's Shillong district
(c) Bihar's Begusarai district (d) Haryana's Rohtak district
119. Every year since 2008, November 11 is celebrated as education day to commemorate the birth anniversary of _____.
(a) Madan Mohan Malviya (b) Maulana Abul Kalam Azad
(c) Lala Lajpat Rai (d) Bipin Chandra Pal
120. Recently, World Pneumonia Day, held each year on _____ aims to raise awareness about this deadly illness and to advocate for global action to protect against it.
(a) 9th November (b) 10th November (c) 12th November (d) 14th November

121. Which of the following Indian cities gets its first ever children's tram library, also the first in the world of its kind?
(a) Kochi (b) Mumbai (c) Kolkata (d) Chennai
122. Recently, The renewable energy Ministry has expanded the scope of _____ scheme to enable greater solar energy generation in farm sector.
(a) PM-KUMUD (b) PM-KUSUM
(c) PM-SURAJ (d) PM-MAUSAM
123. Recently, Central Minister for Road Transport & Highways inaugurated _____ 3.14 km double-decker flyover to carry vehicles on the first level.
(a) Kolkata's (b) Kochi's (c) Nagpur's (d) Jaipur's
124. How many ASEAN member countries signed a free trade pact with China and four other countries while India stayed away?
(a) 5 (b) 10 (c) 12 (d) 20
125. India's first sandalwood museum is to come up in:
(a) Karnataka (b) Kerala (c) Tamil Nadu (d) Maharashtra
126. Recently, Indore-based Enking International may become the world's first company that operates in the _____ markets space to go in for an initial public offering (IPO).
(a) Gold (b) Silver (c) Carbon (d) Platinum
127. Recently, The _____ has given its go-ahead for the creation of the first ever national database of migrant labour to provide a platform for workers and employers, and for the government to implement specific programmes for such labourers.
(a) Labour Ministry (b) Home Ministry (c) Finance Ministry (d) Corporate Affairs Ministry
128. Recently, _____ System has achieved a major milestone by a direct hit on to a Banshee Pilotless target aircraft at medium range and medium altitude.
(a) QRSAM (b) LARSAM (c) NISAR (d) FARCAM
129. Who has been presented with the prestigious Annual Award of the Vienna Economic Forum "Partner of the Year 2020" for contribution to the economic development at regional and international level of the Forum countries?
(a) Bulgaria's EU Commissioner Mariya Gabriel
(b) Austria's EU Commissioner Deemija Burgayal
(c) Finland's UN Commissioner Hinlaj Kurtail
(d) Sweden's EU Commissioner Julbal Mirty
130. Recently, Civil Aviation Ministry and Directorate General of Civil Aviation have granted conditional permission to the International Crops Research Institute for the deployment of drones. The Headquarters of International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) is at:
(a) Bengaluru (b) Hyderabad (c) Kochi (d) Lucknow
131. Name the site in Uttar Pradesh which has been added recently to the list of recognised Ramsar sites?
(a) Bakhira Lake in Sant Kabir Nagar
(b) Chittaura Jheel in Gonda
(c) Keetham lake in Agra
(d) Keerat Sagar lake in Mahoba
132. A remote island in _____ is set to become the first in the world to be powered entirely by 'blue energy' as the nation looks to respond to the challenges posed by climate change.
(a) Wales (b) Greenland (c) Ireland (d) Canada

133. Name the Bangladeshi teen who won the International Children's Peace Prize 2020 for his fight against cyber bullying.
(a) Mohammad Rizwan (b) Yousuf Khan (c) Anjum Raizada (d) Sadat Rahman
134. The name of Tribal Welfare Department will be changed to Tribal Affairs Department in which of the following Indian states?
(a) Chhattisgarh (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Odisha (d) Gujarat
135. Which of the following banks announced the launch of Mooh Band Rakho, a campaign to increase awareness on cyber frauds and preventing them?
(a) ICICI Bank (b) HDFC Bank (c) Axis Bank (d) State Bank of India
136. Which of the following small finance banks has launched a new product aimed at women 'Eva', a unique savings account, tries to address the well-being of Indian women in every aspect such as health, wealth and prosperity?
(a) Equitas Small Finance Bank (b) Utkarsh Small Finance Bank
(c) A U Small Finance Bank (d) Ujjivan Small Finance Bank
137. Recently, A research team of _____ has formulated efficient "pincer" catalytic systems that transform biomass wastes into valuable chemicals.
(a) IIT Delhi (b) IIT Kharagpur (c) IIT Kanpur (d) IIT Guwahati
138. Which tennis star has equalled Pete Sampras's record of winning six year-end number one trophies?
(a) Andy Murray (b) Rafael Nadal (c) Roger Federer (d) Novak Djokovic
139. Who became the first Bengali to be conferred the prestigious Legion of Honour, the highest order of merit in France in 2018?
(a) Soumitra Chatterjee (b) Mamata Bannerjee (c) Deepankar Bannerjee (d) OM Prakash Dhankar
140. The International Day for Tolerance is an annual day observed every year on:
(a) 12th November (b) 13th November (c) 15th November (d) 16th November
141. According to a 2018 report on the 'vital statistics on India based on the Civil Registration System', which of the following states recorded the best sex ratio in the country with 1,085 females born per thousand males?
(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Odisha (c) Nagaland (d) Arunachal Pradesh
142. Which of the following countries interim President Manuel Merino resigned recently as the nation plunged into its worst constitutional crisis in two decades following massive protests unleashed when Congress ousted the nation's popular leader?
(a) Mexico (b) Peru (c) Chile (d) Argentina
143. Recently, Department of Investment and Public Asset Management, DIPAM signed an agreement with _____.
(a) Asian Development Bank (b) Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
(c) Reserve Bank of India (d) World Bank
144. Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended the 12th BRICS Summit hosted by _____.
(a) South Africa (b) Russia (c) Brazil (d) China
145. Recently, The India Customs intercepted an 18-tonne shipment of red sandalwood destined for the United Arab Emirates, during a month-long _____ coordinated by the Interpol and the World Customs Organisation, which involved law enforcement agencies in 103 countries.
(a) "Operation Thunder 2020"
(b) "Operation Thunderbolt 2020"
(c) "Operation Sandal 2020"
(d) "Operation Bright 2020"

146. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled the 'Statue of Peace' in _____ to mark the 151st Birth Anniversary celebrations of Jainacharya Shree Vijay Vallabh Surishwer Ji Maharaj.
(a) Rajasthan (b) Gujarat (c) Maharashtra (d) Madhya Pradesh
147. Tristan da Cunha is creating a marine protection zone to safeguard endangered rockhopper penguins, yellow-nosed albatross and other wildlife in an area of the _____ three times the size of the United Kingdom.
(a) South Atlantic (b) South Pacific (c) North Arctic (d) North Pacific
148. Who is the first chairperson of Air Quality Management for the National Capital Region (NCR) to set up the new agency with sweeping powers to monitor and act against sources of air pollution across five north Indian states?
(a) Paresh Sharma (b) Hitesh Niyamat (c) MM Kutty (d) C M Tejpuria
149. The 2020 Physics Nobel Laureate Prof. Andrea Ghez had worked closely with Indian astronomers on the design of back-end instruments and possible science prospects of the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) project being installed at _____ which can revolutionized the understanding of the universe and the enigmas in it.
(a) Maunakea in Hawaii
(b) Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh
(c) Fertiut in Alaska
(d) Leh in Ladakh
150. The World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims takes place on the third _____ in November every year as the appropriate acknowledgment of victims of road traffic crashes and their families.
(a) Thursday (b) Saturday (c) Sunday (d) Monday
151. Nitish Kumar took oath as Bihar Chief Minister for the _____ time.
(a) Fifth (b) Sixth (c) Seventh (d) Eight
152. External Affairs Minister, S Jaishankar has represented India at the 15th East Asia Summit (EAS). The virtual summit was chaired by _____.
(a) Indonesia (b) Vietnam (c) Singapore (d) Malaysia
153. The second phase of Exercise Malabar 2020 is held in the _____.
(a) Northern Arabian Sea
(b) Bay of Bengal
(c) Indian Ocean
(d) Pacific Ocean
154. The ruling National League for Democracy (NLD) has won a majority in the general elections of Myanmar which took place on November 8. According to the constitution, _____ percent seats in Myanmar parliament are reserved for candidates nominated by the army.
(a) 25 (b) 35 (c) 40 (d) 45
155. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has set up an Innovation Hub for the financial sector and appointed _____ as the chairperson of the governing council for the entity.
(a) M. Subramanyan (b) Sudhakar Rao (c) Kris Gopalakrishnan (d) K.R. Ramana
156. The Fifteenth Finance Commission presented a copy of its report to Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. The report titled 'Finance Commission in COVID Times' deals with the ratio in which the taxes are to be divided between the Centre and States in the upcoming next _____ years.
(a) Two (b) Three (c) Four (d) Five
157. The International Space Station welcomed _____ additional crew members with the arrival and docking of the SpaceX Dragon capsule after a 27-hour voyage.
(a) Two (b) Three (c) Four (d) Five

158. The fifth Scorpene conventional submarine, _____, being built by the Mazagon Docks Limited (MDL) with technology transfer from France was launched into water.
(a) Kaveri (b) Kanderi (c) Vagir (d) Virat
159. The Election Commission of India (ECI) has appointed actor _____ as the Punjab state icon to make people aware about ethical voting.
(a) Ranveer Singh (b) Sonu Sood (c) Salman Khan (d) Aamir Khan
160. Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos has revealed the names of _____ environmental organisations that will receive a share of his \$10 billion fund for climate action.
(a) 10 (b) 12 (c) 16 (d) 20
161. The first solar power-enabled Textile Mill in Asia is coming up in _____.
(a) Latur district (b) Parbhani district (c) Surat district (d) Darbhanga district
162. The Indian Navy is set to begin sea trials of its new aircraft carrier named after the erstwhile _____ which was decommissioned in January 1997.
(a) INS Vikrant (b) INS Virat (c) INS Vishwanath (d) INS Vishant
163. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated Bengaluru Tech Summit, 2020 this month via video conferencing. The theme of the summit is _____.
(a) "Next is Now" (b) "Be What You Are" (c) "Next is Best" (d) "India at it's peak"
164. Recently, The ruling National League for Democracy (NLD) has won a majority in the general elections of _____.
(a) Singapore (b) Maldives (c) Mauritius (d) Myanmar
165. In view of its weak financials, the Reserve Bank has placed the _____ under moratorium with immediate effect.
(a) Lakshmi Vilas Bank Limited (b) Utkash Small Finance Bank
(c) Ujjivan Small Bank (d) Paytm Bank Pvt. Ltd.
166. Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the Bloomberg New Economy Forum. The inaugural forum was held in _____.
(a) Beijing (b) Paris (c) Singapore (d) London
167. Name the supercomputer which was established under the National Supercomputing Mission (NSM) which has achieved 63rd rank in the list of 500 most powerful supercomputers in the world.
(a) Param Siddhi (b) Sushmita (c) Param Shatra (d) Roshan
168. Recently, A team of researchers from the Centre for Ecological Sciences (CES), Indian Institute of Science (IISc), after extensive sampling across peninsular India, have discovered new species of vine snakes, most common in _____.
(a) Western Ghats (b) Eastern Ghats (c) Eastern Himalayas (d) Ladakh
169. Which of the following companies has delivered the first hardware, a booster segment, for Gaganyaan Launch Vehicle to ISRO ahead of schedule?
(a) Reliance Energy Limited (b) Larsen & Toubro Ltd.
(c) RITES (d) Jindal Energy Limited
170. World Toilet Day is celebrated every year on:
(a) 14th November (b) 16th November (c) 17th November (d) 19th November
171. Which of the following has launched the world's first hydrogen powered double-decker buses?
(a) Scotland's Aberdeen (b) Spain's Madrid
(c) Germany's Zurich (d) Ireland's Dublin

172. India's first project under the newly formed Convergence Energy Services Limited (Convergence) will be set up in:
(a) Goa (b) Sikkim (c) Assam (d) Punjab
173. Recently, which of the following states has been conferred four awards for the success in the fishery sector by National Fisheries Development Board?
(a) Nagaland (b) Bihar (c) Assam (d) Uttar Pradesh
174. Which of the following paramilitary forces is organized a Para-Cycling expedition "Infinity Ride 2020", in association with Aditya Mehta Foundation?
(a) Border Security Force (BSF) (b) Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)
(c) Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) (d) Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)
175. Recently, Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga and his Australian counterpart Scott Morrison have signed a landmark defence deal in a bid to counter China's growing influence in the _____ and over the Pacific island nations.
(a) South China Sea (b) Paracel Islands (c) Arctic Ocean (d) Indian Ocean
176. Recently, Reserve Bank of India has announced the names of two startups that have been selected as a part of its regulatory _____ programme.
(a) Paperbox (b) Sandbox (c) Moneybox (d) Mudradox
177. SCO Council of Heads of Government is to hold under the chairmanship of:
(a) Russia (b) China (c) India (d) Turkmenistan
178. The department of radiodiagnosis and imaging at the _____ is installing the country's first digital subtraction angiography (DSA) facility dedicated to basic research in animals.
(a) Puducherry PGIMER (b) Chandigarh PGIMER
(c) AIIMS, Delhi (d) AFMC, Pune
179. Which of the following countries received the hosting rights of the 2022 edition of Women's Under-17 football World Cup by FIFA?
(a) Malaysia (b) Japan (c) India (d) South Korea
180. Recently, In order to provide complete range of health care services for people living in remote and inaccessible areas of _____, the state government flagged off Medical Mobile Unit Jeevan Dhara.
(a) Himachal Pradesh (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Maharashtra (d) Haryana
181. The group of five countries is also known as 'Five Eyes' alliance. Which of the following countries is not part of this alliance?
(a) Germany (b) New Zealand
(c) United States of America (d) Canada
182. Recently, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh unveiled two books 'The Republican Ethic Volume III' and 'Loktantra Ke Swar' which are collections of selected speeches of:
(a) President Ram Nath Kovind (b) Vice President Venkai Naidu
(c) Prime Minister Narendra Modi (d) Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar
183. Who among the following inaugurated the virtual 3rd Global Renewable Energy Investment Meeting and Expo (RE-INVEST 2020), on 26th November?
(a) Prime Minister Narendra Modi
(b) President Ramnath Kovind
(c) Agriculture & Farmers Welfare Minister Narendra Singh Tomar
(d) Power Minister R.K.Singh

184. In which of the following states, a community-based nutrition management programme of very severely malnourished children is being conducted in all districts in November 2020?
(a) Assam (b) West Bengal (c) Bihar (d) Madhya Pradesh
185. Recently, The Green Climate Fund has approved dollar 256 million for _____ in grants and loans to meet its Green House Gas (GHG) emission reduction targets under the Paris agreement.
(a) Bangladesh (b) Pakistan (c) Nepal (d) India
186. India is at _____ position in 2020 in a global list by TRACE, an anti-bribery standard setting organization that measures business bribery risk in 194 countries.
(a) 32nd (b) 45th (c) 64th (d) 77th
187. The Prime Ministers of India and _____ virtually launched RuPay Card phase-2 in November 2020.
(a) Nepal (b) Myanmar (c) Maldives (d) Bhutan
188. Recently, The ICC had postponed the 50 over Women's World Cup slated in _____ from 2021 to 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
(a) New Zealand (b) Australia (c) Canada (d) Bangladesh
189. In tennis, who defeated 20-time Grand Slam champion Rafael Nadal in straight sets at the ATP Finals in London?
(a) Andy Murray (b) Dominic Thiem (c) Novak Djokovic (d) Roger Federer
190. Who has been recently re-elected as president of News Broadcasters Association?
(a) Anuradha Prasad (b) Rajat Sharma (c) Arnab Goswami (d) Deepak Chaurasiya
191. Who has been elected as External Auditor of Inter Parliamentary Union, Geneva, for a three-year term?
(a) Girish Chandra Murmu (b) Rajiv Mahirishi
(c) Rajeev Gauba (d) Deepak Luthra
192. Recently, Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister launched the first State BioEconomy Report. According to the report, Karnataka's BioEconomy has grown by 14 to 17 percent in the previous two years, contributing _____ percent to the Gross State Domestic Product GSDP.
(a) 5.6 (b) 6.7 (c) 8.7 (d) 10.3
193. Recently, Union Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan chaired an event to mark the National Newborn Week 2020. This year, the theme of National Newborn Week is:
(a) 'Quality, Equity, Dignity for every newborn at every health facility and everywhere
(b) Equity and Quality monitoring
(c) Equity and Dignity for every new born
(d) Quality Everywhere and Every Possibility
194. Recently, _____ has released the backend code of Aarogya Setu App in open domain.
(a) Ministry of Education
(b) Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
(c) Ministry of Home Affairs
(d) Ministry of Rural Development
195. As part of steps to deepen cooperation in civil space activities, the space agencies of India and were working together to position temporarily Indian tracking facilities.
(a) Australia (b) New Zealand (c) Indonesia (d) Malaysia
196. Which of the following banks has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Luxembourg Stock Exchange (LuxSe) recently?
(a) State Bank of India (b) Bank of Baroda
(c) Punjab National Bank (d) Canara Bank

197. Recently, Minister for Finance Nirmala Sitharaman virtually participated in the G20 Finance Ministers meeting in _____.
(a) Mumbai (b) Kolkata (c) New Delhi (d) Lucknow
198. India's first child to have undergone liver transplant and is set to become doctor is
(a) Kandasamy (b) Manish Chopra (c) Subendu Sarkar (d) Radharaman Iyer
199. The Gorewada International Zoo in _____ has recently got its first tiger for the Indian safari, work for which has almost been completed.
(a) Nagpur (b) Mysuru (c) Solapur (d) Panaji
200. Who won the 2020 Booker Prize for fiction with his debut novel Shuggie Bain, which described a boy growing up in Glasgow in the 1980s with a mother battling addiction?
(a) Michael Smith (b) Thomas Bun (c) Douglas Stuart (d) Albert Evaristo
201. Recently, Indian Navy is hosted the 27th edition of _____ Bilateral Maritime Exercise SIMBEX-20 in Andaman Sea.
(a) India – Singapore (b) India – Seychelles (c) India – Canada (d) India-Indonesia
202. Which of the following countries is to host G20 Summit in 2023?
(a) Italy (b) Indonesia (c) India (d) Canada
203. Recently, Karnataka Governor Vajubhai Vala presented Doctor of Science honorary doctorate by Visvesvaraya Technological University upon _____.
(a) Chairman of the Defence Research and Development Organisation G. Satheesh Reddy
(b) Director General (Aeronautical Systems) Dr Tessy Thomas
(c) Minister of Science and Technology Dr. Harshvardhan
(d) ISRO Chairman K Sivan
204. Recently, the 15th G20 Summit was held in a virtual format. The two-day Summit is chaired by _____.
(a) Russia (b) France (c) Canada (d) Saudi Arabia
205. Recently, _____ livestreamed footage of its new manned submersible parked at the bottom of the Mariana Trench part of a historic mission into the deepest underwater valley on the planet.
(a) Japan (b) China (c) Australia (d) New Zealand
206. Recently, Birdwatchers photographed a desert finch in _____ district, marking what is possibly the first sighting of this avian species in the country.
(a) Sirsa (b) Rohtak (c) Bikaner (d) Jaisalmer
207. Dronacharya award winner _____ is credited with bringing the country's first professional academy for para badminton, named after him.
(a) Vikrant Thapar (b) Gaurav Khanna (c) Surendra Patil (d) Amit Panghal
208. A cow shelter in Assam's _____ inaugurated Northeast's first-ever cow hospital on the occasion of Gopashtami.
(a) Majuli (b) Dispur (c) Guwahati (d) Dibrugarh
209. Recently, Over 2,000 representatives from _____ countries attended the virtual 4th Global Conference on Criminal Finances and Cryptocurrencies organised by the Interpol, Europol and the Basel Institute on Governance.
(a) 77 (b) 89 (c) 112 (d) 132
210. India International Cherry Blossom Festival, the calendar event of _____ which attracts record number of tourists annually, has been cancelled this year in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic.
(a) Nagaland (b) Sikkim (c) Manipur (d) Meghalay

211. India's first moss garden has been developed at Khurpatal in _____.
(a) Nainital district (b) Pithoragarh district (c) Chamba district (d) Shillong district
212. Who has been conferred with the Vatayan Lifetime Achievement Award for his contribution in the field of literature recently?
(a) Shri Ramnath Kovind (b) Shri Venkaih Naidu
(c) Shri Anurag Thakur (d) Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank
213. A two-day All India Presiding Officers' Conference was organized at _____ on 25th of this month.
(a) Jodhpur in Rajasthan (b) Kevadia in Gujarat
(c) Maharajganj in Uttar Pradesh (d) Gaya in Bihar
214. Indian Navy Ships including indigenously built ASW corvette Kamorta and missile corvette Karmuk are participating in the 2nd edition of India, Singapore and _____ Trilateral Maritime Exercise SITMEX-20 in Andaman Sea.
(a) Thailand (b) Trinidad and Tobago (c) Tajikistan (d) Tanzania
215. Recently, US President-elect Joe Biden has appointed Indian-American _____ as the policy director of his wife Jill, choosing an experienced education policy hand as the incoming First Lady focuses on education and plans to continue teaching community college classes.
(a) Mala Adiga (b) Deepa Malik (c) Vidhushi Sinha (d) Mriganka Singh
216. New Zealand's first-ever Indian-origin minister after Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern brought five new ministers into her executive is
(a) Chetana Jirach (b) Priyanka Radhakrishnan
(c) Ramya Krishnan (d) Anamika Jayachandran
217. Recently, An AI-enabled 'mind-reading' headset designed by _____ an MIT graduate who grew up in Delhi, has been named as Time's 100 Best Inventions of 2020.
(a) Amit Singhal (b) Arnav Kapur (c) Mrinal Sen (d) Anupam Mishra
218. Which of the following has become the first central bank in the world to achieve the 1-million-follower mark on the microblogging network Twitter?
(a) U.S. Federal Reserve System (b) Bank of Japan
(c) Reserve Bank of India (d) Swiss National Bank
219. Who has been awarded the United Nations Population Award in the individual category for 2020 for her work on sexual health and ending gender violence?
(a) Aan San Suu Kyi (b) Maryam Nawaz
(c) Gyalyum Sangay Choden Wangchuck (d) Maneka Gandhi
220. Who among the following addressed the Boston Center of Excellence for Health and Human Development through Video Conference?
(a) Health Minister Harsh Vardhan (b) Prime Minister Narendra Modi
(c) Rajendra Singh (d) Mahendra Singh

221. Which of the following Indian cities has been declared Winner at the ET Government Global Smart Cities Forum 2020 under the category Best Digital Initiative of the Year (Technology)?
(a) Bhopal (b) Kohima (c) Agartala (d) Dispur
222. To mark the occasion of 3 years of UMANG and 2000 plus services milestone, an online conference was organized under the chairmanship of _____.
(a) Minister for Electronics and Information Technology, Ravi Shankar Prasad
(b) Minister of Home Affairs Amit Shah
(c) Prime Minister Narendra Modi
(d) Vice President Venkai Naidu
223. Recently, US President-elect Joe Biden has announced key figures for his cabinet, picking longtime foreign policy advisor _____ to be his secretary of state.
(a) Thomson Jui (b) Bill Knoght (c) Antony Blinken (d) Thiman Jiure
224. Which of the following countries topped public health agency - the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has released its first blueprint of a four-pronged ethical basis which will determine how the coronavirus vaccine could be released to reach more than 261 million people who fall into the category of essential workers?
(a) American (b) British (c) Russian (d) German
225. Recently, Odisha Essential Services (Maintenance) Amendment Bill-2020 was passed by the state assembly. According to the provisions of the amended bill, persons resorting to or found instigating or funding illegal strikes may face a fine upto _____.
(a) Rs. two thousand (b) Rs. five thousand (c) Rs. ten thousand (d) Rs. twenty thousand
226. In a recent study, astronomers have discovered a cold _____ also known as a 'super planet'-BDR J1750+3809 with the help of a radio telescope.
(a) brown dwarf (b) black dwarf (c) red dwarf (d) yellow dwarf
227. A research team led by which of the following IIT's has developed a novel free-space optical communication system for information transfer?
(a) IIT Guwahati (b) IIT Roorkee (c) IIT Delhi (d) IIT Bombay
228. In Tennis, who won ATP Tour Finals, the biggest title of his career?
(a) Daniil Medvedev (b) Roger Federer (c) Andy Murray (d) Dominic Thiem
229. World Television Day is celebrated every year on:
(a) 20th November (b) 21st November (c) 23rd November (d) 24th November
230. Name the Indian series which bagged the best drama series honour at the 48th International Emmy Awards.
(a) Mirzapur (b) Panchayat (c) Delhi Crime (d) A Suitable Boy
231. Name the thirteen-year-old Uttarakhand-based climate activist who has been featured in the BBC's list of 100 inspiring and influential women from around the world for 2020?
(a) Aditi Pant (b) Shivangi Rawat (c) Ridhima Pandey (d) Ayushi Parashar

232. Recently, A 1,500-sq. km. conservation area straddling the _____ border has received the TX2 Conservation Excellence Award for 2020.
(a) India-Nepal (b) India-Bangladesh (c) India-Bhutan (d) India-Myanmar
233. Recently, Agriculture Minister unveiled _____ to impart training to primary cooperative societies in rural areas.
(a) 'Sahakar Pragya' (b) 'Sahakar Sewa' (c) 'Sahakar Sahayata' (d) 'Sahakar Prabha'
234. Who has been nominated by Joe Biden to become the next Treasury secretary of USA?
(a) Pamila Jayapal (b) Janet Yellen (c) Teresa Anthony (d) Nikkey Halley
235. Recently, In a series of proposals, an Internal Working Group (IWG) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has recommended the guarded entry of corporates into the banking space. The committee is headed by:
(a) Amish Kumar Gupta (b) PK Mohanty (c) A. B. Nayan (d) Prabhakar Mukherjee
236. Recently, India unveiled new development initiatives for Afghanistan, including a dam to supply water to Kabul. The name of this dam is:
(a) Parijat Dam (b) Neem Dam (c) Shahtoot Dam (d) Gulmohar Dam
237. Name the Indian players who are nominated for the coveted ICC Men's Player of the Decade Award.
(a) Rohit Sharma and Ravindra Jadeja (b) Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma
(c) Bhubaneshwar Kumar and Rohit Sharma (d) Virat Kohli and Ravichandran Ashwin
238. Which of the following airports has become the first airport in the Asia-Pacific region and in the world to reach Level 4 Transformation of Airport Carbon Accreditation?
(a) Heathrow Airport (b) Sydney Airport (c) Christchurch Airport (d) Alaska Airport
239. In Himachal Pradesh, the state government launched _____ to sensitize the people regarding Covid-19 pandemic and also to collect information regarding symptoms of diseases like TB, Leprosy, sugar and blood pressure by door to door campaign.
(a) 'Him Suraksha Sewa' (b) 'Him Suraksha Abhiyan'
(c) 'Swasthya Himachal' (d) 'Himachal Swasth Rakho Abhiyan'
240. World Children's Day is celebrated every year on:
(a) 12th November (b) 15th November (c) 20th November (d) 25th November
241. Who has been elected as the new independent chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC) recently?
(a) Ehsan Mani (b) Greg Barclay (c) Saurav Ganguly (d) Imran Khwaja
242. Name the Indian origin a Member of Parliament in New Zealand, who took oath in New Zealand's indigenous Maori language and Sanskrit, a classical language from India.
(a) Dr. Vimal Parekh (b) Dr. Gaurav Sharma (c) Dr. Prafull Natrajan (d) Dr. Mrinal Sengupta
243. Which of the following states launched welfare scheme - Jagananna Thodu (Brother Jagan's support) - aimed at providing interest-free loans to small traders and street vendors in the state?
(a) Telangana (b) Karnataka (c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Tamil Nadu

244. Which of the following Indian ministries has launched a portal that will allow transgender persons to apply online for certification of their self-perceived gender identity?
- (a) Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions
(b) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
(c) Ministry of Finance
(d) Ministry of Home Affairs
245. According to the research paper, titled 'Future of Regional Cooperation in Asia and Pacific', India was the _____ major host of greenfield foreign direct investment (FDI) projects and eight major host of cross-border M&A deals between 2004 to 2015.
- (a) Second (b) Third (c) Fourth (d) Sixth
246. Union Cabinet has approved equity infusion by Government of _____ rupees in NIIF Debt Platform sponsored by National Investment and Infrastructure Fund, comprising Aseem Infrastructure Finance Limited and NIIF Infrastructure Finance Limited.
- (a) 3000 crore (b) 4000 crore (c) 5000 crore (d) 6000 crore
247. Which of the following countries is getting on board India's Venus orbiter mission 'Shukrayaan' with a scientific instrument to explore the planet?
- (a) Norway (b) Sweden (c) Ireland (d) Finland
248. The football legend and winner of the 1986 World Cup, Diego Maradona, has passed away at home in Tigre after suffering a heart attack. He hails from _____.
- (a) Argentina (b) Brazil (c) USA (d) Russia
249. Recently, Malayalam feature _____ has been selected as India's official entry for the International Feature Film category at the 93rd Academy Awards announced by the Film Federation of India (FFI).
- (a) Vihangam (b) Rowdy (c) Jallikattu (d) Dhiruster
250. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a book on the life and ideals of _____.
- (a) Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji (b) Sri Guru Ramdas Ji
(c) Sri Guru Arjandev Ji (d) Sri Guru Govind Singh Ji
251. Every year, Constitution Day is being celebrated across the country to mark the adopting of the Indian Constitution by the Constituent Assembly on:
- (a) 18th January (b) 21st November (c) 24th October (d) 26th November
252. According to a survey released by global civil society Transparency International, which of the following countries has the highest rate of bribery and use of personal links to access public services such as healthcare and education in Asia?
- (a) Pakistan (b) Bangladesh (c) India (d) Nepal
253. United Nations Development Programme, (UNDP) and Invest India have launched the _____ Investor Map for India.
- (a) Reinvest India (b) Visitors Lock
(c) Sustainable Development Goals (d) NITI

254. Which among the following has joined hands with PNB MetLife India Insurance Company Limited to launch Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana?
(a) India Post Payments Bank (b) Jio Payments Bank
(c) Ujjivan Finance Payments Bank (d) Paytm Payments Bank
255. Recently, India and _____ signed an MoU for developing cooperation between two countries in the field of Environment protection and biodiversity conservation.
(a) Ireland (b) Finland (c) Sweden (d) Norway
256. Recently, DRDO flagged off the first _____ the heavy weight torpedo that was delivered to the Indian Navy.
(a) Varunastra (b) Vardhastra (c) Varuna (d) Vikramaditya
257. Which of the following countries had launched a robotic spacecraft recently to bring back rocks from the moon in the first bid by any country to retrieve samples from the lunar surface since the 1970s?
(a) Japan (b) India (c) China (d) South Korea
258. According to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India's renewable power capacity is the _____ largest in the world and it is growing at the fastest speed among all major countries.
(a) 2nd (b) 3rd (c) 4th (d) 7th
259. Recently, James Wolfensohn had died. He had earlier served as the President of:
(a) International Monetary Fund (b) World Bank
(c) AIIB (d) United Nations
260. Name union territory which ranked third among the Union Territories in implementing PM SVANidhi Yojana.
(a) Jammu & Kashmir (b) Ladakh (c) Lakshadweep (d) Puducherry
261. Which of the following Indian states announced that it would constitute a Cabinet within the Cabinet, christened "Gau Cabinet", to recommend measures for the conservation and promotion of cattle resources?
(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Haryana (c) Madhya Pradesh (d) Gujarat
262. Which of the following countries has declared a climate emergency recently?
(a) USA (b) France (c) Australia (d) New Zealand
263. Recently, Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar launched five Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) for producing honey which will be set up with the help of NAFED. Which is not among the five FPO's?
(a) Mathura (Uttar Pradesh) (b) Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh)
(c) Bharatpur (Rajasthan) (d) Sunderbans (West Bengal)
264. Which of the following Asian countries has powered up its first domestically developed nuclear reactor the Hualong One to become less dependent on Western allies for energy security and critical technology?
(a) Japan (b) North Korea (c) China (d) South Korea
265. Recently, The Drug Detoxification Centre in _____ is being set up with the help of India.
(a) Maldives (b) Mauritius (c) Seychelles (d) Sri Lanka

266. Recently, Face-to-face negotiations between the _____ and the European Union (EU) over a trade deal have restarted.
(a) United Kingdom (b) Germany (c) France (d) Finland
267. Recently, Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal has launched the _____, an initiative of the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).
(a) Kalawati Award 2020 (b) Mridang Awad 2020
(c) Lilavati Award 2020 (d) Sulekha Award 2020
268. Which of the following countries foreign inflows continued to be the top source of FDI for India in April-September 2020-21?
(a) Singapore (b) Maldives (c) USA (d) Japan
269. Recently, In India the new species of burrowing frog is named after the Indian city of _____.
(a) Chennai (b) Bengaluru (c) Chennai (d) Lucknow
270. Recently, Former President _____ memoir, “A Promised Land,” has sold more than 1.7 million copies in its first week — breaking records for publisher Penguin Random House.
(a) Barack Obama (b) George W Bush (c) Bill Clinton (d) Jimmy Carter
271. Which of the following countries hosted the 19th meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of Government in a virtual format?
(a) Pakistan (b) Russia (c) China (d) India
272. The famous Kartikai Deepam festival is being celebrated in:
(a) Maharashtra (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Sri Lanka (d) Tamil Nadu
273. Dev Deepawali, which has become a world famous festival of light and fervour in _____ is celebrated on Kartik Purnima every year.
(a) Bhubaneswar (b) Varanasi (c) Guwahati (d) Ayodhya
274. According to airline industry body IATA, which of the following cities has become world’s most connected city as the coronavirus shakes up international travel?
(a) Shanghai (b) Paris (c) Tokyo (d) London
275. Which of the following rivers flowing in India is also known as “Yarlung Zangbo” in Tibet?
(a) Teesta (b) Brahmaputra (c) Lohit (d) Dihang
276. Libra cryptocurrency is readying to launch as early as January citing three unidentified people involved in the project. Libra cryptocurrency is associated with _____.
(a) Facebook (b) Google (c) Amazon (d) SpaceX
277. Which of the following countries opened its First UNESCO World Heritage Site ‘Hegra’ After 2,000 Years?
(a) Saudi Arabia (b) Kuwait (c) Oman (d) Jordan

278. Recently, A new species of _____ the smallest known Indian gekkonid, has been discovered in the Eastern Ghats.
(a) Owl (b) Lizard (c) Frog (d) Deer
279. Name the Dubai-based Indian-origin writer who was shortlisted among the final six authors for her debut novel Burnt Sugar for Booker Prize 2020?
(a) Malavika Saha (b) Amita Kulshrestha (c) Avni Doshi (d) Priya Narsingh
280. International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People is observed every year on:
(a) 21st November (b) 22nd November (c) 25th November (d) 29th November



Career
Launcher

ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

1. **a** Ushering in a revolutionary system in the Revenue and Registration departments, the Telangana government launched the Dharani portal, a first of its kind in the country, for storing digitised land records and registration of properties.
2. **c** The Federation of Indian Publishers (FIP) has organised a virtual version of Delhi Book Fair this year in light of the Corona pandemic.
3. **b** Panna National Park in Madhya Pradesh has been declared a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, a site that will serve as a lab to test innovative approaches to eco-conservation and sustainability.
4. **c** The Ministry of AYUSH and M/s Invest India will form a collaboration to set up a “Strategic Policy & Facilitation Bureau” to facilitate planned and systematic growth of the Ayush sector.
5. **b** Priyanka Radhakrishnan has become the first person of Indian origin to become a Minister of the Crown under the new Cabinet line-up announced by Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern.
6. **c** Former HDFC Bank managing director Aditya Puri has joined U.S.-based global investment firm the Carlyle Group as a senior advisor.
7. **b** In a display of its growing combat prowess, the Indian Air Force successfully test-fired an air launched version of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile from a Sukhoi fighter aircraft in the Bay of Bengal.
8. **a** West Bengal will soon feature “India’s first” ‘Tyre Park’, where artworks made from scrap and defective parts will be on display.
9. **a** Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has announced Reliance Jio as the title sponsor of the Women’s T20 Challenge 2020.
10. **d** The International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists is a UN-recognized international day observed annually on 2 November.
11. **d** Union minister Hardeep Singh Puri and nine others were elected unopposed to the Rajya Sabha from Uttar Pradesh.
12. **c** A solar energy-driven miniature train, billed as India’s first of its kind, was inaugurated at the Veli Tourist Village by Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.
13. **a** In December 2015, the United Nations General Assembly designated 5 November as World Tsunami Awareness Day to promote a global culture of tsunami awareness.
14. **c** The Ganges (2525 km) is the longest river in India and also the largest river in India followed by Godavari (1465 km). The states that are covered by this water body are Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and West Bengal.
15. **b** Duarte Pacheco of Portugal has been elected the new President of Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) for the period 2020-2023.
16. **a** Georgia, a country at the intersection of Europe and Asia, is a former Soviet republic that’s home to Caucasus Mountain villages and Black Sea beaches.
17. **a** Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan will launch work on a mega city development project under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in Rashakai town of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province on November 18.
18. **a** Nearly a third of the 100 cities in the world susceptible to ‘water risk’ — defined as losses from battling droughts to flooding — are in India. Jaipur topped the list of Indian cities, followed by Indore and Thane. Mumbai, Kolkata and Delhi also featured on the list.
19. **b** mCaffeine, India’s first caffeinated personal care brand which has led the coffee revolution in the personal care space since 2016, has been declared cruelty-free and vegan by PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals).

- 20. a** The Emmett Leahy award for 2020 was conferred on Dinesh Katre from the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), Pune.
- 21. a** Goa became the first State to provide tap water connections in all rural homes last month, and Telangana (98%) and Puducherry (87%) are also set to achieve full coverage next year.
- 22. b** Six women led startups have won COVID-19 Shri Shakti Challenge organized by MyGov in collaboration with UN Women.
- 23. b** Punjab is the first State in the country to celebrate a state specific “Punjab State No Tobacco Day” on 1st November.
- 24. c** As part of Mission Sagar-II, INS Airavat will deliver food aid to Sudan, South Sudan, Djibouti and Eritrea.
- 25. b** Qatar’s ruler said that a long delayed vote for the country’s policy reviewing chamber will be held in October 2021, marking the Gulf emirate’s first national election.
- 26. a** Interpol has, for the first time in its history, decided to postpone its General Assembly (GA), which had been scheduled to take place in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in December, because of the raging Covid-19 pandemic.
- 27. a** According to the researchers, including those from the University of Sheffield in the UK, the standard method for detecting antibiotic resistance in bacterial samples is a relatively slow process that typically takes between 12 and 24 hours.
- 28. c** On 5 November 2001, the UN General Assembly declared 6 November of each year as the International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict.
- 29. a** The Ladakh administration will be setting up a snow ski institute along with other adventure sports facilities in Kargil district similar to Gulmarg’s Institute of Skiing and Mountaineering (IISM) to promote winter sports in the Union Territory.
- 30. d** Filmmaker Zoya Akhtar’s drama “Gully Boy” has bagged the best original music award for musician Karsh Kale and the Salvage Audio Collective at the 14th Annual Asian Film Awards.
- 31. c** The information and broadcasting ministry has set up a four-member committee to make “recommendations for a robust, transparent and accountable ratings system (for television) in India”.
- 32. a** President Ram Nath Kovind promulgated the Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020 to further amend Arbitration and Conciliation Act 1996.
- 33. a** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has chaired the Virtual Global Investor Roundtable Conference. The Roundtable is being organized by the Ministry of Finance and National Investment and Infrastructure Fund.
- 34. b** A 38-year-old Indian-American lawyer has become the first South Asian woman to be elected to the New York State Assembly. Jenifer Rajkumar, a Democrat, defeated her Republican rival Giovanni Perna.
- 35. c** Visa, the global leader in payments technology, announced the first successful live deployment of a PCI certified Tap to Phonecard acceptance solution, in partnership with Digit Secure and HDFC Bank.
- 36. c** The Indian Space Research organisation (ISRO) has scheduled the launch of the Earth Observation Satellite EOS01. Nine other customer satellites will also be carried into space by the workhorse launch vehicle PSLV-C49.
- 37. a** The Bangladesh and US Navies launched the ‘Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) Bangladesh-2020’ to expand relationships and broaden maritime awareness between the two countries.
- 38. b** Diclofenac, a drug used to treat cattle, was linked to kidney failure in vultures and a decline in the bird’s population.
- 39. c** Niraj Antani, a 29-year-old Republican, has created history by becoming the first Indian-American to be elected to the Ohio state Senate.
- 40. a** Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri launched Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge focusing on shaping cities for young children and their families.

41. b Close on the heels of announcing a minimum support price for 16 vegetables, the left-front government in Kerala has launched royalty for paddy fields in order to promote paddy cultivation. Paddy field owners will get a royalty of Rs. 2,000 per hectare for paddy fields that are being cultivated.
42. c Its aim is to map Ireland's entire seabed by 2026, becoming the first country in the world to have systematically mapped its marine territory. Ireland's ocean territory area – at 880,000 sq km – is about 10 times the land mass of the country.
43. b The swearing-in ceremony of President John Pombe Magufuli is underway in Dodoma, Tanzania.
44. b Indian Army chief General M. M. Naravane was conferred the honorary rank of General of the Nepali Army by President Bidya Devi Bhandari at a special ceremony, a decades old tradition that reflects the strong ties between the two militaries.
45. a The Reserve Bank came out with a Co-Lending Model (CLM) scheme under which banks can provide loans along with NBFCs to priority sector borrowers based on a prior agreement.
46. c ICICI Bank has launched a banking stack for millennial customers which offers an instant savings account, a feature-driven iMobile application that offers investment guidance, curated credit and debit card, instant personal loans and overdrafts, and an experiential branch with social engagement space.
47. a The International Centre for Clean Water (ICCW) is going to collaborate with DG TAKANO, a Japanese firm, to introduce new clean water technologies in India.
48. b NASA's Parker Solar Probe, which is designed to image Sun's outer atmosphere and the solar wind, has recently captured a sungrazing comet, confirming the ability of the spacecraft to observe "hard-to-see" comets.
49. a A bronze statue of Shah Rukh Khan and Kajol will be unveiled at London's Leicester Square to mark 25 years of their cult-hit romantic comedy film Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge (DDLJ).
50. d The Republic of Palau, an archipelago of 500 islands in the western Pacific, has plans to become the world's first carbon neutral tourism destination. (Bhutan is the world's only "carbon negative" country in the world, meaning it removes more CO₂ that it adds.)
51. a The Uttar Pradesh State Mineral Development Corporation (UPSMDC) has become the first state public sector undertaking in India that has been dissolved as per law by the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT).
52. b Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the Ro-Pax terminal at Hazira and flag off Ro-Pax service between Hazira and Ghogha in Gujarat through video conferencing.
53. c India and Italy signed 15 agreements in various sectors following a Virtual Bilateral Summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Italian counterpart Giuseppe Conte.
54. d Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lead the Indian delegation to the 20th Summit of SCO Council of Heads of States, which will be held virtually on 10th of this month.
55. c The Haryana Assembly passed a Bill to reserve 75 per cent of private sector jobs in the state for residents of Haryana amid objections from not just the Opposition but also a legislator of the JJP which is part of the BJP-led ruling alliance.
56. b The five Nordic countries are – Finland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Iceland.
57. c In a tightly contested election at the United Nations(UN) in New York, Indian diplomat Vidisha Maitra was elected to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ).
58. a Facebook has rolled out a how-to guide for small- and medium-sized businesses (SMB) in India to help them move from offline to the social network-owned online platforms.
59. b Twenty two faculty members and researchers of Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati were featured in the list of the world's top two per cent scientists created by Stanford University of the USA.
60. c Information Commissioner Yashvardhan Kumar Sinha has been administered the oath as the Chief Information Commissioner (CIC).

- 61. b** Chief minister Trivendra Singh Rawat inaugurated the country's longest single-lane motorable suspension bridge in Tehri Garhwal district to mark the state's 21st foundation day.
- 62. c** Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat launched India's first solar-based Integrated Multi-Village Water Supply Project (IMVWSP) in Arunachal Pradesh.
- 63. c** Government is changing the name of the Ministry of Shipping and it will be known as the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
- 64. a** Mr. Devansh Manoj Jalan is currently pursuing his law degree at the Jindal Global Law School. Mr. Devansh worked on developing this technology for a while and in July 2019, filed for a provisional patent with the Indian Patent Office.
- 65. d** Scotland has become the first country in the United Kingdom to impose a ban on smacking children. With the new legislation that came into force, children under 16 now have the same protection from assault as adults.
- 66. c** Democrat Joe Biden beat Republican Donald Trump to become the 46th President of the United States.
- 67. c** The task force will be co-chaired by former Surgeon General Vivek Murthy, former Food and Drug Administration Commissioner David Kessler and Marcella Nunez-Smith, a professor of public health at Yale University.
- 68. b** China's aim of the launch is to test the technology. The cutting-edge satellite was sent into space with 12 other satellites from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center in the Shanxi Province.
- 69. d** Indian Institute of Management Udaipur announced the virtual launch of its 'Consumer Culture Lab' to foster consumer culture research in India.
- 70. a** In Tennis, world number five Daniil Medvedev defeated Alexander Zverev 5-7, 6-4, 6-1 in the Paris Masters final to clinch his eighth ATP title.
- 71. a** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated a model of the anti-satellite missile system, which is seen as a symbol of national technological advancement, at the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) headquarters in the national capital.
- 72. d** The armed forces conducted a joint tri-service exercise 'Bull Strike' at the Teresa Island in the Nicobar group of islands located close to the strategic Strait of Malacca.
- 73. d** Luis Arce, winner of the October 18 general elections in Bolivia, took office as the new president of the South American country for the next five years. The solemn swearing-in ceremony began at dawn with ancestral rituals at Plaza Murillo in La Paz, where the executive and legislative branches of government are headquartered.
- 74. c** US President-elect Joe Biden has announced a 12-member coronavirus task force to mount an effective response to the pandemic that has infected millions and damaged the US economy.
- 75. a** The first flight carrying Israeli tourists to the UAE landed in the city-state of Dubai, the latest sign of the normalization deal reached between the two nations.
- 76. b** India successfully launched its latest earth observation satellite EOS-01 and nine customer satellites on board its Polar rocket from the spaceport. The Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C49) lifted off from the first launch pad at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Andhra Pradesh at 3:12 PM at the end of a 26-hour countdown and injected the satellites into orbit one after another 20 minutes later.
- 77. a** In a first of its kind policy consultation, Science and Technology Minister Harsh Vardhan interacted with the highly-skilled Indian diaspora to facilitate channels for them to contribute to India's Science Technology and Innovation Policy (STIP) 2020.
- 78. b** Manipur's Gyanendro Ningombam has been elected as the Hockey India president. Ningombam has become the first person from the Northeast to be appointed in the top post of India's national hockey team.
- 79. d** Nagaland Tourism Department has informed that the state government decided to celebrate the Hornbill Festival 2020 in a complete virtual mode only through various audio visual media channels and Social Media platforms.

- 80. b** In Assam, the Education department has started an Aadhaar enrolment drive for nearly 70 lakh students from 9 November, 2020. The drive will cover all government and private school students aged between 6 to 18 years.
- 81. b** Tamil Nadu has bagged the first place under the 'Best State' category under the National Water Awards (NWAs) 2019, presented by the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti, Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation.
- 82. d** The states of Kerala, Goa, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh have been most successful in integrating migrant workers, while crucial migrant receiving states, including Delhi, have done poorly, shows the Interstate Migrant Policy Index that seeks to measure integration of interstate migrants.
- 83. b** Fifteenth Finance Commission submitted its report for the period of 2021-26 to President Ram Nath Kovind. The Finance Commission led by its Chairman N.K. Singh called on the President and submitted the report.
- 84. a** The annual Heads of State-level meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation will be held under the chairmanship of Russia.
- 85. b** Nepal President Bidhya Devi Bhandari has released a special anthology on Mahatma Gandhi- 'My understanding about Gandhi' - during a ceremony at Kathmandu in the presence of Indian Ambassador Vinay Mohan Kwatra.
- 86. a** Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman participated in the 1st BRICS Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors' Meeting under the Russian Chairmanship to discuss the BRICS Economic and Financial Cooperation agenda for 2020.
- 87. a** 'Mission Shakti' was the country's first ever Anti-Satellite (A-SAT) Missile Test successfully conducted on 27th March 2019 from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island in Odisha, where a fast-moving Indian orbiting target satellite in Low Earth Orbit was neutralised with pinpoint accuracy.
- 88. b** Celebrated every 10 November, World Science Day for Peace and Development highlights the significant role of science in society and the need to engage the wider public in debates on emerging scientific issues.
- 89. b** Kenya-based teacher Peter Tabichi, who was awarded the \$1 million Global Teacher Prize last year, has been conferred the 2020 Ahimsa Award by the Trustees of the Institute of Jainology in London.
- 90. c** Pune born Tanay Manjrekar was set to be strapped inside a hyperloop pod deep in the Nevada desert, about to become the first Indian to ride the futuristic mode of transport.
- 91. d** The construction work of the country's first Vertical Lift Railway Sea Bridge is going in full swing, which will be linking Mandapam in the state of Tamil Nadu to Rameswaram at the Pamban Island.
- 92. c** Maharashtra Government has given a green signal to distribute 75 percent of the budgetary fund for the capital expenditure to the department which are at the forefront in generating wealth and employment.
- 93. a** Bhavan Vidyalaya Chandigarh has once again been ranked first in the country in the Academic Reputation category in the 2020-21 School Rankings by Education World.
- 94. a** Armenia and Azerbaijan have signed an agreement to end military conflict over the disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh.
- 95. b** The famous litchis of Tezpur, Assam got the geographical indication (GI) tags, making the item an incontrovertible proof of their origins in the state and protecting them from production elsewhere.
- 96. b** -With a donation of Rs. 7,904 crore during 2019-20, IT giant Wipro's founder chairman Azim Premji topped the list of "India's most generous" released by Hurun India and EdelGive. This is a jump of 1,645% from Rs 453 crore donated by Mr. Premji in the previous year.
- 97. a** A team of researchers at Carnegie Mellon University in Pennsylvania have developed the world's fastest open-source intrusion detection system.
- 98. b** Beihangkongshi 1 is a 12U CubeSat. It is above all the world's first satellite equipped with an electric iodine Ion, called NPT30-I2.

- 99. d** World number one Chen Meng beat Chinese compatriot Sun Yingsha to win her maiden ITTF Women's World Cup title in Weihai as international table tennis returned from an eight-month hiatus due to COVID-19.
- 100. a** Mumbai Indians clinched their record-extending fifth IPL title after beating Delhi Capitals by five wickets in the final at Dubai.
- 101. b** Contreras Earl Architecture has revealed its design for the world-first coral ark. Located at the gateway to the Great Barrier Reef in Port Douglas, North Queensland, Australia, the conservation facility "aims to secure the long-term future and biodiversity of corals worldwide which are under severe threat due to climate change".
- 102. a** Prime Minister Narendra Modi co-chaired the 17th ASEAN-India Summit along with Prime Minister of Vietnam Nguyen Xuan Phuc.
- 103. c** President-elect Joe Biden has chosen his longtime adviser Ron Klain to reprise his role as his chief of staff.
- 104. c** Indian Navy's fifth Scorpene class submarine 'Vagir' was launched at Mumbai's Mazagon Dock.
- 105. c** Team from Odisha selected for NASA Human Exploration Rover Challenge 2021
- 106. b** Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated "Sarhad Vistar Vikasotsav 2020" at Dhordo village situated in the forward border area in Kutch district of Gujarat.
- 107. c** At least 14 scientists from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) - Banaras Hindu University have figured among the top two per cent scientists in a global list compiled by the prestigious Stanford University.
- 108. c** In a first for India, the Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation Ltd., MMRCL will lay vibration-absorbing tracks on the Colaba-Bandra-SEEPZ Metro Line-3.
- 109. c** Public Service Broadcasting Day is being observed on 12th November.
- 110. d** The world's longest serving Prime Minister, Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa of Bahrain, passed away.
- 111. a** Jharkhand Assembly passed a resolution for the provision of a separate 'Sarna Code' for tribals.
- 112. a** Jammu and Kashmir government has launched an e-Auction portal to promote trading of GI tagged 'Kashmir Saffron' across the country.
- 113. a** India Post Payments Bank, IPPB have successfully launched the initiative of doorstep service for submission of Digital Life Certificate through Postman.
- 114. b** The Union Election Commission (UEC) has started to formally announce the results but the final announcement will take some more time as the counting of votes is continuing in some constituencies of Myanmar.
- 115. b** The central government has established International Financial Services Centres Authority to regulate all financial services in International Financial Services Centres (IFSCs) with headquarters in Gandhinagar (Gujarat).
- 116. d** Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced 12 key stimulus measures to boost the economy saying that it is emerging strong amid the Covid-19 pandemic as key parameters of the economy are in the positive trajectory.
- 117. c** The first commercial shipment from Bangladesh to Karimganj, Assam on the Protocol for Inland Water Trade and Transit (PIWTT) route was received.
- 118. c** Kabartal in Bihar's Begusarai district has been recognised as a wetland of international importance — the first such wetland in the state — under the Ramsar Convention, according to the Union Environment Ministry.
- 119. b** Every year since 2008, November 11 is celebrated as education day to commemorate the birth anniversary of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.
- 120. c** World Pneumonia Day, held each year on 12 November, aims to raise awareness about this deadly illness and to advocate for global action to protect against it.

- 121. c** This Children's Day is special for Kolkata, as the culturally-rich city gets its first ever children's tram library — also the first in the world of its kind, giving access to children across age groups and segments to pick and read their favourite book while on the move.
- 122. b** The renewable energy Ministry has expanded the scope of PM-KUSUM scheme to enable greater solar energy generation in farm sector.
- 123. c** Central Minister for Road Transport & Highways inaugurated Nagpur's 3.14 km double-decker flyover on Wardha Road to carry vehicles on the first level and Nagpur Metro's Orange Line on the second level.
- 124. b** External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar sounded the alarm about Chinese expansionism a day before the 10-nation ASEAN signed a free trade pact with China and four other countries while India stayed away.
- 125. a** India is home to many museums, and now it seems it is on its way to receive a sandalwood museum, too. The country's very first, this museum is likely to come up later this month in Mysuru in Karnataka.
- 126. c** Indore-based Enking International may become the world's first company that operates in the carbon markets space to go in for an initial public offering (IPO).
- 127. c** The Finance Ministry has given its go-ahead for the creation of the first ever national database of migrant labour to provide a platform for workers and employers, and for the government to implement specific programmes for such labourers.
- 128. a** Quick Reaction Surface to Air Missile (QRSAM) System has achieved a major milestone by a direct hit on to a Banshee Pilotless target aircraft at medium range and medium altitude.
- 129. a** Bulgaria's EU Commissioner Mariya Gabriel was presented with the prestigious Annual Award of the Vienna Economic Forum "Partner of the Year 2020" for contribution to the economic development at regional and international level of the Forum countries.
- 130. b** The International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) is an international organization which conducts agricultural research for rural development, headquartered in Patancheru (Hyderabad, Telangana, India) with several regional centers (Bamako (Mali), Nairobi (Kenya).
- 131. c** The Lonar lake in Maharashtra and Sur Sarovar, also known as Keetham lake, in Agra, have been added to the list of recognised Ramsar sites.
- 132. a** A remote island in Wales is set to become the first in the world to be powered entirely by 'blue energy' as the nation looks to respond to the challenges posed by climate change.
- 133. d** Bangladeshi teen, 17-year-old Sadat Rahman has won the International Children's Peace Prize 2020 for his fight against cyber bullying.
- 134. b** In Madhya Pradesh, the name of the Tribal Welfare Department will be changed to Tribal Affairs Department.
- 135. b** HDFC Bank announced the launch of Mooh Band Rakho, a campaign to increase awareness on cyber frauds and preventing them.
- 136. a** Equitas Small Finance Bank has launched a new product aimed at women. 'Eva', a unique savings account, tries to address the well-being of Indian women in every aspect such as health, wealth and prosperity.
- 137. d** A research team of IIT Guwahati has formulated efficient "pincer" catalytic systems that transform biomass wastes into valuable chemicals.
- 138. d** Tennis star Novak Djokovic has equalled Pete Sampras's record of winning six year-end number one trophies.
- 139. a** In 2018, Soumitra Chatterjee became the first Bengali to be conferred the prestigious Legion of Honour, the highest order of merit in France.

- 140. d** The International Day for Tolerance is an annual observance day declared by UNESCO in 1995 to generate public awareness of the dangers of intolerance. It is observed on 16 November.
- 141. d** According to a 2018 report on the ‘vital statistics on India based on the Civil Registration System’, Arunachal Pradesh recorded the best sex ratio in the country with 1,085 females born per thousand males
- 142. b** Peru’s interim President Manuel Merino resigned as the nation plunged into its worst constitutional crisis in two decades following massive protests unleashed when Congress ousted the nation’s popular leader.
- 143. d** Department of Investment and Public Asset Management, DIPAM signed an agreement with World Bank.
- 144. b** Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended the 12th BRICS Summit hosted by Russia on November 17.
- 145. a** The India Customs intercepted an 18-tonne shipment of red sandalwood destined for the United Arab Emirates, during a month-long “Operation Thunder 2020”, coordinated by the Interpol and the World Customs Organisation, which involved law enforcement agencies in 103 countries.
- 146. a** Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled the ‘Statue of Peace’ in Rajasthan to mark the 151st Birth Anniversary celebrations of Jainacharya Shree Vijay Vallabh Surishwer Ji Maharaj.
- 147. a** Tristan da Cunha, an island with 245 permanent residents, is creating a marine protection zone to safeguard endangered rockhopper penguins, yellow-nosed albatross and other wildlife in an area of the South Atlantic three times the size of the United Kingdom.
- 148. c** The Centre said former Delhi chief secretary MM Kutty will be the Commission’s first chairperson. Kutty is also ex-secretary, ministry of petroleum and natural gas.
- 149. a** 2020 Physics Nobel Laureate Prof. Andrea Ghez had worked closely with Indian astronomers on the design of back-end instruments and possible science prospects of the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) project being installed at Maunakea in Hawaii, which can revolutionized the understanding of the universe and the enigmas in it.
- 150. c** The World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims takes place on the third Sunday in November every year as the appropriate acknowledgment of victims of road traffic crashes and their families.
- 151. c** Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar made history after he took oath for the top post for the fourth consecutive term to become the longest serving chief minister of the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA). He took oath as Bihar Chief Minister for the seventh time with two Deputy Chief Ministers from the BJP — four-time Katihar MLA Tarkishore Prasad and four-time Bettiah MLA Renu Devi.
- 152. b** External Affairs Minister, S Jaishankar has represented India at the 15th East Asia Summit (EAS) which will discuss ways to strengthen the platform and to make it more responsive to emerging challenges on its 15th anniversary. The virtual summit was chaired by Vietnamese Prime Minister, Nguyen Xuan Phuc and will see the participation of all eighteen East Asian countries.
- 153. a** The second phase of Exercise Malabar 2020 begins in the Northern Arabian Sea. Taking forward the synergy achieved in the recently concluded Phase One of Exercise Malabar 2020, which was conducted earlier this month, this phase will involve coordinated operations of increasing complexity between the navies of Australia, India, Japan and the United States.
- 154. a** The ruling National League for Democracy (NLD) has won a majority in the general elections of Myanmar which took place on November 8. The Union Election Commission (UEC) of Myanmar made the formal announcement through its official list of winning candidates. According to the constitution, 25 percent seats in Myanmar parliament are reserved for candidates nominated by the army.
- 155. c** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has set up an Innovation Hub for the financial sector and appointed Senapathy (Kris) Gopalakrishnan, co-founder and former co-chairman of Infosys, as the chairperson of the governing council for the entity.
- 156. d** The Fifteenth Finance Commission presented a copy of its report to Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. The report titled ‘Finance Commission in COVID Times’ deals with the ratio in which the taxes are to be divided between the Centre and States in the upcoming next five years.

- 157. c** The International Space Station welcomed four additional crew members with the arrival and docking of the SpaceX Dragon capsule after a 27-hour voyage. The mission, which followed a successful test flight by SpaceX earlier this year with two astronauts, is the first in the history of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration with a full crew ferried by a commercial transporter.
- 158. c** The fifth Scorpene conventional submarine, Vagir, being built by the Mazagon Docks Limited (MDL) with technology transfer from France was launched into water.
- 159. b** The Election Commission of India (ECI) has appointed actor Sonu Sood as the Punjab state icon to make people aware about ethical voting, an official statement in Chandigarh said. Punjab Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) S Karuna Raju said his office had sent a proposal to the ECI in this regard and they approved the same.
- 160. c** Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos has revealed the names of 16 environmental organisations that will receive a share of his \$10 billion fund for climate action. This is the first time the world's richest man has named the beneficiaries to the climate action fund since its announcement in February.
- 161. b** In Maharashtra, the first solar power-enabled Textile Mill in Asia is coming up in Parbhani district.
- 162. a** The Indian Navy is set to begin sea trials of its new aircraft carrier named after the erstwhile INS Vikrant which was decommissioned in January 1997.
- 163. a** Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated Bengaluru Tech Summit, 2020 this month via video conferencing. The theme of the summit is "Next is Now".
- 164. d** The ruling National League for Democracy (NLD) has won a majority in the general elections of Myanmar which took place on November 8.
- 165. a** In view of its weak financials, the Reserve Bank has placed the Lakshmi Vilas Bank Limited under moratorium with immediate effect.
- 166. c** The inaugural forum was held in Singapore, and the second annual forum was hosted in Beijing.
- 167. a** Param Siddhi, the supercomputer established under the National Supercomputing Mission (NSM), has achieved 63rd rank in the list of 500 most powerful supercomputers in the world.
- 168. a** Vine snakes are known to be among the most common snakes in peninsular India, found even in many peri-urban areas wherever there is some greenery, and in the Western Ghats.
- 169. b** Larsen & Toubro Ltd. (L&T) has delivered the first hardware, a booster segment, for Gaganyaan Launch Vehicle to ISRO ahead of schedule.
- 170. d** World Toilet Day is celebrated every year on 19th November.
- 171. a** Scotland's Aberdeen has launched the world's first hydrogen powered double-decker buses.
- 172. a** Department of New & Renewable Energy (DNRE), Goa, together with Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), a joint venture of PSUs under the Ministry of Power signed a memorandum of understanding to discuss rolling out of India's first project under the newly formed Convergence Energy Services Limited (Convergence) in the State.
- 173. c** The National Fisheries Development Board has conferred four awards to Assam for the success in the fishery sector.
- 174. a** Border Security Force (BSF) is organized a Para-Cycling expedition "Infinity Ride 2020", in association with Aditya Mehta Foundation.
- 175. a** Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga and his Australian counterpart Scott Morrison have signed a landmark defence deal in a bid to counter China's growing influence in the South China Sea and over the Pacific island nations.
- 176. b** Reserve Bank of India has announced the names of two startups that have been selected as a part of its regulatory sandbox programme.

- 177. c** SCO Secretary General Vladimir Norov has said that economic cooperation will be in focus at the upcoming SCO Council of Heads of Government under India's chairmanship on 30th November.
- 178. b** Chandigarh PGIMER to get India's first dedicated animal house laboratory with advanced research facility.
- 179. c** The Women's Under-17 football World Cup in India, which was initially postponed to next year due to COVID-19 pandemic, was cancelled by FIFA but India was handed the hosting rights of the 2022 edition.
- 180. a** In order to provide complete range of health care services for people living in remote and inaccessible areas of Himachal Pradesh, the state government flagged off Medical Mobile Unit Jeevan Dhara
- 181. a** Foreign ministers from the United States, Australia, Britain, Canada and New Zealand have urged China to reconsider its actions against Hong Kong's elected legislature and immediately reinstate the Legislative Council members.
- 182. a** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh unveiled two books 'The Republican Ethic Volume III' and 'Loktantra Ke Swar' which are collections of selected speeches of President Ram Nath Kovind during the third year of his presidency.
- 183. a** Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the virtual 3rd Global Renewable Energy Investment Meeting and Expo (RE-INVEST 2020), on 26th of this month.
- 184. d** In Madhya Pradesh, a community-based nutrition management programme of very severely malnourished children is being conducted in all districts under the nurtured families - well nurtured Madhya Pradesh i.e. 'Poshit Parivar-Suposhit Madhya Pradesh' campaign.
- 185. a** The Green Climate Fund has approved dollar 256 million for Bangladesh in grants and loans to meet its Green House Gas (GHG) emission reduction targets under the Paris agreement.
- 186. d** India is at 77th position with a score of 45 in a global list that measures business bribery risks of 2020.
- 187. d** Prime Ministers of India and Bhutan virtually launched RuPay Card phase-2.
- 188. a** The ICC had postponed the 50 over Women's World Cup slated in New Zealand from 2021 to 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic
- 189. b** In tennis, Dominic Thiem defeated 20-time Grand Slam champion Rafael Nadal in straight sets at the ATP Finals in London.
- 190. b** The News Broadcasters Association elected India TV Editor-in-Chief Rajat Sharma as the president for another term in 2020-21.
- 191. a** The Comptroller and Auditor General of India, Girish Chandra Murmu, has been elected External Auditor of Inter Parliamentary Union, Geneva, for a three-year term.
- 192. d** According to the report, Karnataka's BioEconomy has grown by 14 to 17 percent in the previous two years, contributing 10.3 percent to the Gross State Domestic Product GSDP.
- 193. a** This year, the theme of National Newborn Week is 'Quality, Equity, Dignity for every newborn at every health facility and everywhere.
- 194. b** Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has released the backend code of Aarogya Setu App in open domain.
- 195. a** As part of steps to deepen cooperation in civil space activities, the space agencies of India and Australia were working together to position temporarily Indian tracking facilities in Australia.
- 196. a** State Bank of India (SBI) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Luxembourg Stock Exchange (LuxSe).
- 197. c** Minister for Finance Nirmala Sitharaman virtually participated in the G20 Finance Ministers meeting in New Delhi.
- 198. a** Doctors at Indraprastha Apollo Hospital in the national capital are eagerly waiting for the coming April, as Kandasamy, who had made history to undergo the country's first paediatric liver transplant as a 20-month child in 1998, will take the Hippocratic oath

- 199. a** The Gorewada International Zoo in Nagpur got its first tiger for the Indian safari, work for which has almost been completed.
- 200. c** Scottish writer Douglas Stuart has won the 2020 Booker Prize for fiction with his debut novel Shuggie Bain, which described a boy growing up in Glasgow in the 1980s with a mother battling addiction.
- 201. a** Indian Navy is hosted the 27th edition of India - Singapore Bilateral Maritime Exercise SIMBEX-20 in Andaman Sea.
- 202. c** G20 leaders announced that India will host the summit of the high-profile grouping in 2023 — a year later than what was decided earlier.
- 203. d** Karnataka Governor Vajubhai Vala presented Doctor of Science honorary doctorate upon ISRO Chairman K Sivan.
- 204. d** The 15th G20 Summit was held in a virtual format. The two-day Summit is chaired by Saudi Arabia.
- 205. b** China livestreamed footage of its new manned submersible parked at the bottom of the Mariana Trench part of a historic mission into the deepest underwater valley on the planet.
- 206. a** Birdwatchers photographed a desert finch in Sirsa district, marking what is possibly the first sighting of this avian species in the country.
- 207. b** Dronacharya award winner Gaurav Khanna is credited with bringing para badminton into the spotlight in India. So, it's only fitting that the country's first professional academy for para badminton is named after him.
- 208. d** A cow shelter in Assam's Dibrugarh inaugurated Northeast's first-ever cow hospital on the occasion of Gopashtami.
- 209. d** Over 2,000 representatives from 132 countries attended the virtual 4th Global Conference on Criminal Finances and Cryptocurrencies organised by the Interpol, Europol and the Basel Institute on Governance
- 210. d** India International Cherry Blossom Festival, the calendar event of Meghalaya which attracts record number of tourists annually in Shillong, has been cancelled this year in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic.
- 211. a** India's first moss garden has been developed at Khurpatal in Nainital district.
- 212. d** Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank has been conferred with the Vatayan Lifetime Achievement Award for his contribution in the field of literature.
- 213. b** A two-day All India Presiding Officers' Conference was organized at Kevadia in Gujarat on 25th of this month.
- 214. a** Indian Navy Ships including indigenously built ASW corvette Kamorta and missile corvette Karmuk are participating in the 2nd edition of India, Singapore and Thailand Trilateral Maritime Exercise SITMEX-20 in Andaman Sea.
- 215. a** US President-elect Joe Biden has appointed Indian-American Mala Adiga as the policy director of his wife Jill, choosing an experienced education policy hand as the incoming First Lady focuses on education and plans to continue teaching community college classes.
- 216. b** Priyanka Radhakrishnan became New Zealand's first-ever Indian-origin minister after Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern brought five new ministers into her executive.
- 217. b** An AI-enabled 'mind-reading' headset designed by Arnav Kapur, an MIT graduate who grew up in Delhi, has been named as Time's 100 Best Inventions of 2020.
- 218. c** In less than nine years, India's Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has become the first central bank in the world to achieve the 1-million-follower mark on the microblogging network Twitter.

- 219. c** In a first for the Himalayan Kingdom, and a rare honour in the sub-continent, Bhutan's Queen Mother Gyalyum Sangay Choden Wangchuck has been awarded the United Nations Population Award in the individual category for 2020 for her work on sexual health and ending gender violence.
- 220. a** Health Minister Harsh Vardhan addressed the Boston Center of Excellence for Health and Human Development through Video Conference.
- 221. b** In Nagaland, Kohima Smart City Development Limited, KSCDL has been declared Winner at the ET Government Global Smart Cities Forum 2020 under the category Best Digital Initiative of the Year (Technology) for Kohima City Wifi Phase-I Project.
- 222. a** To mark the occasion of 3 years of UMANG and 2000 plus services milestone, an online conference was organized under the chairmanship of Minister for Electronics and Information Technology, Ravi Shankar Prasad.
- 223. c** US President-elect Joe Biden has announced key figures for his cabinet, picking longtime foreign policy advisor Antony Blinken to be his secretary of state.
- 224. a** American top public health agency - the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has released its first blueprint of a four-pronged ethical basis which will determine how the coronavirus vaccine could be released to reach more than 261 million people who fall into the category of essential workers
- 225. b** According to the provisions of the amended bill, persons resorting to or found instigating or funding illegal strikes may face imprisonment upto one year or a fine upto Rs. five thousand or both.
- 226. a** In a recent study, astronomers have discovered a cold 'brown dwarf' also known as a 'super planet'-BDR J1750+3809 with the help of a radio telescope.
- 227. a** A research team led by IIT Guwahati faculty, Dr. Bosanta Ranjan Boruah, Department of Physics, IIT Guwahati, and Dr. Santanu Konwar, presently an Assistant Professor at the Department of Physics, Abhayapuri College, Assam, has developed a novel free-space optical communication system for information transfer.
- 228. a** In Tennis, Daniil Medvedev beat Dominic Thiem to win ATP Tour Finals, the biggest title of his career.
- 229. b** In recognition of the increasing impact television has on decision-making by bringing world attention to conflicts and threats to peace and security and its potential role in sharpening the focus on other major issues, including economic and social issues, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 21 November as World Television Day.
- 230. c** Netflix's India Original series "Delhi Crime", helmed by Indian-Canadian director Richie Mehta, has bagged the best drama series honour at the 48th International Emmy Awards.
- 231. c** Thirteen-year-old Uttarakhand-based climate activist Ridhima Pandey has featured in the BBC's list of 100 inspiring and influential women from around the world for 2020
- 232. c** A 1,500-sq. km. conservation area straddling the India-Bhutan border has received the TX2 Conservation Excellence Award for 2020. TX2 stands for "Tigers times two", signalling the goal to double the population of wild tigers by 2022.
- 233. a** Agriculture Minister unveils 'Sahakar Pragya' to impart training to primary cooperative societies in rural areas
- 234. b** President-elect Joe Biden plans to nominate former Federal Reserve Chairwoman Janet Yellen, an economist at the forefront of policy-making for three decades, to become the next Treasury secretary, according to people familiar with the decision.

- 235. b** The committee was headed by PK Mohanty.
- 236. c** An agreement with Afghanistan to build Shahtoot Dam in the Kabul river basin to provide drinking water to two million residents of Kabul city.
- 237. d** The talismanic Virat Kohli and Ravichandran Ashwin were nominated for the coveted ICC Men's Player of the Decade Award with the Indian captain featuring in all five men's categories for his incredible run in the last 10 years.
- 238. c** Christchurch Airport in New Zealand has taken a major step forward in its commitment to fight against climate change, becoming the first airport in the Asia-Pacific region and in the world to reach Level 4 Transformation of Airport Carbon Accreditation.
- 239. b** In Himachal Pradesh, the state government launched 'Him Suraksha Abhiyan' to sensitize the people regarding Covid-19 pandemic and also to collect information regarding symptoms of diseases like TB, Leprosy, sugar and blood pressure by door to door campaign throughout the State.
- 240. c** World Children's Day was first established in 1954 as Universal Children's Day and is celebrated on 20 November each year to promote international togetherness, awareness among children worldwide, and improving children's welfare.
- 241. b** New Zealand's Greg Barclay has been elected as the new independent chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC).
- 242. b** Dr. Gaurav Sharma, who was elected as a member of Parliament in New Zealand, took oath in New Zealand's indigenous Maori language and Sanskrit, a classical language from India.
- 243. c** The YSR Congress Party government in Andhra Pradesh launched yet another welfare scheme - Jagananna Thodu (Brother Jagan's support) - aimed at providing interest-free loans to small traders and street vendors in the state.
- 244. b** The ministry of social justice and empowerment launched a portal that will allow transgender persons to apply online for certification of their self-perceived gender identity.
- 245. c** India was the fourth major host of greenfield foreign direct investment (FDI) projects and eight major host of cross-border M&A deals between 2004 to 2015
- 246. d** Union Cabinet has approved equity infusion by Government of 6000 crore rupees in NIIF Debt Platform sponsored by National Investment and Infrastructure Fund, comprising Aseem Infrastructure Finance Limited and NIIF Infrastructure Finance Limited.
- 247. b** Sweden is getting on board India's Venus orbiter mission 'Shukrayaan' with a scientific instrument to explore the planet.
- 248. a** Argentinian football legend and winner of the 1986 World Cup, Diego Maradona, has passed away at home in Tigre after suffering a heart attack.
- 249. c** Malayalam feature "Jallikattu", directed by Lijo Jose Pellissery, has been selected as India's official entry for the International Feature Film category at the 93rd Academy Awards, the Film Federation of India (FFI) announced.
- 250. a** Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a book on the life and ideals of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji.
- 251. d** On 26th November in 1949, the Constituent Assembly of the country formally adopted the Constitution of India which came into force on 26th January 1950.

- 252. c** India has the highest rate of bribery and use of personal links to access public services such as healthcare and education in Asia
- 253. c** United Nations Development Programme, UNDP and Invest India have launched the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Investor Map for India.
- 254. a** India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) has joined hands with PNB MetLife India Insurance Company Limited to launch Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana.
- 255. b** India and Finland signed an MoU for developing cooperation between two countries in the field of Environment protection and biodiversity conservation
- 256. a** DRDO flagged off the first Varunastra, the heavy weight torpedo that was delivered to the Indian Navy.
- 257. c** China launched a robotic spacecraft to bring back rocks from the moon in the first bid by any country to retrieve samples from the lunar surface since the 1970s, a mission that underscores Chinese ambitions in space.
- 258. c** Prime Minister Narendra Modi said India's renewable power capacity is the 4th largest in the world and it is growing at the fastest speed among all major countries.
- 259. b** James Wolfensohn, who served as the president of the World Bank for 10 years and was a guiding force for a couple of the most well-known cultural institutions in the US, has died.
- 260. b** Ladakh has ranked third among the Union Territories in implementing PM SVANidhi Yojana.
- 261. c** Madhya Pradesh chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan announced that he would be constituting a Cabinet within the Cabinet, christened "Gau Cabinet", to recommend measures for the conservation and promotion of cattle resources.
- 262. d** New Zealand has declared a climate change emergency and committed to a carbon-neutral government by 2025, in what the Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern called "one of the greatest challenges of our time".
- 263. b** Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar launched five Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) for producing honey which will be set up with the help of NAFED in East Champaran (Bihar), Morena (Madhya Pradesh), Bharatpur (Rajasthan), Mathura (Uttar Pradesh) and Sunderbans (West Bengal).
- 264. c** China has powered up its first domestically developed nuclear reactor — the Hualong One — a significant step in Beijing's attempts to become less dependent on Western allies for energy security and critical technology.
- 265. a** The Drug Detoxification Centre in Hulhudhoo, Addu, the Maldives is being set up with the help of India. Tailored to meet the requirements of the local community, the project is funded through an MVR 8 million grant assistance from India. And is going to be steered and executed by the Ministry of National Planning, Housing and Infrastructure of that country.
- 266. a** Face-to-face negotiations between the United Kingdom (UK) and the European Union (EU) over a trade deal have restarted.
- 267. c** Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal has launched the Lilavati Award 2020, an initiative of the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).
- 268. a** Mauritius was the second biggest FDI source during the same period previous year. The US was the fourth biggest investor during that period. Singapore with USD 8.3 billion foreign inflows continued to be the top source of FDI for India in April-September 2020-21.

- 269. b** A group of researchers documenting “Amphibians in the Deccan Plateau parts of Karnataka” encountered a new species of frog and published the findings in a journal. This new species — *Sphaerotheca Bengaluru* — is being named after the city to highlight the lacunae in documentation of amphibians from non-forested areas and to restore frog habitats in Bengaluru.
- 270. a** Former President Obama’s memoir, “A Promised Land,” has sold more than 1.7 million copies in its first week — breaking records for publisher Penguin Random House.
- 271. d** India hosted the 19th meeting of the SCO Council of Heads of Government in a virtual format, which was chaired by Vice President Venkaiah Naidu, the Ministry of External Affairs has said.
- 272. d** In Tamil Nadu, the famous Kartikai Deepam festival is being celebrated.
- 273. b** Dev Deepawali, which has become a world famous festival of light and fervour in Varanasi, is celebrated on Kartik Poornima every year.
- 274. a** Shanghai has dethroned London to become the world’s most connected city as the coronavirus shakes up international travel.
- 275. b** Authorities have given the go-ahead for a Chinese hydropower company to construct the first downstream dam on the lower reaches of the Brahmaputra river, or Yarlung Zangbo as it is known in Tibet, marking a new phase in China’s hydropower exploitation of the river with potential ramifications for India.
- 276. a** Facebook’s Libra cryptocurrency is readying to launch as early as January citing three unidentified people involved in the project.
- 277. a** Saudi Arabia Opens Its First UNESCO World Heritage Site ‘Hegra’ After 2,000 Years
- 278. b** A new species of lizard, the smallest known Indian gekkonid, has been discovered in the Eastern Ghats. Studies show that the species belonged to the genus *Cnemaspis*.
- 279. c** Dubai-based Indian-origin writer Avni Doshi, who was shortlisted among the final six authors for her debut novel *Burnt Sugar*, lost out on the top prize.
- 280. d** In 1977, the General Assembly called for the annual observance of 29 November as the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.