

CURRENT AFFAIRS

September 2020



Summary and Multiple Choice Questions

Current Affairs – September 2020

This is a guide to provide you a precise summary and a huge collection of Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) covering national and international current affairs for the month of **September 2020**.

This guide will help you in preparing for Indian competitive examinations like Bank PO, Banking, Railway, IAS, PCS, UPSC, CAT, GATE, CDS, NDA, MCA, MBA, Engineering, IBPS, Clerical Grade and Officer Grade, etc.

Audience

Aspirants who are preparing for different competitive exams like Bank PO, Banking, Railway, IAS, PCS, UPSC, CAT, GATE, CDS, NDA, MCA, MBA, Engineering, IBPS, Clerical Grade, Officer Grade, etc.

Even though you are not preparing for any exams but are willing to have news encapsulated in a roll, which you can walk through within 30 minutes, then we have put all the major points for the whole month in a precise and interesting way.

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Appointments

1. Vice Admiral SR Sarma assumed charge as Chief of Materiel, Indian Navy

Vice Admiral SR Sarma, AVSM, VSM assumed charge as the Chief of Materiel of the Indian Navy. He was awarded the Ati Vishisht Seva Medal and Vishisht Seva Medal. He is also a recipient of Lt VK Jain Gold Medal in 1994.

As a Principal Staff Officer and the senior most Technical Officer in the Indian Navy, the Admiral would be in charge of all aspects related to maintenance, management and life-cycle product support for ships and submarines.



2. Aveek Sarkar appointed as new Chairman of Press Trust of India

Aveek Sarkar, the Editor Emeritus and Vice Chairman of the Ananda Bazar Group, has been appointed as Chairman of Press Trust of India (PTI). He replaced Vijay Kumar Chopra, Chief Editor of the Punjab Kesari Group of newspapers.

Other PTI board members include Vineet Jain, N. Ravi, Viveck Goenka, Mahendra Mohan Gupta, K.N. Shanth Kumar, Riyad Mathew, M.V. Shreyamskumar, R. Lakshmi Pathy, Hormusji N Cama, Praveen Someshwar, Justice R.C. Lahoti, Deepak Nayyar, Shyam Saran and J.F. Pochkhanawalla.



3. Hemant Khatri assumed charge as new CMD of Hindustan Shipyard Limited

Hemant Khatri assumed charge as the Chairman and Managing Director of state-owned defence shipbuilder, Hindustan Shipyard Ltd (HSL). He replaced Rear Admiral L V Sarat Babu. Prior to this appointment, he served as the Director of Strategic Projects HSL.

Hindustan Shipyard Limited is a shipyard located in Visakhapatnam on the east coast of India. It has a covered building dock for building vessels up to 80,000 DWT.



4. Usha Padhee became first woman DG of Bureau of Civil Aviation Security

Usha Padhee, joint secretary in the Ministry of Civil Aviation, has been given additional charge as Director General of the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS). She thus, became first woman and third IAS officer to have been appointed to the post. She replaced Rakesh Asthana (IPS). Presently, Usha Padhee has been handling the government flagship scheme of regional connectivity as joint secretary in the Ministry of Civil Aviation.



The Bureau of Civil Aviation Security is the regulatory authority for civil aviation security in India. It formulates policy on civil aviation security in conformity to ICAO guidelines.

5. ACC approved appointment of V K Yadav as CEO of Railway Board

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet approved the appointment of the current chairman of the Railway Board VK Yadav as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for human resources (HR) with assistance from a DG (HR). Appointment has been taken place due to restructuring of the Railway Board, whose strength has been cut from eight to five.



The merger of eight railway-related wings into a single central service called the Indian Railway Management Service (IRMS), is under process thereby, renaming of Indian Railway Medical Service (IRMS) as Indian Railway Health Service (IRHS).

6. FADA appointed Vinkesh Gulati as its new President

The Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) appointed Vinkesh Gulati as FADA's 35th President for the year 2020-22. He is the Director of United Automobiles, based out of Allahabad and Faridabad. United Automobiles has been involved in the Auto Dealership business since, 1985 and are dealers for Mahindra & Mahindra and Bajaj Auto.



Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA), is the apex national body of automobile retail industry in India engaged in the sale, service and spares of 2/3 Wheelers, Passenger Cars, UVs, Commercial Vehicles (including buses and trucks) and Tractors.

7. Kenichi Ayukawa appointed as new President of SIAM

The Executive Committee of Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) elected Kenichi Ayukawa as its new President. He is the MD & CEO, Maruti Suzuki India Ltd., since 2013. Prior to this appointment, he served as Vice President of SIAM. The members of SIAM also elected Mr Vipin Sondhi, MD & CEO, Ashok Leyland Ltd, as the Vice President of SIAM.



The Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) is a not-for-profit apex national body representing all major vehicle and vehicular engine manufacturers in India. It works towards supporting sustainable development of the Indian Automobile Industry.

8. Paresh Rawal appointed as new Chairman of National School of Drama Society

President of India has appointed veteran Actor Paresh Rawal as Chairman of National School of Drama Society. The National Award-winning actor has been appointed for four years. In 2014, he was conferred with the Padma Shri. He also served as a former Member of Parliament.



Established in 1959, the National School of Drama is an autonomous organisation, fully financed by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. It offers a 3-year, full-time, residential training program in various aspects of theatre.

9. Former Health Secretary Preeti Sudan appointed in WHO panel

Former Health Secretary Preeti Sudan was appointed as one of the 11 panelists in the World Health Organisation's independent panel for pandemic preparedness and response. The panel is headed by former New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clarke and former Liberia President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf made the appointments.



The prestigious panel also has former UK foreign secretary David Milliband as a member. The global panel will evaluate international response to the Covid-19 pandemic and submit a report by May 2021 to the World Health Assembly.

10. Harivansh re-elected as Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha

NDA candidate Harivansh was re-elected as the Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha. He was elected as Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha in 2018. He is the third person ever and first in forty years to hold this post, who is not from the Indian National Congress.

Harivansh is an Indian journalist and politician. He has experience of working in different media publications. He served as an additional media advisor to former Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar.



11. Subhash Kamath selected as new Chairman of ASCI

Subhash Kamath, chief executive at advertising agency BBH & Publicis Worldwide, India was elected as Chairman of the board of governors of the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI). Kamath is an industry veteran, having spent more than 32 years building brands across various sectors.

The Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI), established in 1985, is committed to the cause of Self-Regulation in Advertising, ensuring the protection of the interests of consumers.



12. Jane Fraser named the first female CEO of Citigroup

Jane Fraser was named CEO of Citigroup replacing Michael Corbat, who would be retiring in February 2020. With this, she became first woman to lead a major Wall Street bank. She has handled various responsibilities at Citi for 16 years, serving in her current role, since 2019. She takes care of business in 19 countries.

Citigroup Inc is an American multinational investment bank and financial services corporation. It engages in the provision of financial products and services.



13. Rajesh Khullar appointed as Executive Director of World Bank

The appointments committee of the cabinet has approved the appointment of Haryana IAS officer Rajesh Khullar as Executive Director, World Bank headquarters, in Washington DC. The 1988 batch IAS officer is presently posted as Principal Secretary to chief minister Manohar Lal Khattar.

Khullar will represent a group of countries including India, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Sri Lanka as the World Bank Executive Director. In 2009, he had received an 'Award of Excellence' under Jawahar Lal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM).



14. Sameer Kumar Khare appointed Executive Director at ADB

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet approved the appointments of Sameer Kumar Khare as the new Executive Director for Asian Development Bank (ADB). The 1989 batch IAS officer of Assam-Meghalaya cadre is presently serving as additional secretary in the economic affairs department of the finance ministry.

Asian Development Bank has appointed Takeo Konishi as its new country director for India. He will replace Kenichi Yokoyama who has taken over as director general of Asian Development Bank's South Asia department.



15. ADB appointed Takeo Konishi as Country Director for India

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has appointed Takeo Konishi as its new Country Director for India. He succeeded Kenichi Yokoyama who has taken over as Director General of ADB's South Asia Department. India is currently ADB's fourth largest shareholder and has been its largest borrower since 2010.

Konishi will lead ADB operations and policy dialogue with the government and other development partners in India. He will oversee the implementation of ADB's India Country Partnership Strategy, 2018–2022, that focuses on building industrial competitiveness to create more jobs.



16. Anil Dhasmana became new chief of NTRO

Former Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) chief, Anil Dhasmana has been appointed as the chief of the National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO). He replaced Intelligence Bureau officer Satish Jha. He has served in key capitals, including London and Frankfurt and has also handled SAARC and Europe desks.



The National Technical Research Organisation is a technical intelligence Agency under the National Security Advisor in the Prime Minister's Office, India. It also includes National Institute of Cryptology Research and Development, which is first of its kind in Asia.

17. India's Khushi Chindaliya appointed as UNEP regional ambassador

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) – Tunza Eco-Generation (TEG), appointed teenager Khushi Chindaliya from Surat, Gujarat, as the Regional Ambassador for India. She will be responsible to raise awareness about the need to safeguard environmental treasures by conducting awareness sessions online. Her appointment is till February 2021.

UNEP is the global champion for the environment with programmes focusing on sustainable development, climate, biodiversity and more. It promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system.



18. EESL appointed Rajat Sud as its new Managing Director

Energy Efficiency Services Ltd (EESL) announced the appointment of Rajat Sud as its Managing Director. He replaced S Gopal, director (commercial), who had taken on the additional charge of interim managing director. Rajat Sud has varied experience in energy sector restructuring, business strategy, performance improvement and acquisitions.



Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) is an energy service company (ESCO) of the Government of India and is the world's largest public ESCO. It facilitates implementation of energy efficiency and climate change projects including energy.

19. Senior IAS PD Vaghela appointed as new TRAI chairman

Senior IAS Officer Dr P. D. Vaghela has been appointed as the Chairman of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India - TRAI. He is 1986-batch officer of Gujarat Cadre. Prior to this appointment, he worked as Secretary, Department of Pharmaceuticals.

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved his appointment. He will replace R.S. Sharma. The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India is a statutory body set up by the Government of India under section 3 of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997.



20. Filmmaker Shekhar Kapur named FTII governing council chairman

Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has announced Shekhar Kapur as the new President of Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) Society and Chairman of FTII Governing Council. Kapur has been the recipient of a National Board of Review Award, as well as an Indian National Film Award and three Filmfare Awards. In 2010, he served as one of the Jury Members (International Competition) at the 63rd Cannes Film Festival.



The Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) is a member of the International Liaison Centre of Schools of Cinema and Television (CILECT), an organisation of the world's leading schools of film and television.

Awards

1. Hyderabad International Airport awarded CII-GBC 'National Energy Leader' award

The GMR led Hyderabad International Airport was awarded CII-GBC 'National Energy Leader' and 'Excellent Energy Efficient Unit' award at the 21st National Awards for Excellence in Energy Management. Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited-Vizag Steel Plant (RINL-VSP) was also awarded for excellence in energy management.



The awards were organised by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Godrej Green Business Centre (GBC), to honor outstanding and innovative practices of the energy efficiency sector, for the energy-efficient and sustainable growth of the Indian industry.

2. Indira Gandhi peace prize awarded to Sir David Attenborough

British broadcaster Sir David Attenborough awarded Indira Gandhi Peace Prize. Sir David Attenborough is an English broadcaster and natural historian. He is popularly known for his creativity in educating the humankind with brilliant films and books about the natural world and for his writing and presenting documentary series, in conjunction with the BBC Natural History Unit.



The Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development was instituted in the memory of the former prime minister by a trust in her name in 1986. It is given to individuals or organisations who work towards ensuring international peace and development.

3. Chaitanya Tamhane won 'International Critics Award'

Chaitanya Tamhane won 'International Critics Award' at the Venice Film Festival for the film 'The Disciple' that portrays three decades of an Indian classical music practitioners' journey rooted in Guru-Shishya parampara. The Disciple is about Sharad Nerulkar (Aditya Modak), an Indian classical vocalist trying to achieve purity in his work.



The International Federation of Film Critics (FIPRESCI), aims to promote and develop film culture as well as safeguard professional interests.

4. Aditya Puri conferred Lifetime Achievement Award by Euromoney Awards of Excellence 2020

Aditya Puri, MD, HDFC Bank was conferred the Lifetime Achievement Award by Euromoney Awards of Excellence 2020 for his skills in building a world-class Indian bank at a time where, there were no similar institutions in existence.

Euromoney's Awards for Excellence are the awards that matter to the banks and bankers who matter. They were established in 1992 and were the first of their kind in the global banking industry.



5. Margaret Atwood awarded 2020 Dayton Literary Peace Prize

Renowned author Margaret Atwood won this year's Dayton Literary Peace Prize's lifetime achievement award. The award "celebrates literature's power to foster peace, social justice and global understanding." Atwood received \$10,000 as prize money.

Eighty-year-old, Atwood has written more than 40 books, including the Man Booker Prize-winning "The Blind Assassin" and the Giller-winning "Alias Grace". The Canadian writer is distinguished for her most notable book, bestselling 1985 dystopian novel – The Handmaid's Tale.



6. Chef Vikas Khanna honoured with Asia Game Changer award

Michelin-star chef Vikas Khanna will be honoured with the prestigious 2020 Asia Game Changer Award. He will be awarded for feeding millions across India amid the COVID-19 pandemic through a massive food distribution drive that he coordinated from Manhattan, USA.

The Asia Game Changer Awards, launched by the Asia Society, a US-based non-profit organisation, identify and honour true leaders, who make a positive contribution to the future of Asia. Khanna is the only Indian among the six honourees named.



7. Kerala won UN Award for Control of Non-Communicable Diseases

Kerala was honored with award from the United Nations for its "outstanding contribution" towards preventing and controlling the spread of non-communicable diseases. With this, Kerala became one among the seven ministries of health across the world. Kerala had arranged basic health facilities from the basic public health centres to hospitals at all levels.



Kerala has shown outstanding contribution in the multi-sectoral action in the prevention and control of NCDs, mental health and the wider NCD-related sustainable development goals (SDGs).

8. PM Narendra Modi awarded Ig Nobel Prize 2020 for medical education

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been awarded the Ig Nobel Prize 2020 for Medical Education. He was awarded the prize for "using the COVID-19 pandemic to teach the world that politicians can have a more immediate effect on life and death than scientists and doctors can".



The Ig Nobel Prize is a satirical and parody award given out by a magazine Improbable Research every year since 1991. The award plays on word 'ignoble', an antonym of noble.

9. 72nd Primetime Emmy Awards 2020

The 72nd Primetime Emmy Awards 2020 was announced. The show was hosted by Jimmy Kimmel. The list of key winners is given below:

- Drama Series: Succession
- Lead Actress in a Drama Series: Zendaya, Euphoria
- Lead Actor in a Drama Series: Jeremy Strong, Succession
- Limited Series: Watchmen
- Lead Actor in a Limited Series or Movie: Mark Ruffalo, I Know This Much Is True
- Lead Actress in a Limited Series or Movie: Regina King, Watchmen
- Comedy Series: Schitt's Creek
- Lead Actor in a Comedy Series: Eugene Levy, Schitt's Creek
- Lead Actress in a Comedy Series: Catherine O'Hara, Schitt's Creek
- Variety Talk Series: Last Week Tonight with John Oliver
- Outstanding Television Movie: Bad Education



10. Usha Mangeshkar honoured with Lata Mangeshkar award 2020-21

The Maharashtra government announced the Gan Samragni Lata Mangeshkar award for the year 2020-21 to veteran female playback singer Usha Mangeshkar. She is an Indian singer who has recorded many Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Kannada, Nepali, Bhojpuri, Gujarati and Assamese songs. Some of her popular songs are "Aplam Chaplam", "Mungda", "Jai Jai Santoshi Maata" etc.



The award which carries a cash prize of Rs. five lakhs and a citation, has been constituted for the felicitation of senior vocal artistes and their contribution. Past recipients include Asha Bhosle, singer Suman Kalyanpur, music composers Ram-Laxman, Uttam Singh and Usha Khanna.

11. CSIR-CDRI felicitated young researchers with CDRI Award

The CSIR-Central Drug Research Institute felicitated young researchers with CDRI Award for their outstanding contribution in drug discovery and development. Dr Bushra Ateeq, Dr Surajit Ghosh and Dr Ravi Manjithaya received the prestigious CDRI Award 2020. These scientists have made outstanding contribution in unfolding the knot of Cancer. One of the CDRI awardees, Dr Bushra Ateeq, also got this year's Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Award in medical sciences.

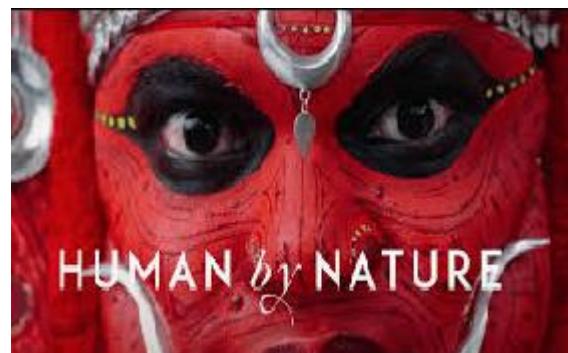


CDRI Awards were instituted in the year 2004 to promote scientific excellence in the country and to recognise outstanding contribution in the area of Drug Research and Development. Each award carries a cash prize of Rs. 20,000/- and a citation.

12. Kerala Tourism bagged PATA Grand Award 2020

Kerala Tourism's 'Human by Nature Print Campaign' bagged the Prestigious Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) Grand Title Winner 2020 for Marketing, out of the 3 categories namely 'sustainability, marketing and human capital development'. The PATA Gold Awards 2020 attracted 121 entries from 62 organisations and individuals worldwide.

PATA Grand Title Winner 2020 for Sustainability was honored to 'Anurak Community Lodge' by YANA Ventures, Thailand. PATA Grand Title Winner 2020 in Human Capital was given to 'Unleashing Greatness' by MGM China.



13. Sonu Sood honoured with Special Humanitarian Action Award by UNDP

Bollywood actor, Sonu Sood was honored with the prestigious SDG Special Humanitarian Action Award by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The actor carried out humanitarian work by paying for the school fee of many less-privileged children and provided free of cost lodging facilities to migrant workers. He financed transportation facilities for scores of migrant workers throughout the country, ensuring that they don't have to resort to walk back home from the states they had migrated to in search of work.



The United Nations Development Programme is the United Nations' global development network. It promotes technical and investment co-operation among nations.

14. Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize 2020 announced

India's Council for Scientific and Industrial Research announced the country's highest science award, Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize for 2020. The prize is awarded to Indian scientists below the age of 45 for outstanding research.



The list of awardees is given below:

Category	Awardee
Mathematics Sciences	Dr UK Anandavardhanan and Dr Rajat Subhra Hazra.
Medicine Sciences	Dr Bushra Ateeq and Dr Ritesh Agarwal.
Physics Sciences	Dr Rajesh Ganapathy and Dr Surajit Dhara.
Biological Sciences	Dr Subhadeep Chatterjee and Dr Vatsala Thirumalai.
Chemical Sciences	Dr Jyotirmayee Dash and Dr Subi Jacob George.
Planetary Sciences	Dr Abhijit Mukherjee and Dr Suryendu Dutta.
Engineering Sciences	Dr Amol Arvindrao Kulkarni and Dr Kinshuk Dasgupta.

Bills and Acts

1. Parliament passed National Commission for Homoeopathy Bill

Parliament passed the National Commission for Homoeopathy Bill, 2020 and the National Commission for Indian System of Medicine Bill, 2020. The bills aim at ensuring availability of high quality medical professionals both for homeopathic treatment as well as for the Indian System of Medicine.

The two bills also propose constitution of Advisory Councils for Homoeopathy as well as for Indian System of Medicine. The bills also envisage a National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test for admission to both undergraduate and Post-Graduate courses of Homoeopathy and for various disciplines of Indian System of Medicine.



2. Rajya Sabha passed Aircraft (Amendment) Bill 2020

Parliament has passed the Aircraft (Amendment) Bill, 2020. The Bill seeks to amend the Aircraft Act, 1934 that regulates the manufacture, possession, use, operation, sale, import and export of civil aircraft, and licensing of aerodromes.

The Bill also seeks to impose a penalty of up to Rs. 1 crore for lapses and violation of airline rules and regulations. It seeks to convert aviation agencies like the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), Bureau of Civil aviation security (BCAS) and Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) into statutory bodies.



3. Parliament passed Bill to cut salaries of MPs by 30%

Parliament passed the Salary, Allowances, and Pension of Members of Parliament (Amendment) Bill, 2020 to reduce salaries of MPs and ministers by 30% for one year in order to "meet the exigencies arising out of the COVID-19 pandemic".

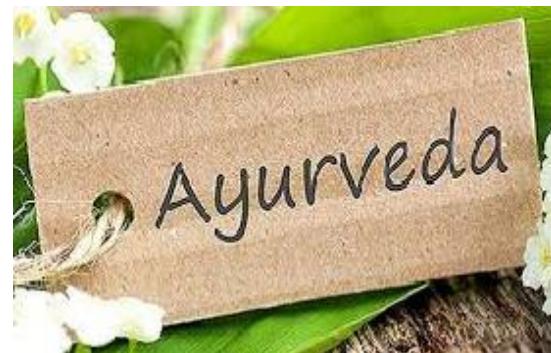
The salaries of MPs will be reduced from Rs. 1,00,000 to Rs. 70,000 for one year. The sumptuary allowance of ministers will be reduced by 30% for the same duration. The proposed reduction to the salaries and allowances of MPs and ministers' amount to savings of around Rs. 54 crores.



4. Parliament passed Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda Bill 2020

The Parliament has passed Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda Bill 2020. The Bill seeks to merge three Ayurveda institutes into one institution by the name of Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda. The Bill declares the Institute to be an institution of National Importance.

The entities that will be merged include Institute for Post Graduate Teaching and Research in Ayurveda, Shree Gulab Kunverba Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya and Indian Institute of Ayurvedic Pharmaceutical Sciences.



5. Parliament passed the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020

Parliament passed the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020.

The main provisions in the bill includes:

- The new legislation will create an ecosystem where, the farmers and traders will enjoy freedom of choice of sale and purchase of agri-produce.
- It will also promote barrier-free inter-state and intra-state trade and commerce outside the physical premises of markets notified under State Agricultural Produce Marketing legislations.
- Farmers will be able to engage in direct marketing thereby, eliminating intermediaries resulting in full realisation of price.

6. Parliament passed the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020

Parliament passed the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020.

The main provisions of the bill are as follows:

- The new legislation will empower farmers for engaging with processors, wholesalers, aggregators, wholesalers, large retailers, exporters etc., on a level playing field. Price assurance to farmers even before sowing of crops.
- It will transfer the risk of market unpredictability from the farmer to the sponsor. Due to prior price determination, farmers will be shielded from the rise and fall of market prices.
- It will reduce cost of marketing and improve income of farmers.



7. Rajya Sabha passed Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (2nd Amendment) Bill

The Rajya Sabha adopted an amendment to the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code Bill, 2020. It amends the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016. It replaces the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020 promulgated on June 5, 2020 to prohibit initiation of insolvency proceedings for defaults arising during the six months from March 25, that is extendable up to one year.



The Bill seeks to temporarily suspend initiation of the corporate insolvency resolution process (CIRP) under the Code.

8. Rajya Sabha passed Epidemic Diseases (Amendment) Bill, 2020

Rajya Sabha passed the Epidemic Diseases (Amendment) Bill, 2020. The Bill amends the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897 to include protections for healthcare service personnel combating epidemic diseases and expands the powers of the central government to prevent the spread of such diseases.

The Bill repeals the Epidemic Diseases (Amendment) Ordinance that was promulgated in April 2020. The legislation makes harm, injury, hurt or danger to the life of healthcare service personnel as a cognizable and non-bailable offence. It has provisions of imprisonment from three months to five years and a fine between Rs. 50 thousand to Rs. 2 lakhs.



9. Parliament approved Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Act, 2020

Parliament approved to the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2020. The bill ensures that foreign funds are not utilized to tamper the social fabric or disturb the internal security in the country. The Bill seeks to amend the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010.

The bill adds public servants among the list of entities prohibited to accept any foreign contribution, which already includes election candidates, editor or publisher of a newspaper, judges, government servants, members of any legislature, and political parties, among others.



10. Lok Sabha passed the Major Port Authorities Bill, 2020

Lok Sabha passed the Major Port Authorities Bill, 2020. The Bill seeks to provide for regulation, operation and planning of major ports in the country and provide greater autonomy to these ports. It seeks to replace the Major Port Trusts Act, 1963.

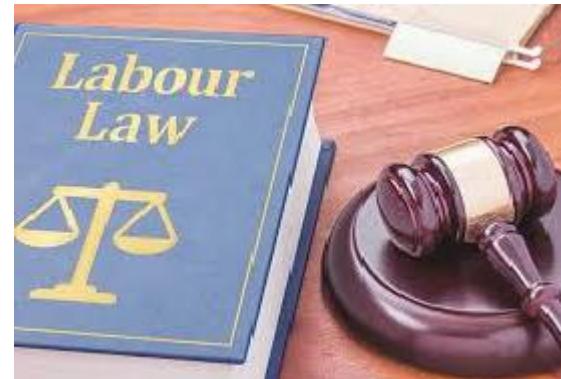
The legislation provides for the creation of a Board of Major Port Authority for each major port. These Boards will replace the existing Port Trusts. The bill will help the ports develop world class infrastructure and will also enhance transparency in their functioning.



11. Parliament passed three Labour Code Bills

The Parliament passed following three Labour Code Bills:

- **The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code 2020**, seeks to amend the laws regulating the occupational safety, health and working conditions of the persons employed in an establishment.
- **The Industrial Relations Code 2020**, aims at amending the laws relating to Trade Unions, conditions of employment in industrial establishment or undertaking, investigation and settlement of industrial disputes.
- **The Code on Social Security, 2020** seeks to amend the laws relating to social security of the employees in the country.



12. Parliament passed J&K Official Languages Bill, 2020

Parliament has passed the Jammu and Kashmir Official Languages Bill, 2020. The bill makes Kashmiri, Dogri, Hindi, English and Urdu as the official language of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.



53.26% people in the Union Territory speak Kashmiri while 20.64% speak Dogri. According to 2011 census, only 0.16% population in Jammu and Kashmir spoke Urdu, while 2.3% spoke Hindi. From 1954, there were two official languages in Jammu and Kashmir, Urdu and English, which were used for official work.

13. Parliament passed Rashtriya Raksha University Bill 2020

Parliament has passed the Rashtriya Raksha University Bill 2020. The Bill establishes the Raksha Shakti University, Gujarat as a University called the Rashtriya Raksha University in Gujarat. The Bill declares the University as an institution of national importance.

The Bill also repeals the 2009 Act. The functions of the University include: (i) providing instructions and research in police sciences, including coastal policing and cyber security, (ii) establishing and maintaining colleges, and (iii) prescribing courses, holding exams, and granting degrees and other distinctions.



14. Parliament passed National Forensic Sciences University Bill 2020

Parliament has passed the National Forensic Sciences University Bill 2020. The Bill establishes the Gujarat Forensic Sciences University, Gandhinagar and the Lok Nayak Jayaprakash Narayan National Institute of Criminology and Forensic Sciences, New Delhi as a National Forensic Sciences University, Gujarat. The Bill declares the University to be an institution of national importance.

The University will promote research in the field of forensic science. It will also work for the capacity building in the field of forensic science.



15. Parliament passed Banking Regulation (Amendment) Bill, 2020

Parliament has passed the Banking Regulation (Amendment) Bill, 2020. The Bill amends the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, which regulates the functioning of banks and provides details on various aspects, such as licensing, management and operations of banks.

The Bill will replace the Banking Regulation (Amendment) Ordinance which was promulgated in June 2020. The Bill allows Reserve Bank of India to initiate a scheme for reconstruction or amalgamation without imposing a moratorium. If a moratorium is imposed in addition to the existing restrictions, the banks cannot grant any loans or make investments in any credit instruments during the moratorium.



16. Parliament passed IIIT Laws (Amendment) Bill 2020

Parliament has passed the Indian Institutes of Information Technology Laws (Amendment) Bill 2020. The Bill amends the Indian Institutes of Information Technology Act, 2014 and the Indian Institutes of Information Technology (Public-Private Partnership) Act, 2017.

The Bill seeks to declare five IIITs set up under the public private partnership mode in Surat, Bhopal, Bhagalpur, Agartala, and Raichur as institutions of national importance.

Currently, these institutes do not have the power to grant degrees or diplomas. On being declared institutions of national importance, the five institutes will be granted the power to grant degrees.



17. Parliament passed Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill

Parliament has passed the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 2020. The Bill allows the central government to regulate the supply of certain food items only under extraordinary circumstances such as war and famine. It will replace the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020 which was promulgated in June 2020.

The Bill will provide assistance in the food production and create a storage system. It will provide freedom to farmers to sell their produce as per their choice and create balance in demand and supply chain.



18. Parliament passed Companies (Amendment) Bill

Parliament has passed the Companies (Amendment) Bill, 2020. The Bill makes three changes to decriminalise various non-compoundable offences and promote ease of doing business.

The bill removes the penalties, which apply for any change in the rights of a class of shareholders made in violation of the Act. The Bill empowers the central government to allow certain classes of public companies to list classes of securities (as may be prescribed) in foreign jurisdictions. It exempts companies with a CSR liability of up to Rs. 50 lakh a year from setting up CSR Committees.



19. Parliament passed 'The Taxation and Other Laws (Relaxation and Amendment of Certain Provisions) Bill, 2020'

Parliament has passed the 'The Taxation and Other Laws (Relaxation and Amendment of Certain Provisions) Bill, 2020'. The Bill seeks to provide various reliefs in terms of compliance requirements for taxpayers amid the coronavirus pandemic. The reliefs include extending deadlines for filing returns and for linking PAN and Aadhaar.

The Taxation and Other Laws (Relaxation and Amendment of Certain Provisions) Bill, 2020, will replace the Taxation and other Laws (Relaxation of Certain Provisions) Ordinance, 2020, issued in March 2020. The bill also seeks to give tax exemption for contributions made to PM-CARES Fund.



Books & Authors

1. Book titled “The Big Thoughts of Little Luv” authored by Karan Johar

Filmmaker and producer Karan Johar announced his first-ever authored children's book titled 'The Big Thoughts of Little Luv'. The book inspired by his parenting experience and his Twins Yash and Roohi, will be published by Juggernaut Books. The book portrays the story of the twins Luv and Kusha and explores every day challenges a parent faces while raising a boy and a girl.

Indian Filmmaker Karan Johar welcomed daughter Roohi and son Yash via surrogacy in February 2017. He has also penned book based on his autobiography, titled as "An Unsuitable Boy" in 2017".



2. Book titled “Let Us Dream” by Pope Francis is set to release

Pope Francis, the head of the Catholic Church and sovereign of the Vatican City State, has penned a new book titled "Let Us Dream" which is set to release in December 2020. The book teaches people on how to handle upheaval of any kind in our own lives and the world at large.

The book offers an inspiring new thinking for building a better world based on numerous exchanges between Pope Francis and his Biographer Austen Ivereigh.



3. “The Little Book of Green Nudges” launched by UN Environment Programme

The UN Environment Programme launched a new publication, "The Little Book of Green Nudges", which aims to inspire up to 200 million students around the globe to adopt environmentally friendly habits and greener lifestyles. The book is UNEP's first on behavioural science and nudge theory, which focuses on human actions and how to change them, and was drafted with The Behavioural Insights Team and GRID-Arendal.



The Little Book of Green Nudges contains evidence-based guidance on implementing nudges, centered around techniques such as resetting default options, changing the framing of choices, and harnessing social influence.

4. Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot released Action Plan 2020-21

Union Minister of Social Justice Thaawarchand Gehlot released a book containing 33 Action Plans 2020-21 of all the schemes of the Department of Social Justice. The book is a collection of 33 annual action plans for all the schemes. In the financial year 2020-21, total expenditure incurred in different schemes has been increased to Rs. 9933.33 Cr with anticipated 4.91 Cr beneficiaries.

Various schemes include Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojna, National Action Plan On Drug Demand Reduction, Integrated Programme For Rehabilitation Of Beggars, VISVAS Yojana etc.



5. Gauri Khan to release her book 'My Life in Design'

Celebrated interior designer Gauri Khan announced to launch her debut book titled "My Life in Design". The book details about her journey as a designer and will be released in 2021 under Penguin Random House India's 'Ebury Press' imprint.

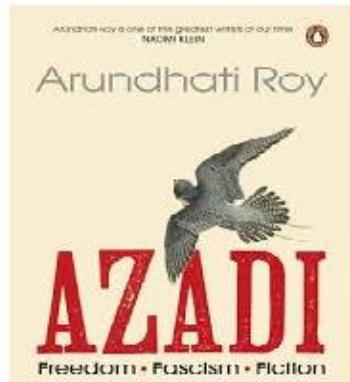
The coffee-table book will also be visually appealing with exclusive pictures and information. The book will feature unseen pictures of her interior design projects, family and residence. Khan owns Gauri Khan Designs (GKD), a well-known interior design company.



6. Arundhati Roy authors new book titled "Azadi"

Booker Prize-winning author Arundhati Roy has penned her new book titled 'Azadi: Freedom. Fascism. Fiction.' The book has been published by the Penguin Books Ltd. The nonfiction book is a collection of essays that shows the meaning of Freedom in the world of increasing authoritarianism.

Arundhati Roy is the author of the novel "The God of Small Things", for which she was awarded the Booker Prize in 1997, and two collections of essays: "The Algebra of Infinite Justice" and "An Ordinary Person's Guide to Empire".



7. Barack Obama announced his memoir 'A Promised Land'

Former U.S. President Barack Obama released the first volume of his memoir titled as 'A Promised Land'. 'A Promised Land' portrays his early political life as the 44th U.S. President, his presidential campaign in 2008, and ending with the death of Osama bin Laden in 2011.

The book is the first of two volumes of the book to be released in November 2020. It takes readers on a compelling journey, when he was elected as the 44th president of the United States, to becoming the first African American to hold the nation's highest office.



8. Chef Vikas Khanna's book titled "Kitchens of Gratitude" to release in 2021

Michelin Star chef Vikas Khanna's new book, 'Kitchens of Gratitude', is set to be released in 2021. The book will be published by Penguin Random House, India.

The book will detail the author's experience and also, touch upon his will to combat the ills of the time with the nourishing quality of food. He has been nominated for the 2020 Asia Game Changer Award for his Feed India initiative.



9. Historian Romila Thapar authors new book titled "Voices of Dissent"

Historian Romila Thapar has authored a new book titled "Voices of Dissent". The book is published by Penguin Random House India and Seagull Books. This book is a historical essay exploring dissent with a special focus on recent protests in the country.

Beginning with Vedic times, she takes readers from the second to the first millennium BC. She also brings the readers to a major moment of dissent that helped to establish a free and democratic India: Mahatma Gandhi's satyagraha.



Committees

1. Committee set up to review effective utilisation of AFHQ CS cadre

A three-member committee has been set up to review the effective utilisation of the Armed Forces Headquarters Civil Services (AFHQ CS) cadre. The committee will be headed by Lt. Gen. Shekatkar (retired). Two other members of the committee include R. Chandrashekhar (Retd AFHQ cadre officer) and AN Das from the MoD finance wing.



The committee will be responsible to optimise the civil as well as military administrative appointments in the service headquarters and find out appointments by conducting survey in Service HQs and Inter-Service Organisations (ISO) that may fall under the domains of AFHQ CS officers.

2. Supreme Court mandated Committee on Content Regulation in Government Advertising

The 19th meeting of Supreme Court - mandated Committee on Content Regulation in Government Advertising (CCRGA). As per directions of the Supreme Court, states are mandated to set up their respective three member committees on Content Regulation of Government Advertisements. Karnataka, Goa, Mizoram and Nagaland States have already constituted state-level three Member Committees.



Committee is empowered to summon the concerned official of the Govt. agencies dealing with release of advertisements in the event of undue delay in responding to Committee's notices.

3. Gujarat formed task force to implement NEP-2020 for school education

Gujarat state government formed the task force to study and implement the National Education Policy-2020. It comprises 15 members. This task force is expected to study NEP-2020, make changes suggested in the school education format and come up with the best implementation measures.

The National Education Policy 2020 is a comprehensive framework for elementary education to higher education as well as vocational training in both rural and urban India. The policy aims to transform India's education system by 2030.



4. Five-member committee of the RBI led by K V Kamath submitted its report

The five-member committee of the RBI led by K V Kamath, to suggest debt recast rules, has identified five financial parameters to gauge the health of sectors facing difficulties. These include total outside liabilities to adjusted tangible networth, total debt to earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization (EBITDA), debt service coverage ratio (DSCR), current ratio and average debt service coverage ratio (ADSCR).



The committee identified 26 sectors for loan restructuring which include automobiles, power, tourism, cement, chemicals, gems and jewellery, logistics, mining, manufacturing, real estate, and shipping among others.

5. Government formed three-member expert panel to assist in assessment of relief to bank borrowers

Government has constituted a three-member expert committee to assist in the assessment of relief to bank borrowers. The committee will be chaired by former CAG Rajiv Mehrishi. Former Managing Director of IDBI Bank B. Sriram is also one of the members of the panel.

The committee will measure the impact on the national economy and financial stability of waiving of interest and waiving of interest on interest on the COVID-19 related moratorium. The panel will also give suggestions to mitigate financial constraints of various sections of society in this respect and measures to be adopted in this regard.



6. Justice R F Nariman appointed as Chairperson of SC Legal Services Committee

Justice Rohinton Fali Nariman has been appointed as the Chairperson of the Supreme Court Legal Services Committee (SCLSC). He will replace Justice Arun Mishra, who retired from the position.

Supreme Court Legal Services Committee is constituted for implementing the legal services programme insofar, as it relates to the Supreme Court of India. Rohinton Fali Nariman was appointed the Solicitor General of India on 23 July 2011 for eighteen months.

He is the fifth Supreme Court judge to be elevated directly from the Bar.



7. Center to place expert panel to study reports of China snooping on Indian politicians

Centre has set up an expert committee under the National Cyber Security Coordinator to study reports that unveiled that China-based company 'Zhenhua Data Information Technology' is mining data and snooping on hundreds of Indian politicians and leaders.

The panel will study these reports, evaluate their implications, assess any violations of law and submit its recommendations within 30 days. Panel will look into issue of protection of privacy and personal data of citizens.



8. IFSCA Committee submitted interim report on development of international retail business

The International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) Expert Committee on international retail business development in the IFSC has submitted its interim report to the Chairperson of the IFSCA. The interim report covers a number of suggestions aimed at swift and efficient development of international retail businesses in the IFSC.



The Expert Committee suggests that the IFSC can aim at:

- Becoming a gateway to India growth story for international investors and business.
- Providing Indian diaspora and individuals from Asia and Africa with a comprehensive range of financial services from the IFSC.
- Serving domestic residents availing liberalised remittance scheme.

9. Government forms five task forces to revive MSME sector

Government of India formed five task forces in five different key areas to boost the MSME sector in the country. These five task forces would work for a month in five key areas, particularly the MSME sector.

Key Focus of Task Force is as follows:

- To explore interventions to align various modernisation schemes like ZED (zero defect and zero effect) and LEAN.
- To focus in the key manufacturing areas, how to improve our quality standards, designs and technology, packaging.
- To focus on how to integrate our technology centres, export promotion and import reduction.



Deaths

1. 'Scooby Doo' Co-Creator Joe Ruby passed away

Animation writer and executive Joe Ruby passed away. He was known for co-creating cartoon series including "Scooby-Doo". He created famous "Scooby-Doo" cartoon character along with his creative partner Ken Spears. He founded television animation production company Ruby-Spears Productions.

Some of his popular created cartoon characters were Dynomutt, Dog Wonder, Jabberjaw, The Barkleys and The Houndcats.

He produced animated series for Saturday mornings such as Fangface, The Plastic Man Comedy-Adventure Hour, Thundarr the Barbarian etc.



2. India's first female cardiologist Dr S.I. Padmavati passed away

India's first female cardiologist, Dr S.I. Padmavati, passed away. She was popularly known as "God Mother of Cardiology". She established the first cardiac clinic and cardiac catheter lab in India. She was the founder president of the All India Heart Foundation. She worked as Chief Administrator of 3 major institutions and as the Director (Principal) of the Maulana Azad Medical College.



Padmavati was awarded India's second highest civilian honour, the Padma Vibhushan in 1992 and Padma Bhushan, India's third highest civilian honor in 1967.

3. Former England Cricketer David Capel passed away

Former England all-rounder David Capel passed away. He was known as the first cricketer born in the county to play a test for England in 77 years when he made his debut against Pakistan in July 1987. He represented Northamptonshire in 270 first-class matches. He played 15 Tests and 23 one-day internationals for England.

David worked as the director of excellence of the Northamptonshire County Cricket Club in 1999, assistant coach of the England women's cricket team in 2013 and as the head coach of the Bangladesh women's cricket team.



4. Father of India's Radio Astronomy Govind Swarup passed away

Father of India's Radio Astronomy, Dr. Govind Swarup passed away. He was known not only for his many important research contributions in several areas of astronomy and astrophysics, but also, for his outstanding achievements in building ingenious, innovative and powerful observational facilities for front-line research in radio astronomy.

Dr. Swarup was awarded Padmashree, H. K. Firodia award and many international awards. He laid the foundation for quality radio astronomy research in India. He was the founding director of Pune-based National Centre for Radio Astrophysics (NCRA) of the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR).



5. Oscar winning Czech Director Jiri Menzel passed away

Oscar-winning Czech film director Jiri Menzel passed away. Some of his popular movies include "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest", "Larks on a String, and "Amadeus". He played around 80 roles in film and television.

Menzel was honored with best foreign-language film Academy Award for his directorial debut story "Closely Watched Trains". In the year 2013, he was also conferred with Lifetime Achievement Award at International film festival held in India. He won the Golden Bear at the Berlin International Film Festival in 1990.



6. Former Union Minister Raghuvansh Prasad Singh passed away

Former Union Minister Raghuvansh Prasad Singh passes away. He resigned from RJD party recently. He was part of active politics since 1977. Prior to joining politics, Mr Prasad taught mathematics. He served as Union Cabinet Minister for Rural Development in UPA-I of Manmohan Singh's government.

Raghuvansh Prasad was popularly known for implementation of NREGA (National rural employment guarantee act). He worked as socialist for Teachers' and Farmers' movements.



7. Veteran scholar of Indian classical dance Kapila Vatsyayan passes away

Scholar, author and veteran scholar of Indian classical dance, Kapila Vatsyayan, passed away. She authored 20 books on different forms of art and their histories such as "The Square and the Circle of Indian Arts (1997)", "Bharata: The Natya Sastra (2006)", "Dance in Indian Painting (2004)" etc.

Kapila Vatsyayan was founding director of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts and Chairperson of the Asia Project at the IIC. She was honored with Padma Vibhushan in 2011.



8. Mali's Former President Moussa Traore passed away

Mali's former president Moussa Traore passed away. He ruled the West Africa nation for more than 22 years. He served as President of Mali from 1968 to 1991. As a Lieutenant, he led the military ousting of President Modibo Keïta in 1968.

Moussa Traore served as a military leader when he forcibly took over the reign from Modibo Keita (known as the 'father of independence'), after participating in a military coup.



9. Veteran Communist leader and former Lok Sabha MP Roza Deshpande passed away

Veteran Communist leader and former Lok Sabha Member Roza Deshpande passed away at the age of 91 years. Deshpande had taken part in the Sanyukta Maharashtra Movement (the movement for the creation of the State of Maharashtra) and the Goa liberation struggle as a Member of the All India Students' Federation.

In 1974, she was elected to the Lok Sabha from the Bombay South Central constituency. She had also led a campaign to secure maternity leave benefits for working women and served on various Central and State Government Committees on labour problems, particularly those of women workers.



10. Legendary singer SP Balasubrahmanyam passed away

Legendary playback singer SP Balasubrahmanyam passed away at the age of 74 years. He won six National awards. His fans had given him the title of Paadum Nila (Singing Moon). SPB sang a staggering 40,000 songs in his career in 16 languages.



SPB won 25 Nandi Awards. The Government of India honoured the singer-actor with the Padma Shri in 2001 and the Padma Bhushan in 2011. He also acted in many films, the major films are Keladi Kanmani (1990), Thiruda Thiruda (1993), Kadhalan (1994), Ullaasam (1996) and others.

11. Renowned nuclear scientist Dr. Sekhar Basu passed away

Veteran nuclear scientist and former chairman of Atomic Energy Commission Dr. Sekhar Basu passed away at the age of 68 years. Dr. Basu is revered for his contributions to the country's atomic energy programme. He was awarded Padma Shri in 2014.



Dr. Basu had also pioneered the highly complex reactor for India's first nuclear-powered submarine INS Arihant. He played a key role in the development of the Indian Neutrino Observatory at Tamil Nadu. The atomic scientist was conferred the Indian Nuclear Society Award in 2002.

12. Australian cricketer Dean Jones passed away

Former Australia batsman Dean Jones passed away in Mumbai, at the age of 59 years. He was part of the 1987 World Cup winning team. He was in Mumbai with the commentary team for the Indian Premier League.



Dean Mervyn Jones played 52 Tests and scored 3631 runs including 11 centuries, and featured in 164 One-Dayers, racking up 6063 runs, seven centuries and 46 fifties. He retired from international cricket with an average of 46.55 in Test cricket and 44.61 in ODIs.

13. Legendary Mountaineer Ang Rita Sherpa passed away

Prominent Nepalese mountaineer, Ang Rita Sherpa, passed away at the age of 72 years. He became the first person in the world to climb Mount Everest 10 times without bottled oxygen. He was popularly known as the Snow Leopard.

In 2017, the Guinness Book of World Records had recognised him as the only person on the planet to have climbed the Mt. Qomolangma 10 times without supplemental oxygen. The Guinness Book of World Records has also recognised him as the first person to climb Mt. Qomolangma in winter without bottled oxygen in December 1987.



1. Ministry of Defence signed contracts worth Rs 2,580 Crore with BEML, TPCL & L&T

Providing further boost to the 'Make in India' initiative of Government of India in the Defence Sector, Ministry of Defence signed contracts with M/s. Bharat Earth Movers Ltd. (BEML), M/s. Tata Power Company Ltd. (TPCL) and M/s. Larsen & Toubro (L&T) for supply of Six Pinaka Regiments to the Regiment of Artillery of the Indian Army at cost of Rs. 2,580 Crores.



These six pinaka regiments comprise 114 Launchers with Automated Gun Aiming & Positioning System (AGAPS) and 45 Command Posts. These six pinaka regiments will be operationalised along the Northern and Eastern Borders of our country, further enhancing the operation preparedness of our Armed Forces. Induction of Six Pinaka Regiments is planned to be completed by 2024.

2. Government banned 118 Chinese apps

India has banned 118 more Chinese apps in the interest of India's defence and security. Earlier, 59 Chinese apps were banned. The government invoked its powers under Section 69A of the Information Technology Act and relevant provisions under IT Rules 2009 to block these apps.

Some of such apps include popular multiplayer game PUBG, Alipay, Ludo All Star, WeChat reading, Super Clean and search engine Baidu. Tencent-backed PUBG is a popular gaming app with over 40 million active users in India.



3. 11th edition of exercise INDRA NAVY held in Bay of Bengal

The 11th edition of a biennial bilateral maritime exercise "INDRA NAVY" between the Indian Navy and Russian Navy was held at the Bay of Bengal. Due to COVID-19 pandemic, the two-day naval exercise was undertaken in a 'non-contact, at sea only' format.



The INDRA series of exercises began in 2003 and was conducted as a bilateral naval exercise alternately between the two countries to improve the understanding as well as the procedures for multi-faceted maritime operations.

4. DRDO successfully flight tested Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle

Defence Research and Development Organisation successfully demonstrated the hypersonic air-breathing scramjet technology with the flight test of Hypersonic Technology Demonstration Vehicle (HSTDV). The hypersonic cruise vehicle was launched using a proven solid rocket motor, which took it to an altitude of 30 kilometres (km). A Ship was also deployed in the Bay of Bengal to monitor the performance during the cruise phase of hypersonic vehicle.



With this successful demonstration, many critical technologies such as aerodynamic configuration, use of scramjet propulsion for ignition, thermo-structural characterisation of high temperature materials, separation mechanism at hypersonic velocities etc. were proven.

5. Rafale aircraft formally inducted into Indian Air Force

Rafale Fighter Aircraft was formally inducted into the Indian Air Force. There was an Air Display by Rafale and Tejas aircraft as well as by 'Sarang Aerobatic Team', followed by a traditional water cannon salute to the Rafale aircraft.



The Dassault Rafale is a French twin-engine, canard delta wing, multirole fighter aircraft designed and built by Dassault Aviation. The first five Rafale aircraft, which arrived at Air Force Station, Ambala from France on 27th July 2020, would be part of 17 Squadron, the "Golden Arrows".

6. DRDO developed P-7 Heavy Drop System capable of para dropping military stores

Defence Research and Development Organization developed P-7 Heavy Drop System, which is capable of para dropping military stores up to seven-tonne weight class from IL- 76 aircraft. The system has been developed successfully with 100% indigenous resources. P-7 Heavy Drop System has been inducted in the Army.



System consists of a platform and specialised parachute system. The parachute system is a multi-stage system which comprises of five Main canopies, five Brake chutes, two Auxiliary chutes, one Extractor parachute and platform is a metallic structure made up of Aluminium or steel alloys.

7. India successfully flight tests indigenous Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle

India successfully flight tested Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle (HSTDV) using indigenously developed scramjet propulsion system. HSTDV is an unmanned scramjet vehicle with the ability to travel at six times the speed of sound.

India has joined the elite group of countries i.e. the US, Russia and China, who possess the technology. The HSTDV has a range of uses, including missiles of the future for air defence, surveillance and reconnaissance.



8. Funds for Defence Modernisation

An amount of Rs. 90,048 crores have been allocated for Capital Acquisition (Modernization) in BE 2020-21 under Defence Service Estimates, which is an increase of Rs. 9,088.92 crores over BE 2019-20 allocations. The total amount allocated for Capital Acquisition (Modernization) is 27.87% of Defence Services Estimates.

Government is taking measures for modernisation of Armed Forces, through procurement of new equipment and upgrading of existing equipment and systems. The modernisation projects are being progressed as per approved capital acquisition plan and in terms of extant Defence Procurement Procedure.



The modernisation projects are being progressed as per approved capital acquisition plan and in terms of extant Defence Procurement Procedure.

9. First of its kind, women officers joined helicopter stream of Indian Navy

In yet another first in the history of Indian naval aviation, two women officers have been selected to join as "Observers" (Airborne Tacticians) in the helicopter stream. They would in effect, be the first set of women airborne combatants, who would be operating from warships. Earlier, entry of women was restricted to the fixed wing aircraft that took off and landed ashore.

These officers, Sub Lieutenant (SLt) Kumudini Tyagi and SLt Riti Singh, are a part of a group of 17 officers of the Indian Navy, including four women officers and three officers of the Indian Coast Guard, who were awarded "Wings" on graduating as "Observers".



10. India successfully conducts testing of Prithvi II missile

India conducted a successful night test-fire of its indigenously developed nuclear capable surface-to-surface Prithvi-II missile, as part of a user trial by the Army from a base in Odisha. The launch of the missile was carried out from Integrated Test Range at Balasore. Prithvi is a tactical surface-to-surface short-range ballistic missile developed by DRDO.

Prithvi-II is capable of carrying 500 to 1,000 kg of warheads and is powered by liquid propulsion twin engines. It is the first to be developed by the DRDO under its Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme.



11. India-Japan Maritime bilateral exercise 'JIMEX' held in North Arabian Sea

The fourth edition of India-Japan Maritime bilateral exercise (JIMEX) was held in North Arabian Sea. The exercise is conducted biennially between the Indian Navy and Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF). 'JIMEX' series of exercises commenced in January 2012 with special focus on maritime security co-operation.

JIMEX 20 was spread over three days and conducted in a 'non-contact at-sea-only format', in view of COVID-19 restrictions. The last edition of JIMEX was conducted in October 2018 off Visakhapatnam coast.



12. Indian Navy, Royal Australian Navy Passage Exercise (PASSEX) held in Eastern Indian Ocean

The Passage Exercise (PASSEX) between Indian Navy and Royal Australian Navy was held in Eastern Indian Ocean. The exercise reflects the growing strength of Indo-Australian bilateral relations as comprehensive strategic partners, particularly in defence co-operation in the maritime domain.

PASSEXes are regularly conducted by Indian Navy with units of friendly foreign navies. The two navies have built a robust relationship through regular exercises such as AUSINDEX conducted biennially.



13. DRDO successfully test fired Laser-Guided Anti-Tank Missile

Defence Research and Development Organization has successfully conducted test firing of Laser Guided Anti-Tank Guided Missile from MBT Arjun at K K Ranges in Ahmednagar. While, the missile is currently being tested from the MBT Arjun, it has been designed so that, it can be fired from other platforms too.

The missile has the capability of engaging with the target even if, it is not in the line of sight. The missile uses a warhead that has the capability to neutralise armoured vehicles which have reactive armours.



14. DRDO conducted successful flight test of ABHYAS

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully conducted the flight test of ABHYAS - High-speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) vehicles from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur in Odisha. ABHYAS has been designed and developed by the Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE) of the DRDO.

The vehicle is a drone that will be used as a target for various missile systems. It can also be used as a decoy aircraft, if needed. Abhyas is capable of fully-autonomous flight and runs on a gas turbine engine.



ABHYAS is capable of fully-autonomous flight and runs on a gas turbine engine.

15. DAC approved proposals for capital acquisition of equipment worth Rs. 2,290 crore

The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) approved proposals for capital acquisition of various equipment required by the Indian Armed Forces at an approximate cost of Rs. 2,290 crores. These include procurement from Domestic Industry as well as Foreign vendors.

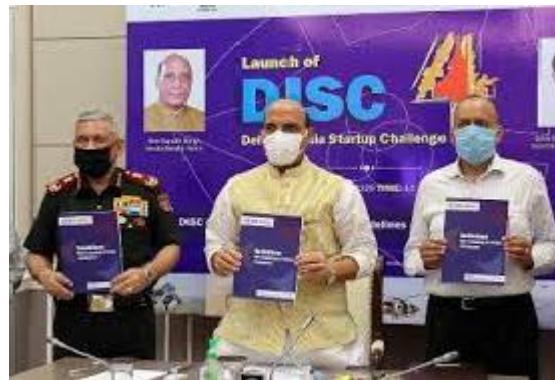
Under the Buy Indian category, the DAC approved procurement of Static HF Transceiver sets and Smart Anti Airfield Weapon. The Smart Anti Airfield Weapon being procured at an approx cost of 970 crore rupees will add to the fire power of Navy and Airforce.



16. Rajnath Singh launched Defence India Startup Challenge-4

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched the Defence India Startup Challenge (DISC 4) during the iDEX event, featuring the initiatives aimed at expanding the horizons of Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) ecosystem. He also launched the iDEX4Fauji initiative and Product Management Approach (PMA) guidelines.

iDEX4Fauji is a first of its kind initiative, launched to support innovations identified by members of the Indian Armed Forces and will bolster frugal innovation ideas from soldiers and field formations.



17. BrahMos Missile featuring Indigenous Booster successfully flight tested

"BrahMos surface-to-surface supersonic cruise missile featuring indigenous Booster and Airframe Section along with many other 'Made in India' sub-systems were successfully flight tested. It has paved the way for the serial production of the indigenous booster and other indigenous components of the powerful BrahMos Weapon System realising Atmanirbhar Bharat pledge.

The BrahMos is a medium-range ramjet supersonic cruise missile that can be launched from submarine, ships, aircraft, or land. It is the fastest supersonic cruise missile in the world. It is one more major step in enhancing the indigenous content.



Economic

1. Coal India to invest over 1.22 Lakh Crores on 500 Projects by 2023-24

With an aim to achieve 1 billion tonnes (BT) coal production by the year 2023-24 and make the nation Aatmanirbhar in Coal, Coal India Ltd (CIL) will invest over Rs. 1.22 lakh crores on about 500 projects related to coal evacuation, infrastructure, project development, exploration and clean coal technologies.

Out of the proposed spend of over 1.22 lakh crores, CIL has planned to invest Rs. 32,696 crores on Coal Evacuation, Rs. 25,117 crores on Mine Infrastructure, Rs. 29,461 crores on Project Development, Rs. 32,199 on diversification & clean coal technologies, Rs. 1,495 crores on social infrastructure and Rs. 1,893 crores on exploration works by the year 2023-24.



2. Gross GST revenue collection in August stood at Rs 86,449 crore

The gross GST revenue collected in August is Rs. 86,449 crore. Out of this, CGST is Rs. 15,906 crores, SGST is Rs. 21,064 crores and IGST is Rs. 42,264 crore. The revenue for August 2020 is 88% of the GST revenue. The revenue from import of goods was 77% and the revenue from domestic transactions were 92% of the revenue.



The government settled Rs. 18,216 crores to CGST and Rs. 14,650 crores to SGST from IGST as regular settlement. The total revenue earned by Central Government and the State Governments after regular settlement in August is Rs. 34,122 crores for CGST and Rs. 35,714 crore for the SGST.

3. Government decides to cap export incentives under MEIS scheme

Indian Government announced to cap export incentives under Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS) at Rs. 2 crore per exporter on outbound shipments made during September-December, 2020. The MEIS was launched as an incentive scheme for the export of goods in 2015 where, rewards were given by way of duty credit scrips to exporters.



MEIS will be replaced by a new scheme called Remission of Duties or Taxes On Export Product from January 2021. The ceiling is to ensure that the total claim under the scheme does not exceed the allocation prescribed by the government.

4. Vodafone Idea rebranded itself as 'Vi'

Vodafone Idea Ltd. rebranded itself as 'Vi', creating a unified identity two years after the merger of erstwhile Vodafone India Ltd. and Idea Cellular Ltd. The tagline of 'Vi' is 'Together for Tomorrow' giving birth to a new brand called "Vi" (read as "We").

At the time of merger, customer base stood at 408 million, which has decreased to 280 million at the end of June 2020. The company targets to raise up to ₹25,000 crores to meet government dues, pay interest and invest in operations.



5. Infosys acquired product design firm Kaleidoscope Innovation

Infosys announced a definitive agreement to acquire Kaleidoscope Innovation, a full-spectrum product design, development and insights firm innovating across medical, consumer and industrial markets, bolstering capabilities in the design of smart products. Kaleidoscope Innovation offers usability testing in support of regulatory submissions, including the delivery mechanism for aortic stents.



This acquisition strengthens digital offerings at the intersection of new software technologies at Infosys. Kaleidoscope Innovation brings to Infosys extensive knowledge of design and engineering in product design, UI/UX design, research & insight, development and visualization.

6. India Ratings forecasted contraction of 11.8% in FY21 GDP

The Indian arm of Fitch Ratings, India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) has projected India's FY21 GDP growth forecast at -11.8%. The quantum of negative gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 23.9% recorded in 1QFY21 is much higher than India Ratings and Research's (Ind-Ra) forecast of 17.0%.

The economic loss in FY21 is estimated to be INR18.44 trillion. However, GDP is expected to rebound and grow at 9.9% yoy in FY22 mainly due to the weak base of FY21. The work place mobility would remain low even in the next few months and would not return to normal till a vaccine is found.



7. Fitch Ratings projected global GDP to contract 4.4%

Fitch Ratings projected global GDP to contract 4.4% in the current year, a modest upward revision from the 4.6% decline expected in the June GEO. It however, revised upwards China's growth estimate to 2.7% for 2020. Fitch has slashed India's growth projection to (-) 10.5% from (-) 5% estimated earlier.

Fitch projected the U.S. GDP to contract 4.6% in 2020, less than the 5.6% decline which, it had forecast in June.



8. Factory output contracted 10.4% in July 2020

Factory output contracted 10.4% in July 2020, in a year-on-year comparison of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), released by the Centre. Mining and manufacturing shrunk 13% and 11% respectively, although electricity generation has recovered to a contraction of 2.5%.

Meanwhile, the fall in IIP for June has been revised to (-)15.77% from the provisional estimates of 16.6% contraction released last month. According to the IIP data, factory output had registered a growth of 4.9% in July 2019.



9. Moody's forecasts India's GDP at -11.5% for FY21

Moody's Investors Service has forecast India's real GDP to contract by 11.5% in fiscal 2020-21. It had earlier predicted a 4% contraction. However, it has predicted the Indian economy to grow at 10.6% in 2021-22. Moody's expects the government fiscal deficit to reach 12.0% of GDP in FY20.

Fitch Ratings predicted that India's economy will contract by 10.5% in 2020-21. Domestic rating agency India Ratings and Research, had revised India's GDP growth forecast for the financial year 2020-21 to -11.8%.



10. CRISIL projected India's GDP contraction estimate for FY21 at 9%

Domestic rating agency CRISIL predicted India's GDP to contract 9% in the financial year 2020-21 (FY21). It had earlier projected a 5% contraction in May 2020. While, the government figures reveal the GDP fell by 23.9% in Q1, the rating agency projected a fall of 12% in Q2.

CRISIL expects the growth of GDP at 10% in FY22, on the back of a very weak base. For the next three years, between fiscals 2023 and 2025, CRISIL projects the Indian GDP to average a growth of 6.2% annually.



11. ADB and Suguna Foods Private Limited signed \$15 million deal

The Asian Development Bank signed an agreement for \$15 million of debt financing through the subscription of non-convertible debentures for Suguna Foods Private Limited (Suguna) to help sustain poultry farming operations, as well as rural livelihoods and food security in India during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

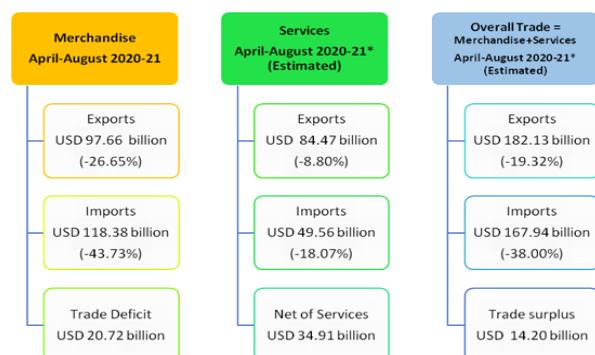
Funds will help the company build inventory buffers, encourage local lenders to support the business and make timely payments to contract farmers and suppliers. Poultry livestock is central to India's food value chain as an affordable source of animal protein that can address malnutrition.



Asian Development Bank

12. INDIA'S FOREIGN TRADE: August 2020

India's overall exports (Merchandise and Services combined) in April-August 2020-21 are estimated to be USD 182.13 billion, exhibiting a negative growth of (-) 19.32% over the same period last year. Overall imports in April-August 2020-21 are estimated to be USD 167.94 billion, exhibiting a negative growth of (-) 38.00% over the same period last year.



- Merchandise:** Total exports was USD 97.66 billion down 26.65%, while, total imports was USD 118.38 billion down 43.73%. The trade deficit was USD 20.72 billion.
- Services:** Total exports was USD 84.47 billion down 8.80%, while, total imports were USD 49.56 billion down by 18.07%. The net of services was USD 34.91 billion.
- Overall Trade:** Total exports was USD 182.13 billion down by 19.32%, while, total imports was USD 167.94 billion down 38.00%. The trade deficit was USD 14.20 billion.

13. S&P projects Indian economy to contract 9% in FY21

S&P Global Ratings revised its forecast of the contraction of Indian economy to 9% in the fiscal year 2020-21 (FY21). It had earlier projected the economy to contract by 5% in May 2020. For the FY22 (2021-22), S&P expects GDP growth of 6% and for FY23 (2022-23), GDP is projected at 6.2%.

Moody's and Fitch had projected Indian economy to contract 11.5% and 10.5% respectively in the current fiscal. However, Goldman Sachs has estimated the contraction at 14.8%.

14. ADB projects Asia's economy to shrink for first time since 1960s

Asian Development Bank has projected the gross domestic product (GDP) of Asia to decline by 0.7% in 2020, down from June's projection of an increase of 0.1%. If so, the Asian economy would shrink for the first time, since the early 1960s.

Growth in Developing Asia will rebound to 6.8% in 2021. The negative growth weighs on several factors that includes majorly due to the corona pandemic as well as US-China trade tensions and technology conflicts.



15. Asian Development Bank projected India's GDP at -9% in FY21

ADB projected India's gross domestic product (GDP) growth for fiscal year (FY) 2020 ending on 31 March 2021, to contract by 9.0%. ADB projected the gross domestic product (GDP) growth for developing Asia at - 0.7 per cent in 2020, the first negative economic growth, since 1962.



Inflation is expected to fall in the remainder of FY 2020 to 4.5% with tamed food prices and decreased economic activity, and then further decline to 4.0% in FY 2021. India's current account deficit is forecast to shrink to 0.3% of GDP this fiscal year, then widen to 0.6% of GDP in FY 2021 with exports expected to recover as global growth rebounds.

16. UBS Securities projected India's GDP at -8.6% in FY21

UBS Securities predicted India's GDP for 2020-21 (FY21) to contract by 8.6% in FY20. India's public debt-to-GDP ratio is also estimated to rise further to 83.9 percent by end-FY22. UBS Securities projects India's GDP to grow by 10% in FY22. UBS Investment Bank provides corporate, institutional and wealth management clients with expert advice.



The Covid-19 pandemic has reduced India's growth to around 5 per cent YoY. It has been predicted that COVID-19 stimulus will be enhanced up to around 3% of GDP in FY21.

17. OECD projected India's GDP at -10.2% in FY21

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Interim Economic Outlook predicted Indian economy to contract by 10.2% in FY21 (2020-21). GDP is estimated to grow at 10.7% in FY22 (2021-22).



The highlights include:

- Rising inflationary pressures and concerns about financial stability will limit central banks to cushion economic activity.
- Global GDP is predicted to contract by 4.5% in 2020, whereas, for F.Y. 2021-22, GDP is estimated to increase by 5%.
- Income loss of USD 7 trillion to the world is predicted for FY 21-22.

18. ONGC exits from Sudan Oilfields

India's Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC) has exited from Sudan oilfields, after the African nation refused to pay for oil, which, it lifted from the fields. Sudan's dues towards OVL totalled USD 430.69 million. ONGC Videsh Ltd (OVL) had a 25% stake in Block 2A&4 in Sudan while CNCP had 40% and Petronet 30%.



ONGC has been ranked as the Top Energy Company in India. Sudan had since 2011 not paid OVL and partners for oil it bought from the block.

19. Vodafone won arbitration case against India, Government to study the case award

Vodafone Group Plc has won an international arbitration case against the Indian government in the high-profile dispute involving a \$2 billion tax claim. The case refers to India's controversial retrospective amendment to Income Tax Act in 2012.

The Permanent Court of Arbitration located at The Hague has ruled that the conduct of India's tax department is in breach of "fair and equitable" treatment. However, the Government of India plans to study the award and all its aspects carefully in consultation with its counsels.



20. FM granted permission to raise additional financial resources of Rs. 9,913 crores to five states

The Ministry of Finance has granted permission to raise additional financial resources of Rs. 9,913 crores to 5 (five) states through Open Market Borrowings (OMBs). These states are Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Goa, Karnataka and Tripura. This permission has been accorded, after these states successfully met the reform condition of implementation of One Nation One Ration Card System.

This permission allows Karnataka to raise Rs. 4,509 crores whereas, Andhra Pradesh can borrow Rs. 2,525 crores. Telangana has been permitted to borrow Rs. 2,508 crores while, Goa can raise Rs. 223 crores and Tripura Rs. 148 crores.

State wise details of the additional borrowing permission granted by the Government on meeting reform targets

S.No.	State	Additional Borrowing granted
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Rs.2,525 crore
2.	Telangana	Rs.2,508 crore
3.	Karnataka	Rs.4,509 crore
4.	Goa	Rs.223 crore
5.	Tripura	Rs.148 crore

21. ICRA projected India's GDP for FY21 to contract by 11%

Rating agency ICRA has revised its gross domestic product (GDP) forecast for 2020-21 to a contraction of 11% from an earlier estimate of -9.5%. ICRA cited the continued rise in COVID-19 cases across the country as the reason for the change in GDP forecast.

For Q3FY21, ICRA revised its GDP forecast to -5.4 percent from -2.3 percent. It also predicts economic contraction of 2.5 percent in Q4FY21, a downward revision from the previous estimate of 1.3 percent. ICRA expects the economic situation to improve in H2FY21, relative to the first half of the fiscal year.



Environment

1. Five PSUs of India to join International Solar Alliance Coalition

Five Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) under Petroleum & Natural Gas Ministry is set to join International Solar Alliance (ISA)'s Coalition for Sustainable Climate Action (ISA-CSCA) as Corporate Partners. Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC), Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) and GAIL (India) Limited will be contributing to International Solar Alliance's Corpus Fund.



Oil & Gas PSUs are increasingly evaluating new opportunities in the solar and RE space for diversification. Indian Oil & Gas companies are actively taking part in this clean energy transition.

2. Climate Smart Cities Assessment Framework (CSCAF 2.0) and Streets for People Challenge launched

The government has launched the Climate Smart Cities Assessment Framework (CSCAF) 2.0, along with the 'Streets for People Challenge'. The objective of CSCAF is to provide a clear roadmap for cities towards combating Climate Change, while planning and implementing their actions, including investments.

The Streets for People Challenge is the response to the need for making our cities more walkable and pedestrian friendly. The Challenge builds on the advisory issued by MoHUA for the holistic planning for pedestrian-friendly market spaces, earlier this year.



3. Eight Indian beaches recommended for coveted Blue Flag international eco-label

Eight beaches of the country have been recommended for the coveted 'Blue Flag' international eco-label. Blue Flag certification is a globally recognised eco-label accorded by an international agency 'Foundation for Environment Education, Denmark' based on 33 stringent criteria.

The eight beaches recommended under the BEAMS are Shivrajpur in Gujarat, Ghoghla in Daman and Diu, Kasarkod and Padubidri in Karnataka, Kappad in Kerala, Rushikonda in Andhra Pradesh, Golden in Odisha and Radhanagar in Andaman and Nicobar Islands. India also has its own eco-label 'Beach Environment and Aesthetics Management Services' (BEAMS) under its Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) project.



4. UN and United Kingdom to co-host Global Climate Summit 2020

The United Kingdom and the United Nations are going to co-organise a global climate summit in December 2020, to mark the fifth anniversary of the signing of the Paris Climate Agreement in 2015. The event is being dubbed "the sprint to Glasgow" by the UN.

The aim of the event is to rally momentum and call for much greater climate action and ambition. National governments will be invited to present more ambitious and high-quality climate plans, as well as COVID recovery plans, new finance commitments and measures to limit global warming to 1.5C.



1. ICICI Prudential Life launched voice chatbot “LiGo” on Google Assistant

ICICI Prudential Life Insurance has introduced its customer service chatbot 'LiGo' on 'Google Assistant'. This would enable the policyholders to have their queries addressed by simple voice commands such as "Ok Google, I want to speak to ICICI Prudential Life LiGo" or "May I talk to ICICI Prudential Life LiGo".

Customers can instantly access information on their policies by activating 'Google Assistant' on their Android smart phones and speaking out their policy number or registered phone number.



2. Reserve Bank of India revised Priority Sector Lending guidelines

Reserve Bank of India revised Priority Sector Lending guidelines to address the regional disparities in the flow of priority sector credit. In the revised guidelines, higher weightage has been assigned to incremental priority sector credit in identified districts and loan limits for renewable energy have been increased.

Bank finance to start-ups up to 50 crore rupees, loans to farmers for installation of solar power plants for solarisation of grid connected agriculture pumps and loans for setting up Compressed Bio Gas plants have been included as fresh categories eligible for finance under priority sector.



3. 15th Finance Commission held discussions with its Economic Advisory Council

The Fifteenth Finance Commission held discussions with its Economic Advisory Council. The meeting discussed GDP growth, tax buoyancy of the Centre and the States, GST compensation and fiscal consolidation. Specific issues relating to public expenditure on health, investment revival, recapitalisation of the financial system and its impact on public finances were also discussed.

The meeting was chaired by N. K. Singh, Chairman of Fifteenth Finance Commission. Finance Commission decided to take a nuanced approach towards tax devolution to the States.



15th FINANCE COMMISSION

4. ICICI Bank launched 'Home Utsav', a virtual property exhibition

ICICI Bank launched 'Home Utsav', a virtual property exhibition that digitally showcases real estate projects by renowned developers from key cities across the country. ICICI bank customers can avail exclusive offers such as attractive interest rates, special processing fees and digital sanction of loans, on buying a property through this exhibition.

The first 'Home Utsav' exhibition has been launched for the Mumbai and Pune region, where over 100 projects by more than 60 developers were showcased. ICICI Bank customers and those who are not the Bank's customers, can participate in 'Home Utsav'.



5. S Krishnan appointed as MD & CEO of Punjab & Sind Bank

S Krishnan took charge as Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of state-owned Punjab & Sind Bank. Prior to this appointment, he worked as an Executive Director at Canara Bank. He has handled responsibility as the Executive Director of Syndicate Bank. He has specialisation in various fields such as credit, specifically corporate credit and risk management.

Punjab & Sind Bank is a government-owned bank. The bank has overall 1559 branches which are widely spread across India.



6. Murali Ramakrishnan selected as new MD & CEO of South Indian Bank

The Reserve Bank of India appointed Murali Ramakrishnan as Managing Director and CEO of the South Indian Bank for a period of three years. Prior to this appointment, he worked as an advisor in South Indian Bank on the risk advisory board of VISA for the Asia Pacific.

Murali worked as former senior executive at ICICI Bank, looking after operations in North Asia, West Asia, Sri Lanka and Africa and as Senior General Manager at Strategic Project Group.



7. NABARD organised awareness cum sensitisation programme in Jammu and Kashmir

An awareness cum sensitisation programme for newly proposed Farmer Producer Organizations (FPO) was organised by NABARD in Jammu and Kashmir. The programme was organised to promote sustainable and equitable agriculture and rural prosperity through effective credit support related services, institutional development and other initiatives.

Farmers were made aware regarding the scheme for providing financial assistance and training to the farming community for establishment of FPO's. A large number of farmers engaged in different agri activities and self help groups of NRLM participated in the programme.



8. RBI paved way for loan recasts

The Reserve Bank specified five financial ratios and sector-specific thresholds for resolution of COVID-19-related stressed assets in 26 sectors, including auto components, aviation and tourism. The 26 sectors specified by the RBI include automobiles, power, tourism, cement, chemicals, gems and jewellery, logistics, mining, manufacturing, real estate, and shipping among others.

The resolution plans shall be taken into account the pre-COVID-19 operating and financial performance of the borrower and impact of COVID-19 on its operating and financial performance at the time of finalising the resolution plan.



9. Finance Minister unveiled doorstep banking services

Union Minister of Finance Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated Doorstep Banking Services and felicitated best performing banks on EASE Banking Reforms Index. As part of the EASE Reforms, Doorstep Banking Services is envisaged to provide convenience of banking services to the customers at their door step through the universal touch points of Call Centre, Web Portal or Mobile App.



EASE Agenda is aimed at institutionalising clean and smart banking. The overall score of PSBs increased by 37% between March-2019 and March-2020, with the average EASE index score improving from 49.2 to 67.4 out of 100.

10. IT Dept issued refunds worth Rs 1.01 lakh cr to 27.55 lakh taxpayers

The Income Tax Department issued refunds of over 1.01 lakh crore rupees to 27.55 lakh taxpayers between April 1st 2020 to September 8th 2020. This includes personal income tax (PIT) refunds amounting to 30,768 crore rupees issued to 25.83 lakh taxpayers and corporate tax refunds amounting to 70,540 crore rupees issued to over 1.71 lakh taxpayers during this period.

The government has emphasised on providing tax related services to taxpayers without any hassles during the COVID-19 pandemic.



11. RBI ceased Banking operations of Aditya Birla Idea Payments Bank

Reserve Bank of India ceased the Banking operations by the Aditya Birla Idea Payments (ABIP) Bank under Banking Regulations Act 1949 with effect from July 28, 2020. Aditya Birla Idea Payments Bank was headed for liquidation after the company's application for voluntary winding up.

Aditya Birla Idea Payments Bank had received the banking licence from the RBI in April 2017. Vodafone Idea Limited holds 51% in ABIP bank and the remaining 49% by Grasim Industries Limited.



12. India Post launched Five Star Villages Scheme

The Department of Posts launched a scheme called Five Star Villages, to ensure universal coverage of flagship postal schemes in rural areas of the country. The scheme seeks to bridge the gaps in public awareness and reach of postal products and services, especially in interior villages. All postal products and services will be made available and marketed and publicized at village level.

The schemes covered under the Five Star scheme include NSC / KVP certificates, Sukanya Samridhi Accounts, Funded Post Office Savings Account, Postal Life Insurance Policy and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana Account.



13. Bank of Baroda topped EASE 2.0 Index by IBA

Union Minister of Finance Nirmala Sitharaman felicitated best performing banks on EASE Banking Reforms Index. Bank of Baroda, State Bank of India, and erstwhile Oriental Bank of Commerce were felicitated for being the top three (in that order) in the 'Top Performing Banks' category, according to the EASE 2.0 Index Results.



Bank of Maharashtra, Central Bank of India and Corporation Bank were awarded in the 'Top Improvers' category basis EASE 2.0 Index. Punjab National Bank, Union Bank of India, and Canara Bank were also recognised for outstanding performance in select themes.

14. SBI to launch new loan scheme SAFAL for organic cotton growers

State Bank of India (SBI) has planned to launch a new loan product called 'SAFAL', to provide loans to farmers on easy terms. Under this product, loans will be provided to the organic cotton growers, who have taken no credit on easy terms will be provided.

SBI will use Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) for launching loan product Safe and Fast Agriculture Loan (SAFAL). Organic cotton is not exposed to toxic chemicals in the field or through their food and water supply.



15. CRISIL, Ind-Ra upgrade Yes Bank's ratings

Rating agencies CRISIL and India Ratings have upgraded Yes Bank's infrastructure bonds and other papers on the back of improvement in its funding and liquidity profile recently. CRISIL upgraded its rating on Rs. 20,000 crore certificates of deposit of Yes Bank to A2-plus from A2 besides reaffirmed its BBB/Stable rating on the bank's tier two bonds under Basel III and infrastructure bonds.

Ind-Ra revised upwards the bank's long-term issuer rating to BBB from BB-(minus), while resolving the rating watch evolving.



16. RBI issued norms for compliance functions in banks

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) issued new guidelines regarding compliance functions and defined the role of the chief compliance officer (CCO) in banks to ensure global industry standards in risk management. A bank shall lay down a Board-approved compliance policy.

As per the new guideline, an independent compliance function is required to be headed by a designated chief compliance officer (CCO). The CCO shall be appointed for a minimum fixed tenure of not less than three years.



17. Mastercard launched Central Bank Digital Currencies (CBDCs) Testing Platform

Mastercard has launched a Central Bank Digital Currencies (CBDCs) Testing Platform aimed at helping central banks test their digital currencies. The platform enables the simulation of issuance, distribution and exchange of CBDCs between banks, financial service providers and consumers.

CBDCs are designed to be equivalent in value to a nation's paper currency and subject to the same government-backed guarantees. In addition to printing money, central banks can issue CBDCs as a digital representation of a country's fiat currency.



18. ICICI Bank introduced 'iStartup2.0'

ICICI Bank launched 'iStartup2.0' for startups that takes care of their banking as well as beyond-banking needs such as regulatory assistance, analytics, staffing, accounting, customer acquisition and digital outreach to customers, among others.

Under the programme, ICICI Bank offers customers an eponymous Current Account which is available in three variants--Platinum, Gold and Silver. The startups up to 10 years old can opt for the current account of the bank.



19. SBI and Titan launch contactless payment watches “Titan Pay”

Titan Company has partnered with the State Bank of India (SBI) to launch India's first contactless payment watches named "Titan Pay". Titan and SBI have launched a range of stylish new watches with contactless payment functionality for the first time in India.

With this launch, SBI account holders can tap their Titan Pay watch on contactless payment POS machine without the need of swiping or inserting their SBI bank card. A secure certified Near-Field Communication (NFC) chip embedded in the watch strap by Tappy Technologies enables all the functionalities of a standard contactless SBI debit card.



20. Canara Bank introduced i-Lead 2.0

Canara Bank has launched lead management system (LMS) – i-Lead 2.0 (Inspiring Leads System version 2.0) to provide its services to customers irrespective of where they reside. The new initiative aims to build and sustain business relationships with both new customers to bank and existing customers to bank.

Through LMS, customers can enquire and get services rendered through simple modes such as internet banking, mobile banking, call centre, SMS and missed call. A unique reference number will be generated, which is communicated to the customers at the time of lead generation from above sources.



21. RBI suggested five-pillared approach to deal with cybersecurity issues in UCBs

The Reserve Bank has suggested a five-pillared strategic approach 'GUARD' to deal with cyber security threats being faced by Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs). The RBI released its document 'Technology Vision for Cyber Security for Urban Cooperative Banks 2020-2023'.

The five-pillared strategic approach 'GUARD' comprises Governance Oversight, Utile Technology Investment, Appropriate Regulation and Supervision, Robust Collaboration and Developing necessary IT and cybersecurity skills set. The 12 specific action points suggested in the document include -- more board oversight over cybersecurity; enabling UCBs to better manage and secure their IT assets.



22. Google Pay partnered with Visa to allow card-based payments through tokenisation

Google Pay in association with Visa has rolled out tokenisation that will enable users to safely transact with their debit or credit cards. The feature will allow Google Pay Android users to use their debit or credit card to make payments through a secure digital token attached to their phone without having to physically share their credit or debit card details.



Tokenisation will also facilitate use of tap-to-pay feature on near-field communications (NFC)-enabled point of sale (PoS) terminals and online merchants. The service is already live for SBI Card and Axis card holders with Visa payments network.

23. IRDAI identified LIC, GIC, New India Assurance as D-SIIs

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has identified Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), General Insurance Corporation of India (GIC) and New India Assurance as domestic systemically important insurers (D-SIIs). D-SIIs are perceived as insurers that are 'too big or too important to fail' (TBTF).



IRDA

Domestic Systemically Important Insurers (D-SIIs) refer to insurers of such size, market importance and domestic and global interconnectedness, whose distress or failure would cause a significant dislocation in the domestic financial system. Therefore, the continued functioning of D-SIIs is critical for the uninterrupted availability of insurance services to the national economy.

24. IDBI Bank becomes 1st bank to enable document embedding feature on SFMS

IDBI Bank Limited becomes the [first bank] to have implemented the new feature of document embedding facility with Letter of Credit ("LC") / Bank Guarantee ("BG") messages over SFMS platform of IFTAS (a wholly owned subsidiary of Reserve Bank of India) through, its middleware application i@Connect-SFMS (CSFMS) developed by IDBI Intech Limited.



This new feature of "document embedding" provides banks with the functionality of transmitting a pdf. document upto 1MB size along with the LC / BG messages. Transmission of digitally signed documents ensures reliability of the transaction, ease current process of manual verification and reduce frauds.

Important Days

1. World Coconut Day observed on 2nd September

World Coconut Day was celebrated on 2nd September, under the auspices of the Asia-Pacific Coconut Community from 2009 onwards to focus attention and awareness about this plantation crop. Kerala tops the production in coconut, but Tamil Nadu and Karnataka are also picking up in this sector.

The National Coconut Board is also overseeing the production and development of value-added varieties from coconut like soft drinks, chips and jams. Handicrafts based on coconut shell and wood are also being given further encouragement.



2. International Day of Charity observed on 5 September

The International Day of Charity is an international day observed annually on 5 September. It was declared by the United Nations General Assembly in 2012. The day promotes the rights of the underprivileged and spreads the message of humanity in conflict situations.

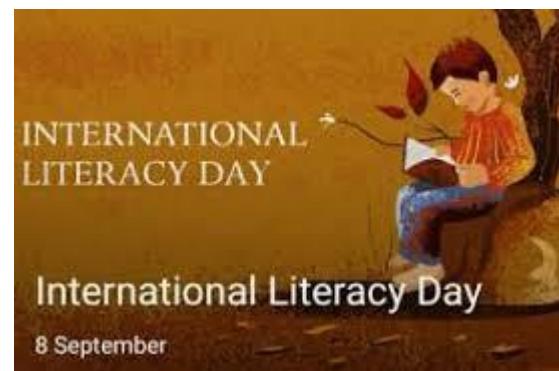
The date of 5 September was chosen in order to commemorate the anniversary of the passing away of Mother Teresa of Calcutta, who received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979 "for work undertaken in the struggle to overcome poverty and distress, which also constitute a threat to peace." Mother Teresa died on September 5th 1997, at 87 years of age.



3. International Literacy Day observed on September 8

The 8th of September was proclaimed International Literacy Day by UNESCO in 1966, to remind the international community of the importance of literacy for individuals, communities and societies, and the need for intensified efforts towards more literate societies. The theme of 2020 was "Literacy, teaching and learning in the COVID-19 crisis and beyond". The theme highlights literacy learning in a lifelong learning perspective.

The issue of literacy is a key component of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. South Asia has the lowest regional adult literacy rate, at 58.6%.



4. First International Day of Clean Air for blue skies observed on September 7

The world celebrated its first-ever International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies on September 7. It is a part of a resolution taken by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on December 19, 2019. The day is observed to raise public awareness at all levels and to promote and facilitate actions to improve air quality.

The day promotes solutions that improve air quality by sharing actionable knowledge best practices. Air pollution contributes to heart disease, strokes, lung cancer and other respiratory diseases. It also threatens the economy, food security and the environment.



5. World Suicide Prevention Day observed on 10th September

World Suicide Prevention Day is observed on 10th of September every year to raise awareness around the globe that suicide can be prevented. Various activities including educational and commemorative events, press briefings and conferences, as well as Facebook and Twitter coverage are organised on this day.

The theme of 2020 was 'Working together to prevent suicide'. It focuses on bringing together government organisations, healthcare professionals, NGOs, family, friends, coworkers and closed ones to work together to bring down suicide rate.



6. International Day to Protect Education from Attack observed on September 9

International Day to Protect Education from Attack is observed globally on 9th September. United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 9 September as the International Day to Protect Education from Attack, mobilising action to safeguard education in armed conflict. The resolution proclaiming the Day was presented by the State of Qatar and co-sponsored by 62 countries.

In proclaiming the International Day to Protect Education from Attack to be celebrated for the first time in 2020, UN highlighted the importance of safeguarding schools as places of protection and safety for students and educators and the need to keep education at the top of the public agenda.



7. World First Aid Day 2020

World First Aid Day is observed on the second Saturday of September, every year. This year it was observed on September 12. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) introduced World First Aid Day in 2000.

The day aims to promote the importance of first aid training in preventing injuries and saving lives. This day is also celebrated to encourage first aid training for all.



8. Hindi Diwas observed on September 14

Hindi Day is an annual day observed on 14 September in Hindi speaking states of India to celebrate the adoption of Hindi as one of the official languages of India. It was on this day in 1949, that the constituent assembly adopted Hindi written in Devanagari as the official language of the country.

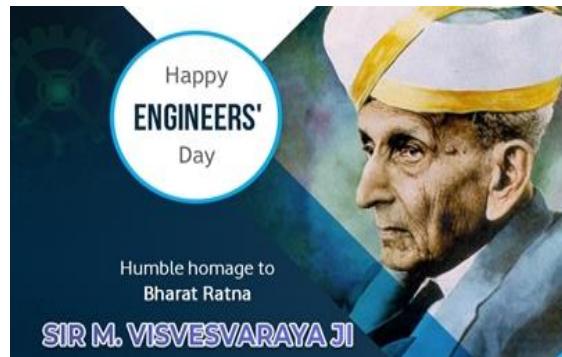
Hindi is one of the widely spoken languages in the world and the first language of more than 520 million people. Government has taken several steps to promote the Rajbhasha and at the international forums.



9. Engineers' Day 2020 celebrated

India celebrates September 15 as National Engineer's Day every year to honour the contributions of Mokshagundam Visvesvaraya. The Bharat Ratna awardee, Visvesvaraya was born on September 15, 1861.

Visvesvaraya had patented and installed an irrigation system with water floodgates at the Khadakwasla reservoir near Pune to raise the food supply level and storage to the highest levels. While serving as the Diwan of Mysore, he was awarded 'Knight' in 1915 as a commander of the British Indian Empire by King George V.



September 15 is celebrated as National Engineer's Day every year to honour the contributions of Mokshagundam Visvesvaraya. The Bharat Ratna awardee, Visvesvaraya was born on September 15, 1861.

10. International Day of Democracy 2020

The United Nations' (UN) International Day of Democracy is observed annually on 15th September to raise public awareness about democracy. The theme of International Day of Democracy 2020 is "COVID-19: A Spotlight on Democracy".

The day was created by the UN General Assembly, through a resolution in 2007 to strengthen national programme devoted to the promotion and consolidation of democracy. According to the UN, Democracy is a fundamental building block for peace, sustainable development and human rights.



11. International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer observed on September 16

September 16 was designated by the United Nations General Assembly as the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer. The date marks the signing, in 1987, of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (resolution 49/114).



The ozone layer, a fragile shield of gas, protects the Earth from the harmful portion of the rays of the sun, thus, helping preserve life on the planet. The phase out of controlled uses of ozone depleting substances have protected human health and ecosystems by limiting the harmful ultraviolet radiation from reaching the Earth.

12. World Patient Safety Day observed on 17 September

World Patient Safety Day is observed on 17th September every year. World Patient Safety Day was established by the 72nd World Health Assembly, in May 2019, with the adoption of resolution WHA72.6 on 'Global action on patient safety', and an endorsement for the Day to be marked annually on 17 September.

The overall objectives of World Patient Safety Day are to enhance global understanding of patient safety, increase public engagement in the safety of health care and promote global actions to enhance patient safety and reduce patient harm.



13. World Bamboo Day 2020

World Bamboo Day is observed every year on the 18th of September by the World Bamboo Organisation to generate awareness about conserving and promoting the bamboo industry. The theme for 11th edition of WBD 2020 is 'BAMBOO NOW.'

The World Bamboo Organisation aims to bring the potential of bamboo to a more elevated exposure – to protect natural resources and the environment, to ensure sustainable utilisation, as well as promote traditional uses locally for community economic development.



14. International Day of Peace observed on 21 September

The International Day of Peace, sometimes officially known as World Peace Day, is a United Nations-sanctioned holiday observed annually on 21 September. The 2020 theme for the International Day of Peace is "Shaping Peace Together." It implies to stand together with the UN against attempts to use the virus to promote discrimination or hatred.

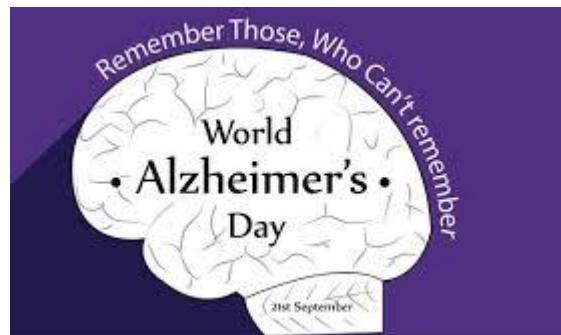
The UN General Assembly has declared this as a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, through observing 24 hours of non-violence and cease-fire.



15. World Alzheimer's Day observed on 21 September

September 21st every year is observed as World Alzheimer's Day around the world, highlighting the importance of talking about dementia and to raise awareness of how it impacts the daily lives of people affected by the condition. The theme for World Alzheimer Day 2020 is 'Let's talk about dementia'.

The impact of World Alzheimer's day is growing, but the stigmatisation and misinformation that surrounds dementia remains a global problem that requires global action. World Alzheimer's Day was launched at the opening of ADI's annual conference in Edinburgh on 21 September 1994.



16. International Coastal Clean-Up Day 2020

The International Coastal Clean-up Day is traditionally held on the third Saturday in September. In 2020, the day is being held on 19 September. It is one of the world's largest annual preservation and protection events and volunteer efforts for our ocean, waves and beaches. 2020 theme for International Coastal Clean-up Day 2020 was "Achieving a trash-free Coastline".

The International Coastal Clean-up began more than 30 years ago, when communities rallied together with the common goal of collecting and documenting the trash littering their coastline.



17. World Pharmacist Day observed on 25 September

World Pharmacist Day is observed globally on 25th September every year. This day is celebrated to create awareness about the role of a pharmacist in improving health. The day was an initiative of the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) along with the council of this organization.

The theme of 2020 was "Transforming global health". The International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) is the global body representing over 4 million pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists.



18. World Maritime Day 2020 observed on 24 September

World Maritime Day 2020 is observed globally on 24th September to mark the contribution of international maritime industries towards the economy of the world. IMO has adopted and will continue to develop measures to cut greenhouse gas emissions, reduce the sulphur content of ships' fuel oil etc.

The theme for this year is "Sustainable shipping for a sustainable planet," which provides an excellent opportunity to raise awareness of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to showcase the work that the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and its Member States are undertaking to achieve the targets.



19. International Day of Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

The General Assembly commemorates 26 September as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. This Day provides an occasion for the world community to reaffirm its commitment to global nuclear disarmament as a priority.

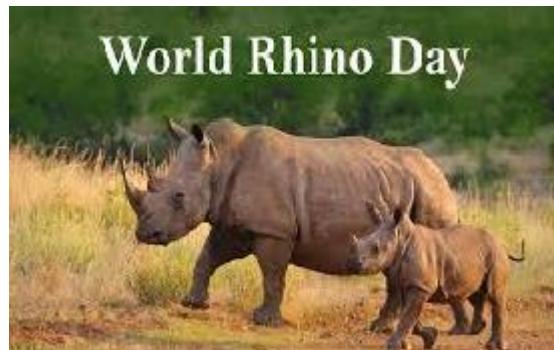
In accordance with General Assembly resolution 68/32 and subsequent resolutions, the purpose of the International Day is to further the objective of the total elimination of nuclear weapons through enhancing public awareness and education about the threat posed to humanity by nuclear weapons and the necessity for their total elimination.



20. World Rhino Day observed on 22 September

World Rhino Day is observed globally on 22 September every year to raise awareness and build a safe natural habitat for this incredible species. This special day provides the opportunity for cause-related organizations, NGOs, zoos, and members of the public to celebrate rhinos in their own unique ways.

The day celebrates all five species of rhino: Black, white, greater one-horned, Sumatran and Javan rhinos. Some species of rhinoceros are among the world's most endangered animals, threatened by both habitat loss and poaching.



21. International Red Panda Day 2020 observed on September 19

The third Saturday in September has been set aside as International Red Panda Day. The day is dedicated to learn about red pandas and raise awareness. Red pandas are not related to giant pandas and were discovered 50 years earlier. They are important indicators of the vibrant forests in the Eastern Himalayas.

Red pandas are the only living member of their taxonomic family. On this day, thousands of people visit more than 100 zoos worldwide and learn about red pandas. The day was launched by the Red Panda Network in 2010. The first international red Panda day was celebrated on 18th September 2010.



22. International Day of Sign Languages observed on 23 September

International Day of Sign Languages is celebrated annually across the world on 23 September every year. This is done along with International Week of the Deaf to raise awareness of the importance of sign language in the full realisation of the human rights of people who are deaf. The choice of 23 September is the same date that the World Federation of the Deaf was established in 1951.

International Day of Sign Languages 2020



The International Day of Sign Languages is a unique opportunity to support and protect the linguistic identity and cultural diversity of all deaf people and other sign language users. The theme for the 2020 International Day of Sign Languages is "Sign Languages are for Everyone!"

23. World Environmental Health Day observed on 26 September

World Environmental Health Day is being observed globally today on 26th September to highlight the importance of work of environmental health around the world. The theme for the 2020 World Environmental Health Day was 'Environmental health, a key public health intervention in disease pandemic prevention'.

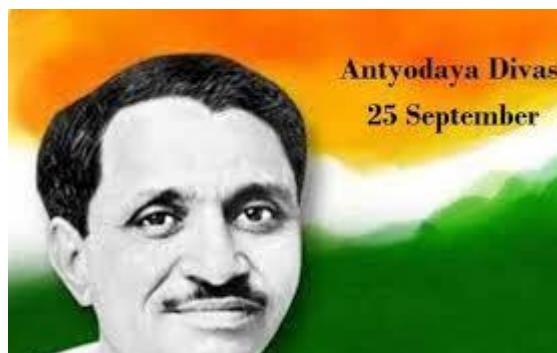
The day was launched by International Federation of Environmental Health council in 2011. Environmental Health Practitioners play important role to implement disease preventive measures.



24. Nation observed Antyodaya Divas on 25 September

India observes Antyodaya Diwas on 25th September every year. This day is celebrated to mark the birth anniversary of Pandit Deendayal. Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya was one of the great thinker and philosopher of the nationalist movement of the country.

During the Antyodaya Divas each Swachhagrahi is asked to create an army of her own Swachhagrahis. Each team works on ODF and ODF activities in their villages, depending on the ODF status of their villages.



25. World Heart Day observed on September 29

World Heart Day is observed on September 29, aimed at drawing people's attention to heart ailments and the whole range of associated health issues. This initiative was launched in 2000 by the World Heart Federation as an annual event and gets celebrated on 29th day of September ever since.

The day promotes different preventive steps and changes in lifestyle to avoid any cardiovascular diseases, like heart attack, stroke, heart failure and any other condition related to the same. It is advisable for every individual to have their heart, blood pressure and cholesterol checked frequently.



26. International Translation Day observed on 30 September

International Translation Day is observed on 30th September every year. International Translation Day is meant as an opportunity to pay tribute to the work of language professionals, which plays an important role in bringing nations together, facilitating dialogue, understanding and co-operation, contributing to development and strengthening world peace and security.

30 September celebrates the feast of St. Jerome, the Bible translator, who is considered the patron saint of translators. St. Jerome was a priest from North-eastern Italy, who is known mostly for his endeavor of translating most of the Bible into Latin from the Greek manuscripts of the New Testament.



International

1. US federal budget deficit projected to hit record USD 3.3 trillion

The United State's federal budget deficit is projected to hit a record USD 3.3 trillion as huge government expenditure to fight the corona virus and to prop up the economy have added more than USD 2 trillion to the federal ledger. Government spending, fuelled by four corona virus response measures, would register at USD 6.6 trillion, USD 2 trillion-plus more than 2019.

The recession has caused a drop in tax revenues. The spike in the deficit means that federal debt will exceed annual gross domestic product of 2021.



2. Third US India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF) Summit held

Vice President of United States Mike Pence and Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the third US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF) Summit. The US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF) is a non-profit organization that works for the partnership between India and the United States.



The 5-day Summit was based on theme "US-India Navigating New Challenges". Summit witnessed the discussions on India's potential in becoming a Global Manufacturing Hub, Opportunities in India's Gas Market, Ease of Doing Business to attract FDI in India, Common Opportunities & Challenges in Tech Space, Indo-Pacific Economic issues etc.

3. Saudi Arabia chairs G20 Foreign Ministers' Extraordinary Meeting

The G20 meeting was chaired by Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud who called for re-opening borders, in accordance with all the protective measures and national regulations. The discussions centered on strengthening international co-operation across borders in wake of COVID-19 crisis.

EAM called on Governments around the world to ensure that interests of foreign students are protected and movement of stranded seafarers back to their home country is facilitated. EAM also proposed development of voluntary 'G20 Principles on Co-Ordinated Cross-Border Movement of People'.



4. Prahlad Singh Patel attended BRICS Culture Ministers' Meet

Union Minister of State for Culture and Tourism Prahlad Singh Patel virtually participated in BRICS Culture Ministers' meeting held in Curitiba, Brazil. During the meeting the discussion was held on the impact of the epidemiological situation on the cultural sphere in the BRICS countries and review of the possible implementation of joint cultural online-projects within BRICS.

India suggested for opening BRICS Corner under the auspices of BRICS Alliance of Libraries during the India's BRICS Presidency in 2021 and hosting a Digital Online Exhibition on a Shared theme towards end of 2021 under the auspices of BRICS Alliance of Museums.



5. UNICEF to lead global procurement and supply of Coronavirus vaccines

UNICEF announced that it will be leading the procurement and supply of coronavirus vaccines to ensure that all countries have safe access to initial doses, when they are available. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is the world's largest single vaccine buyer, procuring more than 2 billion doses of various vaccines annually for routine immunisation.

UN agency, in collaboration with the Revolving Fund of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), will lead efforts to procure and supply doses of COVID-19 vaccines on behalf of the COVAX Global Vaccines Facility.



6. 35th FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific 2020

The 35th Session of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific (APRC 35) was held. The conference highlighted to build resilience and sustainability in food systems to ensure continued food security and nutrition for people in the region. It acknowledged that many countries, recognising the importance of agriculture, brought in measures to facilitate farming operations and export-import pathways.



APRC 35 is a forum to discuss regional priorities and pressing issues such as the impact of COVID-19, the state of agriculture, natural resources management, food security and nutrition.

7. First session of India-Angola Joint Commission meet held

The Angola-India Joint Commission held its first session on 7th September. The session was co-chaired by the External Affairs Minister of India, Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, and the Minister of External Relations of the Republic of Angola, Ambassador Téte António.

The two Ministers reviewed the entire spectrum of bilateral relations in the areas of political, economic, trade and investment, defence and security and development cooperation. They also exchanged views on regional and global developments of mutual interest, including counter-terrorism and security.



8. 17th Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Culture Ministers' Meeting held

Union Minister of State for Culture Prahilad Singh Patel participated in the 17th Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Culture Ministers' Meeting. Discussion was held on the role and place of culture during the global epidemiological crisis and on the prospects for developing multilateral cultural cooperation within the SCO.

Participants emphasised the need to share the initiatives taken in respective nations in the field of culture with each other to further spread the message of hope and unity in the prevailing situation. 2021 is being observed as the "Year of Culture of the SCO".



9. India and Japan signed agreement on Reciprocal Provision of Supplies

India and Japan signed an Agreement between the two countries concerning Reciprocal Provision of Supplies and Services between the Armed Forces of India and The Self-Defense Forces of Japan. This agreement enhances the interoperability between the Armed Force of India and Japan. Thereby, further increasing the bilateral defence engagements under the Special Strategic & Global Partnership between the two countries.



The agreement establishes the enabling framework for closer cooperation between the Armed Forces of India and Japan in reciprocal provision of supplies and services while engaged in bilateral training activities, United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, Humanitarian International Relief and other mutually agreed activities.

10. President Ram Nath Kovind accepted Letter of Credence from High Commissioner of Singapore

President Ram Nath Kovind accepted Letter of Credence from Simon Wong Wie Kuen, the High Commissioner of the Republic of Singapore in a virtual ceremony. A letter of credence is a formal diplomatic letter that appoints a diplomat as ambassador to another sovereign state. The letter is addressed from one head of state to another, asking them to give credence to whatever the ambassador may say on their country's behalf.



Ram Nath Kovind is the 14th and current President of India. He served as the 26th Governor of Bihar from 2015 to 2017.

11. First India-France-Australia Trilateral Dialogue held

The first India-France-Australia Trilateral Dialogue was held virtually. The focus of the dialogue was on enhancing cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region, Marine Global Commons and potential areas for practical cooperation at the trilateral and regional level.

During the dialogue, the three sides discussed economic and geostrategic challenges and cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and domestic responses to it. The three countries had an exchange on the priorities, challenges and trends in regional and global multilateral institutions.



12. US revoked visas of more than 1,000 Chinese students deemed to be a security risk

The United States revoked the visas of more than 1,000 Chinese students and researchers who are deemed to be a security risk. The move is aimed at Chinese nationals suspected of having ties to the military.

The Trump administration has charged that Chinese students have come to the United States to steal intellectual property to advance China's economic and military sectors. Nearly 3,70,000 students from China enrolled at US universities in 2018-19.



13. ADB provided 50-million-dollar loan to Bangladesh for PPP infrastructure projects

The Asian Development Bank and government of Bangladesh signed a 50-million-dollar loan agreement to promote, fund and implement public-private partnership (PPP) infrastructure projects in the country. The project will generate 3,000 jobs in PPP projects supported by the Bangladesh Infrastructure Finance Fund Limited (BIFFL) by 2024.



The project will help Bangladesh to mobilise private investment, develop infrastructure projects and create jobs which will help accelerate the economic recovery process in the aftermath of the Corona pandemic.

14. UAE extended amnesty period waiving fines of residents with expired visas

UAE extended an amnesty period waiving the fines of residents whose visas expired before March 1. Those, who are in UAE on lapsed visas will have time until November 17 to leave without having to pay a penalty.

The decision targets people who were already in UAE before March 1 without a valid visa - such as workers with expired permits, jobseekers on expired visit visas and people working without any documents. Anyone who leaves the country UAE as part of the amnesty will not be banned from reentering at a later date.

Asian Development Bank



15. Germany joined Indo-Pacific club aimed at securing trade routes from China

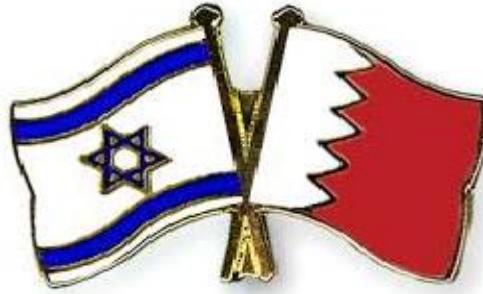
Germany joined the Indo-Pacific club. The move is aimed at securing the trade routes from China. Germany has drafted a 40-page guidelines, as it formally adopts a strategy for the Indo-Pacific region. The move makes it the second European nation after France to formally adopt a strategy for the Indo-Pacific region.

The strategy is designed to allow Germany to make an active contribution to shaping the international order in the Indo-Pacific. The move by Germany augurs well for the Quad which is constituted by the United States, Japan, Australia, and India.



16. Bahrain becomes latest Arab nation to agree to normalise ties with Israel

Bahrain has become the latest Arab nation to agree to normalise ties with Israel as part of a broader diplomatic push by US President Donald Trump and his administration to fully integrate the Jewish State into the Middle East. US President Trump, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa issued a brief six-paragraph joint statement, attesting to the deal.



The agreement makes Bahrain the fourth Arab country, after Egypt, Jordan and the UAE, to have full diplomatic ties with Israel.

17. India-US held 2 plus 2 inter-session meeting

The Inter-Sessional Meeting of the U.S.-India 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue was held, where the two sides discussed a range of bilateral, regional, and multilateral issues. Both countries discussed issues such as combating COVID-19, counter terrorism, India's membership on the UN Security Council, efforts to counteract recent destabilizing actions in South Asia, and the broader Indo-Pacific region.

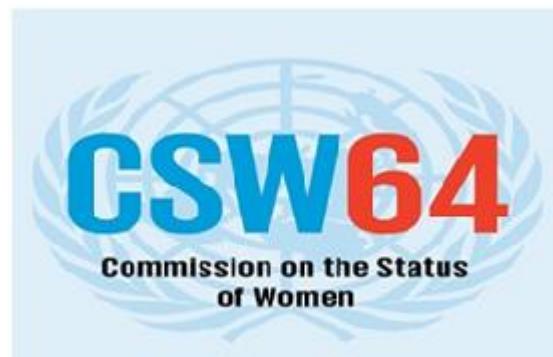


The United States underscored the importance of India's status as a Major Defense Partner, growing military-to-military cooperation, and other defense priorities. Both sides reviewed the progress and developments in bilateral ties in defence, security, and foreign policy.

18. India beats China to become member of UN's Commission on Status of Women

India has been elected as the member of the Commission on Status of Women (CSW), a body of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). India will be a member of the prestigious body for four years from 2021 to 2025.

India, Afghanistan and China had contested the elections to the Commission on Status of Women. While, India and Afghanistan won the ballot among the 54 members, China failed to cross the half-way mark. The CSW is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.



19. S Jaishankar chaired IBSA Foreign Ministers' virtual meeting

External Affairs Minister of the Republic of India, Shri S. Jaishankar, chaired the customary meeting of IBSA Foreign Ministers. The Ministers exchanged views on furthering IBSA co-operation and exchanged views on various issues of global significance including peace, security, countering terrorism, climate change, sustainable development.

Ministers adopted and released the IBSA Joint Ministerial Statement on the Reform of the UN Security Council, as a common endeavour of the Global South. The Ministers agreed to enhance IBSA co-operation at multilateral forum.



20. Environment Ministerial Meeting of G20 held virtually

The Environment Ministerial Meeting (EMM) of the G20 countries was held under the Presidency of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Union Minister Prakash Javadekar highlighted the efforts made by National Coastal Mission Programme and applauded the launch of Global Initiative to Reduce Land Degradation and Coral Reef program at the G20 Environment Ministers meeting.



The meetings focused on various social and economic issues such as agriculture, anti-corruption, climate, digital economy, education, employment, energy, environment, health, tourism, trade and investment.

21. Bangladesh granted Special Permission for Export of Hilsa Fish to India

The Commerce Ministry of Bangladesh has given special permission for traders to export Hilsa fish to India on a limited scale in view of the forthcoming Durga Puja. The Commerce Ministry has allowed nine exporters to send a total of approximately 1500 tonnes of Hilsa to India.

Bangladesh imposed a ban on the export of Hilsa in 2012. Bangladesh has a share of 75% in the production of Hilsa fish in the world.



22. Mexico issued world's first sovereign bond linked to UN sustainable goals

Mexico has become the first country in the world to issue a sovereign bond. The bonds are linked to the sustainable development goals set by the United Nations. Mexico has raised EUR 750 million (\$890 million) through these bonds.

The SDG bond will mature in September 2027 and offers a yield to maturity rate of 1.603% and a coupon rate of 1.350%. This new bond was issued under Mexico's new "SDG Sovereign Bond Framework," which was released in February in partnership with French investment bank Natixis.



23. India extended 250 million dollars support to Maldives to overcome Covid-19

India provided financial assistance of 250 million dollars as budgetary support to the Maldives government to mitigate the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The budgetary support of 250 million dollars has been extended without conditions. Maldives government is at liberty to use the money in repairing the domestic economic situation in line with its own priorities. Indian government has provided a sovereign guarantee to SBI for this financial assistance. Maldives is the only country to which India has provided such assistance.



24. India held webinar with Israel on Defence Industry Global Outreach

A webinar between India and Israel was held based on theme "Indian Defence Industry Global Outreach for Collaborative Partnership: Webinar and Expo". This webinar is the first in the series of webinars which will be organised with friendly foreign countries in order to boost defence exports and achieve defence export target of \$5 billion in the next five years.

A MoU was signed between Kalyani Group and Rafael Advanced Defence Systems during the webinar. Creation of Sub Working Group (SWG) on Defence Industrial Cooperation between India and Israel was announced in the webinar.



25. Mohamed Hussein Roble appointed as new Prime Minister of Somalia

President of Somalia, Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed has appointed Mohamed Hussein Roble as the new Prime Minister of Somalia. He will replace former Prime Minister Hassan Ali Khaire, who was voted out of office by parliament. Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed won votes of 215 members of Parliament. He has served for the International Labour Organisation, a United Nations agency.

Somalia is a sovereign country in the Horn of Africa. It has been driven by civil war since 1991. Somalia has the longest coastline on Africa's mainland.



26. Bah Ndaw sworn in as interim president of Mali

Retired colonel and former defence minister Bah Ndaw has been sworn in as Mali's interim President. A military coup had recently overthrown embattled leader Ibrahim Boubacar Keita. Bah Ndaw has been appointed for a maximum of 18 months before staging nationwide elections.

Coup leader Colonel Assimi Goita was also sworn in as the vice president of the transition. The 15-nation Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) slapped sanctions on Mali after the coup.



27. Ex-rebel leader Ishmael Toroama elected President of Bougainville

Former rebel military commander Ishmael Toroama has been elected as president of Bougainville. It is an autonomous region of Papua New Guinea. Toroama is set to lead talks for the territory's independence from Papua New Guinea.

Bougainville voted overwhelmingly for separation from Papua New Guinea in 2019. Bougainville is a mineral-rich and lush group of islands in the South Pacific. Mr Toroama was a commander in the secessionist Bougainville Revolutionary Army, and later worked on the peace and disarmament process.



28. World Bank approved 200-million-dollar loan for safe water & sanitation in Bangladesh

The World Bank approved a 200-million-dollar loan for Bangladesh to improve access to safe water and sanitation services in the rural areas of the country. The Bangladesh Rural Water, Sanitation and Hygiene project will help 6 lakh people to have access to clean water through piped water schemes in rural areas and provide sanitation services to over 3.6 million rural people in Bangladesh.

Funds will be used for setting up more than 2500 hand-washing stations in public places with overhead tanks for running water and sanitation facilities to prevent diseases and protect from pandemics like COVID 19.



29. Moctar Ouane appointed as new Prime Minister of Mali

The interim President of Mali, Bah Ndaw, has named former Malian Foreign Minister Moctar Ouane as the new Prime Minister of Mali. The appointment of a civilian prime minister was a major condition imposed by the West African regional economic bloc, ECOWAS, on Mali.

Moctar Ouane has served as Mali's ambassador to the United Nations from 1995-2002, as diplomatic advisor to President Moussa Traoré from 1990 to 1991, as chief of staff of the Secretary-General of the Presidency from 1988 to 1990 and as foreign minister from 2004-2009, during Amadou Toumani Toure's presidency.



Miscellaneous

1. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved extension of Pramod Chandra Mody as Chairman, Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) for a period of six months with effect from 01.09.2020 to 28.02.2021 or until further orders.
2. Tamil Nadu has appointed India's first-ever woman ambulance driver, M Veeralakshmi under a new initiative by CM Palaniswami. M Veeralakshmi was appointed as the driver of one of the newly launched '108' ambulances.
3. Raj Kumar Srivastava, presently Deputy Chief of Mission in the Embassy of India, Tokyo was appointed as the next Ambassador of India to the Republic of Croatia. He is an IFS officer of 1997 batch.
4. Private life insurer, Bajaj Allianz Life, has appointed actor Ayushmann Khurrana as its brand ambassador.
5. Union Minister of Education has launched a free mobile app named as "EnglishPro". This app will be "a useful digital tool" and will act as an educational resource for the teachers, students and for people from varied backgrounds.
6. Union Agriculture and Farmers Welfare ministry approved four crore rupees for up-gradation of Soil Testing labs across the Kashmir valley. The quality control laboratory upgradation will facilitate upgradation and strengthening of fertilizer quality control lab.
7. Assam inaugurated a total of 329 schemes under various departments worth 121 crore rupees.
8. Famous filmmaker Johnny Bakshi passed away. Some of his popular movies were Manzilein Aur Bhi Hain (1974), Raavan (1984), Daku Aur Police (1992), Khudai (1994) and Phir Teri Kahani Yaad Aayee (1993).
9. Karnataka Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa inaugurated the 'Veer Savarkar' flyover in Bengaluru.
10. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the Patrika Gate in Jaipur, Rajasthan through video conference. The Patrika Gate was built by the Patrika group of Newspapers on the Jawaharlal Nehru Marg in Jaipur.
11. On the occasion of Bank of India (BoI)'s 115th Foundation Day, BoI has launched an international contactless debit card, "Signature Visa Debit Card" for high net worth individuals who are maintaining an average quarterly balance of Rs 10 lakhs and above.
12. Fantasy sports gaming platform, Playerzpot, has appointed Smriti Mandhana and Bhuvneshwar Kumar as its brand ambassadors.
13. India and China have agreed on five points to guide their approach to the situation on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the bilateral meeting between Foreign Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi held along the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Ministerial meet in Moscow.
14. The Competition Commission of India (CCI) approved proposed combination involving acquisition of 20% of the issued and paid-up equity share capital of Piramal Pharma Limited (Pharma Co.) by CA Clover Intermediate II Investments (Curie).
15. Indian Police Officer, Poonam Khatri, has claimed World Championship status after her silver medal at the Wushu World Championship 2019 has been upgraded to a Gold medal.
16. Hubballi Railway Station in Karnataka will now be known as 'Shree Siddharoohda Swamiji Railway Station.

17. Japan's ruling party elected Yoshihide Suga as its new leader.
18. Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated to the Nation three key projects related to the Petroleum sector in Bihar. The projects include, the Durgapur-Banka section of the Paradip-Haldia-Durgapur Pipeline Augmentation Project and two LPG Bottling Plants in East Champaran and Banka.
19. TikTok has chosen Oracle to be its technology partner for its American operations.
20. The central government has banned export of all varieties of onions.
21. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has given its approval to the Haryana Orbital Rail Corridor Project from Palwal to Sonipat via Sohna-Manesar-Kharkhuda.
22. In pursuance of the announcements made in the Statement on Developmental and Regulatory Policies dated February 6, 2020, the Reserve Bank of India has released Draft Rupee Interest Rate Derivatives (Reserve Bank) Directions, 2020.
23. Online poker platform 9stacks has signed Suresh Raina as its brand ambassador.
24. The Fiumicino International Airport (FCO) in Rome, Italy, has become the first airport in the world to be certified with "COVID-19 5-star airport rating" from Skytrax, a U.K. based airport and airline review firm.
25. SBI General Insurance inked corporate agency agreement with YES Bank.
26. The Badminton World Federation (BWF) has announced that the Thomas Cup and the Uber Cup, which were scheduled to be held from 3 to 11 October 2020 in Denmark, has been postponed for 2021.
27. The Ministry of Education organised a webinar on Faculty Development for Quality Education under Shikshak Parv Initiative.
28. TATA group to construct New Parliament Building.
29. FDI inflows of Rs 2,883 crore have been reported in Defence and Aerospace sector through automatic route till June this year.
30. The International Finance Corporation has said that two trillion dollars will be provided to India to develop green buildings, improve public transport and to expand renewable sources of energy.
31. The shortest-serving Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, Amitabha Ghosh passed away.
32. Bandhan Bank has set up a new vertical called "Emerging Entrepreneurs Business (EEB)" to support the emerging needs of the unbanked and underbanked segment of customers.
33. The 10th Meeting of the BRICS High Representatives on National Security was held virtually and chaired by the current chair of BRICS i.e. Russia. National Security Advisor Ajit Doval represented India.
34. ICICI Home Finance has launched a new loan scheme 'Apna Ghar Dreamz', with credit amount in the range of Rs 2 lakh to 50 lakhs, for skilled workers employed in the informal sector in Delhi.
35. Rajya Sabha MP from Karnataka, Ashok Gasti passed away due to COVID-19.
36. Lok Sabha passed Bilateral Netting of Qualified Financial Contracts Bill. The Bill seeks to provide a legal framework for bilateral netting of qualified financial contracts, which are over the counter derivatives contracts.
37. Former Prime Minister of India, H D Deve Gowda took oath as a member of the Rajya Sabha from Karnataka.
38. The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind virtually inaugurated the Visitor's conference on Implementation of National Education Policy 2020 in Higher Education.

39. A veteran Australian judge, James Spigelman, one of the 14 foreign judges on Hong Kong's highest court, has resigned citing unspecified reasons related to the new national security law imposed by Beijing on the city.
40. Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi will inaugurate the Vaishvik Bharatiya Vaigyanik (VAIBHAV) Summit on 2nd October 2020, through video conferencing.
41. Toxins made by microscopic algae in water caused the previously unexplained deaths of hundreds of elephants in Botswana. A total of 330 elephants are now known to have died from ingesting cyanobacteria.
42. The 51st Edition of the International Film Festival of India, IFFI will be held from 16th to 24th January, next year in Goa.
43. HDFC Bank has launched video KYC (Know Your Customer) facility for its customers. The consent-based Video KYC facility is an alternate method of establishing the prospective customer's identity, during the account opening process in a safe and secure environment.
44. HDFC (Housing Development Finance Corporation) Life and Yes Bank entered into a Corporate Agency Arrangement (CA).
45. Renowned Marathi, Hindi films and stage actress Ashalata Wabgaonkar passed away.
46. A National webinar on "Curriculum Reforms & National Curriculum Framework (NCF) and Pedagogy" was organised under Shikshak Parv initiative.
47. Assam Government launched "Mukhyamantrir Grammya Paribahan Achoni Yojana". Under the scheme, Light Motor Vehicle Service would be launched in all the villages of the state to improve rural connectivity and generate employment in the villages.
48. The Central Pollution Control Board celebrated its 46th Foundation Day.
49. Volvo Car India has partnered with HDFC Bank to launch Volvo Car Financial Services to enable buyers get easy finance for its vehicles.
50. IDFC First Bank will launch "SafePay" a contactless debit card-based payment facility.
51. Minister of State for Railways Suresh Angadi passed away at the age of 65 years.
52. Former Canadian PM John Turner passed away at the age of 91 years.
53. The Appointments Committee of Cabinet has approved the proposal to appoint Simanchala Dash as an advisor to Executive Director, International Monetary Fund (IMF), in Washington for a period of three years.
54. The Department of Biotechnology has launched the programme for "Strengthening Clinical Trial Research Capacity in Neighbouring Countries".
55. Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has appointed AK Dixit, ex-General Manager of Union Bank of India as the new administrator of Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative (PMC) Bank. He will replace JB Bhoria.
56. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated 6 mega development projects in Uttarakhand under the Namami Gange Mission.
57. Veteran writer and critic Dr. G S Amur passes away.
58. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has launched a book titled 'A bouquet of flowers' written by Dr Krishna Saksena. She is the first lady to get a PhD, in 1955 from Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh.
59. The National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) has projected the GDP growth for the Indian economy at -12.6% For 2020-21 (FY21) with the remaining three quarters expected to witness a fall. For 2021-22, NCAER projects the GDP of India to grow by 7%.
60. The Reserve Bank of India has announced that it will launch "Positive Pay System" for Cheque Truncation System from 01st January, 2021.

61. SBI Card has launched its new brand campaign titled 'Contactless Connections', which aims to spreads the message that love and care can be shared even during this difficult period where social distancing is the norm.
62. ITBP Director General, S S Deswal has been given the additional charge of counter-terrorism force National Security Guard (NSG) as its incumbent chief A K Singh is going to retire on September 30.
63. Assam's first and only woman chief minister, Syeda Anwara Taimur passed away.

1. India to receive development assistance loan worth Rs 3,500 Cr from Japan to fight COVID-19

Japan committed an official Development Assistance loan of 3500 crore rupees for the COVID-19 Crisis Emergency Response Support. This programme loan aims to support India's efforts in fighting COVID-19 and to prepare the health system to manage future epidemics.

This Grant-in-aid from the Government of Japan is for providing medical equipment to strengthen the public health and medical system in India. It will strengthen the health care facilities for managing critical and serious patients suffering from COVID-19 infection.

The image shows the national flags of India and Japan side-by-side. The Indian flag on the left features the Ashoka Chakra in the center, with saffron at the top, white in the middle, and green at the bottom. The Japanese flag on the right is white with a red rising sun in the upper left corner.



2. Center gave nod to 27 integrated cold chain development projects under PM Kisan SAMPADA Yojana

Government gave its nod to 27 projects under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana for development of integrated cold chains. The new integrated cold chain projects will generate direct and indirect employment for over 16,000 people and benefit nearly 2,57,000 farmers and help in augmenting farmers' incomes.

27 new projects will leverage a total investment of Rs 743 crore for the creation of modern, innovative infrastructure and effective cold chain facilities for the food processing sector across various states.



3. Cabinet approved Mission Karmayogi - National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building

The Cabinet approved Mission Karmayogi - National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building. Mission Karmayogi aims to prepare the Indian Civil Servants for future by making them more creative, proactive, professional and technology-enabled.

The institutional framework will consist of Prime Minister's Public Human Resources (HR) Council, Capacity Building Commission, Special Purpose Vehicle for owning and operating the digital assets and the technological platform for online training.



4. Cabinet approved MoU between India and Japan regarding Indian textiles

Cabinet approved the signing of MoU between India and Japan for improving quality and testing of Indian textiles and clothing for the Japanese market. The MoU would enable M/s Nissenken Quality Evaluation Centre, Japan in assigning Textile Committee as their cooperative Testing and Inspection service providers in India for Textiles and Apparel products.



MoU will meet the requirements of Japanese importers as per technical regulation imposed by Japan and help exporters expand their market in Japan and boost Indian textiles and apparel exports, including technical textiles to Japan.

5. Cabinet approved MoU between India and Finland

Cabinet approved MoU for co-operation in the field of geology and mineral resources between Geological Survey of India and Geological Survey of Finland. The MoU facilitates cooperation in the field of geology, training, mineral prognostication and suitability analysis, 3/4D modeling, Seismic and other Geophysical surveys.



This MoU aims to provide with a framework to promote co-operation in the fields of geology, and mineral resources and share experiences on geological data management to promote exploration and mining, in the areas of geology and mineral resources.

6. Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced September to be observed as “Nutrition month”

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced to celebrate September 2020 as "Poshan Maah" or Nutrition Month. National Nutrition Month is celebrated in India every year during September to spread awareness about nutritional needs, deficiencies and malnutrition.



The day spreads awareness about crops grown in each district and their nutritional values is much needed. Various schools are provided with Nutrition Monitor and Nutrition Cards. MyGov portal organised Food and Nutrition Quiz.

7. Union Power Minister RK Singh launched “Green Term Ahead Market”

Union Minister R K Singh launched the Green Term Ahead Market (GTAM) for electricity. The introduction of GTAM platform would lessen the burden on RE-rich States and incentivize them to develop RE capacity beyond their own RPO. GTAM platform will lead to increase in number of participants in renewable energy sector.

Green Term Ahead Market contracts will allow additional avenues to the RE generators for sale of renewable energy; enable Obligated entities to procure renewable power at competitive prices and provide a platform to environmentally conscious open access consumers and utilities to buy green power.



8. IIPA organised “National Tribal Research Conclave”

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs and Indian Institute of Public Administration organised Two Days ‘National Tribal Research Conclave’. The conclave discussed the outcome and the best practices of various research projects being implemented under partnerships with TRIs and other stakeholders.

An agreement was signed between Ministry of Tribal Affairs and Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) for setting up National Tribal Research Institute (NTRI) for improving tribal research resulting in evidence based planning and development of tribal areas across the country.



9. 24x7 Toll-Free Mental Health Rehabilitation Helpline “KIRAN” launched

Union Minister Thaawarchand Gehlot launched 24x7 Toll-Free Mental Health Rehabilitation Helpline “KIRAN” (1800-500-0019). It will provide relief and support to persons with Mental Illness. It will function as a lifeline to provide 1st stage advice, counseling and reference in 13 languages to individuals, families, NGOs etc.

Kiran Helpline will offer mental health rehabilitation services with the objective of early screening, first-aid, psychological support, distress management, mental wellbeing, promoting positive behaviours, psychological crisis management etc.



10. Atal Innovation Mission united with Freshworks to empower AIM Startup Innovators

Atal Innovation Mission, partnered with Freshworks Inc., a customer-engagement software company, to increase the efficacy of the institutions and startups in the AIM portfolio and foster innovation and entrepreneurship among startup innovators.



Freshworks will do a white-glove onboarding for startups, which includes functional training in sales, marketing, and customer support use of cloud technology for providing better customer experiences. Various webinars will be organised with AIM, including workshops, training of modules and other relevant topics.

11. AIM and ScooNews partnered to spread awareness of Grassroots Innovations

Atal Innovation Mission partnered with ScooNews to spread awareness of Grassroots Innovations. AIM and ScooNews shall curate and publish ATL-related content, inspiring grassroots stories and innovations, ed-tech news and stories of various startups and organisations supported by AIM on a monthly basis. ScooNews will also bring out a special publication to celebrate the top innovations of ATL Marathon.



Atal Innovation Mission aims to create over a million neoteric innovators and potential job creators in the country. ScooNews is one of the largest education media houses in India.

12. Financial assistance of Rs 68,820 crores under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package given

Around 42 crore beneficiaries received financial assistance of 68,820 crore rupees under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package. Government had announced free food grains and cash payment to women, poor senior citizens and farmers.

Pradhan Mantri Garib

Under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana, 37.52 lakh metric tonnes of food grains has been distributed to 75.04 crore beneficiaries in April, 37.46 LMT distributed to 74.92 crore beneficiaries in May and 36.62

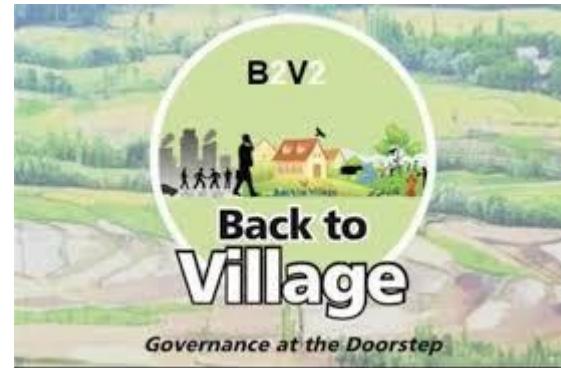
Kalyan Package

LMT distributed to 73.24 crore beneficiaries in June 2020. A total of 2,814 crore rupees disbursed to about 2.81 crore old age persons, widows and disabled persons in two installments.

13. Center announced third phase of 'Back to Village' programme

In the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the government announced the third phase of ambitious Back to Village (B2V) programme.

The Phase-I of B2V was an introductory and interactive programme to understand the people's grievances and demands. Phase-II focused on the devolution of powers to panchayats and tried to understand how these panchayats are functioning and what are the grievances and demands. Phase-III has been designed on the format for grievance redressal.



14. Tribal Affairs Ministry signed agreement with IIPA

Tribal Affairs Ministry signed an agreement with Indian Institute of Public Administration, IIPA for setting up of National Institute of Tribal Research. The proposed National Institute will be engaged in quality tribal research in collaboration with reputed government and non governments NGOs spread over the country.

National Institute of Tribal Research will have an educational wing to educate students on tribal development and tribal art and culture.

Ministry has designed workable models, which provide end to end solution as part of action research to be implemented by policy initiatives.



15. Union Minister for Agriculture launched 22 bamboo clusters in 9 States

Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Shri Narendra Singh Tomar launched 22 bamboo clusters in 9 States (Gujarat, MP, Maharashtra, Odisha, Assam, Nagaland, Tripura, Uttarakhand and Karnataka). A logo for the National Bamboo Mission was also released. The use of bamboo has been an ancient tradition in India and it is now being supported with modern technology.



The Minister called upon the States to take forward the objectives of the Mission, which would contribute to Aatma Nirbhar Krishi. This will help increase income of farmers and at the same time, reduce dependency on imports of some raw material.

16. Ministry of Education organised first Webinar on use of technology under Shikshak Parv initiative

Aiming at the dissemination of NEP, 2020 perspectives amongst the teacher fraternity, Shikshak Parv was organised by Education Ministry from 8th September-25th September, 2020. In line with the initiative, the Ministry of Education organised first Webinar on use of technology.

Various renowned scholars, experts including NCERT Universities and practicing teachers spoke from online forum and presented info-graphics about the recommendations of the policy. This provided an opportunity to seek suggestions and the opinions of teachers on various recommendations of the policy for their smooth implementation.



17. WhatsApp and CPF partnered to drive cyber safety awareness

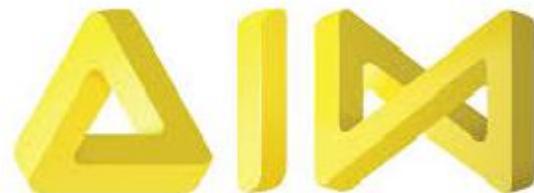
Facebook-owned WhatsApp partnered with Cyber Peace Foundation to create awareness on cyber safety among students. Cyber Peace Foundation will train teachers, parents and students using a co-created curriculum to arm them with tips and tricks to increase online safety for children. This educational partnership is a part of WhatsApp's multi-year campaign on safety focusing on digital literacy.



The core focus of this partnership is to create awareness, critical thinking, and logical reasoning to infuse a sense of responsibility and resilience amongst the children as their online interactions increase.

18. Aatmanirbhar Bharat ARISE Atal New India Challenge initiative of Niti Ayog launched

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari launched the Aatmanirbhar Bharat ARISE Atal New India Challenge initiative of Niti Ayog. The objective of the program is to proactively collaborate with Ministries and the associated industries to catalyse research, innovation and facilitate innovative solutions to sectoral problems.



The Aatmanirbhar Bharat ARISE-ANIC programme will support deserving applied research-based innovations by providing funding support of up to Rs 50 lakh for speedy development of the proposed technology solution.

19. Cabinet approved asset monetization of subsidiaries of PGCIL through Infrastructure Trust

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved Asset Monetization of subsidiaries of Power Grid Corporation of India Limited - POWERGRID through Infrastructure Investment Trust. It has given approval to POWERGRID to undertake monetization of its Tariff Based Competitive Bidding (TBCB) assets, held in existing Special Purpose Vehicle (SPVs), through Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvIT).



Power Grid Corporation of India

In the first block, POWERGRID would be able to monetize 5 TBCB assets of gross block of 7164 crore rupees. Based on the experience gained, further monetization shall be carried out in future.

20. India, ADB signed 500 million US dollar loan for Delhi-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System corridor

India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed a 500 million US dollar loan for Delhi-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) corridor. The first tranche of a total one-billion-dollar facility, to build a modern, high-speed 82-kilometer Delhi-Meerut RRTS corridor will improve regional connectivity and mobility in India's national capital region (NCR).



The 82-kilometer corridor connecting Sarai Kale Khan in Delhi to Modipuram in Meerut in Uttar Pradesh is expected to reduce the journey time to about one hour from the present 3 to 4 hours.

21. Government constituted EGoM to guide corporatisation process of OFB

The Government has constituted an Empowered Group of Ministers under the Chairmanship of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, to guide corporatisation process of Ordnance Factory Board. It has decided to convert OFB into one or more than one 100% Government owned corporate entities.



ORDNANCE FACTORY BOARD

The EGoM will oversee and guide the entire process. Other ministers in the EGoM are Home Minister Amit Shah, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, Labour and Employment Minister Santosh Kumar Gangwar and Minister for Personnel Dr Jitendra Singh.

22. PM announced National Evaluation Centre, Parakh

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the setting up of the National Evaluation Centre, PARAKH, for Performance Assessment, Reviews/ and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development to improve the overall evaluation system of the students. Parakh is an online testing partner that helps in conducting tests timely and accurately.

Teachers can use this app to create multiple tests to scrutinise the performance of students. Students who are ready to evaluate their performance can join any class using unique code.



23. Government launched 'SAROD-Ports'

The government launched 'SAROD-Ports' (Society for Affordable Redressal of Disputes - Ports). SAROD-Ports will resolve the disputes in fair and just manner, while saving huge amount of legal expenditure and time.

SAROD-Ports consists members from Indian Ports Association (IPA) and Indian Private Ports and Terminals Association (IPTTA). SAROD-PORTS was envisaged after amendments in the Model Concession Agreement (MCA) in January 2018. It is similar to provision available in Highway Sector in the form of SAROD-Roads constituted by NHAI.



24. NSDC, LinkedIn partner to accelerate digital skills training for youth

National Skill Development Corporation and LinkedIn have partnered to provide access to free LinkedIn Learning resources for imparting digital skills to youth. Under the partnership, 10 free LinkedIn Learning paths, consisting of 140 courses for a range of in-demand tech jobs, will be made available for free on eSkill India digital platform until March 31, 2021.



LinkedIn will also provide periodic labour market insights based on its economic graph of more than 69 million members in India. This will include in-demand skills, emerging jobs, and global hiring rates to NSDC to better understand the skilling ecosystem.

25. A two-day Conclave on 'School Education in 21st Century' held virtually

A two-day Conclave on "School Education in 21st Century" was organised by Ministry of Education virtually as part of Shikshak Parv 2020. It concluded with a commitment to take New Education Policy 2020 forward. Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the Conclave.

Shikshak Parv is celebrated from September 8 to 25 to felicitate the teachers and to take New Education Policy 2020 forward. NEP is the first education policy of the twenty-first century, which was announced after 34 years of the previous National Policy on Education 1986.



5. The previous National Policy on Education 1986.

26. Home Ministry granted FCRA registration to Golden Temple

The Union Government has granted a Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) licence to Sri Harmandir Sahib at Amritsar in Punjab for five years. The Golden Temple management had applied for FCRA registration on May 27, 2020. This will now allow it to receive foreign funding.

The FCRA registration has been given in the name of the 'Sachkhand Sri Harmandir Saheb Sri Darbar Saheb Punjab Association', a body set up in 1925.



27. CCEA approved Haryana Orbital Rail Corridor Project

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has given its approval to the Haryana Orbital Rail Corridor Project from Palwal to Sonipat via Sohna-Manesar-Kharkhuda. The project is likely to be completed in 5 years with estimated completion cost 5,617 crore rupees.

The project will be implemented by Haryana Rail Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (HRIDC), a Joint Venture company set up by the Ministry of Railways with the Government of Haryana. This rail line will facilitate diversion of traffic not meant for Delhi, thus decongesting the NCR network.



28. Cabinet approved establishment of new All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) at Darbhanga

The Union Cabinet has approved establishment of a new All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) at Darbhanga, Bihar. This will be established under the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY). The total cost will be Rs. 1,264 crores and is likely to be completed within a period of 48 months.

The new AIIMS will add 100 UG (MBBS) seats and 60 B.Sc (Nursing) seats. It will have 15-20 Super Specialty Departments and add 750 hospital beds.



29. Details of loan disbursal by World Bank to India to fight COVID-19 pandemic

The World Bank has so far provided three loans worth \$2.5 billion to Government of India to support Government of India's response to COVID-19 pandemic situation. The first loan is for health (\$1 billion), second for social protection (\$0.75 billion) and third for economic stimulus (\$0.75 billion). The first loan relating to health measures worth \$1,000 million was used to part finance Government of India's Rs 15,000 crore COVID Health measures.



The second loan relating to social protection measures worth \$750 million was provided as budgetary support under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package (PMGKP). The third loan worth \$750 million was used under Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Package (ANBP).

30. Allocation of funds to States under ANBP and PMGKP

The Government has made a provision of Rs. 40,000 crores under MGNREGA Scheme through Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Package (ANBP) to provide employment to workers, in addition to allocation of Rs. 61,500 crores under MGNREGA for Financial Year 2020-21.

Under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package (PMGKP), the Government paid 12% employers' share and 12% employees' share under Employees' Provident Fund (EPF), totaling 24% for three wage months from

March to May, 2020 for all the establishments having up to 100 employees with 90% of such employees earning less than Rs. 15,000 monthly wage. The package was extended for another 3 wage months.



Ministry of Finance

Government of India

31. Center prepared draft of Electricity (Rights of Consumers) Rules, 2020

Power Ministry has drafted rules providing for rights of electricity consumers for the first time. With this objective, a draft of Electricity (Rights of Consumers) Rules, 2020 has been prepared for the first time by the government.

According to the draft, State Electricity Regulatory Commissions, SERCs will fix average number and duration of outages per consumer per year for DISCOMs, so as to provide consumer satisfaction with respect to minimum service levels and standards.



32. M Venkaiah Naidu inaugurated 4th Global Ayurveda Summit

The 4th edition of Global Ayurveda Summit was virtually inaugurated by Vice-President Muppavarapu Venkaiah Naidu based on theme "Emerging Opportunities for Ayurveda during Pandemic". CII organised the summit in partnership with Ministry of Ayush, and with the support of Ayurveda Medical Association of India.

The summit showcased Ayurveda immunity model. Various seminars and exhibition were attended by participants from more than 25 countries.



33. Government increased MSP of six Rabi Crops

Government increased the Minimum Support Price (MSP) of six rabi crops namely wheat, chana, masoor, mustard, jowar and safflower. The hike in MSP reflects the government's commitment to guarantee MSP and government procurement in the country.

The MSP of wheat has been increased by Rs. 50 per quintal whereas, the MSP for Masoor has been hiked by Rs. 300. Mustard's MSP has been raised by Rs. 225 while, the same for Chana has been hiked by Rs. 225. Increase in Jowar's MSP is by Rs. 75 while, the same for Safflower has been hiked by Rs. 112 per quintal.



34. AYUSH Ministry and WCD Ministry signed MoU for POSHAN Abhiyaan

Ministry of AYUSH has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Ministry of Women and Child Development for controlling Malnutrition as a part of POSHAN Abhiyaan. The MoU will see scientifically proven Ayush-based solutions being adopted for controlling malnutrition in the country.

The collaboration will pave way in tackling the problem of malnutrition in mothers and children in the country. Nutri-gardens and medicinal gardens will be established in every Anganwadi in



Ministry of AYUSH

near future.

35. MoU signed between FACT

The Fertilisers and Chemicals Travancore Limited (FACT) signed a MoU with Government Industrial Training Institute (ITI) Kalamassery. It aims to improve industry institute interaction.

MoU agreement will implement adoption programme mainly to share training facilities, facilitate academic interaction between ITI students and FACT employees, exchange knowledge, conduct factory visits, enable experts from FACT to impart training, organise joint projects, participate in research and provide on-the-job training in FACT.



36. O-SMART SCHEME of the Ministry of Earth Sciences launched

Ministry of Earth Sciences launched O-SMART SCHEME. The objectives of O-SMART (Ocean Services, Modelling, Applications, Resources and Technology) scheme of Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), Govt. of India are as follows:

- To generate information on Marine Living Resources in the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).
- To periodically monitor levels of sea water pollutants for health assessment of coastal waters of India.
- To develop high resolution models for ocean forecast and reanalysis system and technologies to tap the marine bio resources.
- To support operation and maintenance of five Research vessels for ocean survey/monitoring/technology demonstration programmes,

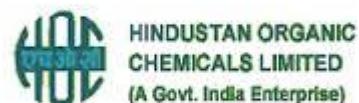


Ministry Of Earth Sciences

Government of India

37. HOCL gets Bureau of Indian Standards Certification for all its products

Hindustan Organic Chemicals Limited (HOCL), a PSU under the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers has been granted Bureau of Indian Standards - BIS certification for all its products. All the products of the company are widely being accepted, especially in Pharmaceutical industry.

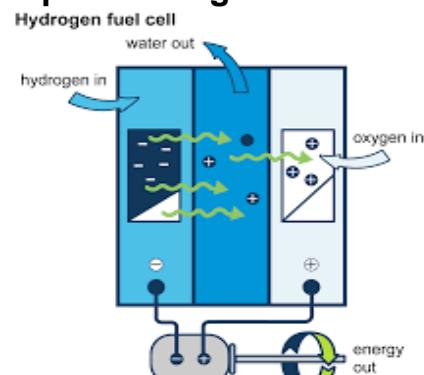


HOCL, a leader in chemical industry has manufacturing unit at Kochi in Kerala. It provides basic organic chemicals essential for vital industries like Drugs and pharmaceuticals, resins and laminates, dyes and dyes intermediates, rubber chemicals, paints, pesticides and Textile industry, virtually touching every facets of life. It is also manufacturing sanitizers in this period of COVID pandemic.

38. Government sets Hydrogen Energy Development Targets

The government's stated capacity target of 175 GW by 2022 lists 100 GW from solar, 60 GW from wind, 10 GW from biofuels, and 5 GW from hydro-based projects, as presently hydrogen does not form a plan of India's renewable energy future plans of developing 175 GW renewable power by 2022.

The main usage of hydrogen will be in fuel cells for electric vehicles. Fuel cells are a promising technology for use as a source of heat and electricity for buildings. Hydrogen can also join electricity as an important energy carrier.



39. Prime Minister Modi launched 'Fit India Age Appropriate Fitness Protocols'

On occasion of nation-wide online Fit India Dialogue, the Prime Minister launched Fit India Age-Appropriate Fitness Protocols. He interacted with various sports persons, fitness experts and others during the Fit India Dialogue event organised on the occasion.

Fit India Dialogue focuses on the fitness interests of every age group and brings into play different dimensions of fitness. Youth Ministry and Health Ministry together released Fitness protocols. The protocol urged everyone to practice yoga, or badminton, tennis or football, karate or kabaddi for at least 30 minutes daily.



40. AYUSH Ministry partnered Industry Bodies for Medicinal Plants cultivation

National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB), Ministry of AYUSH signed an MoU with the major AYUSH and Herbal industry bodies covering a set of measures to promote medicinal plant cultivation. AYUSH ministry will provide the buy-back guarantee to the farmers / gatherers on the NMPB supported medicinal plant cultivation and collection programs.

MoU include ADMA (Ayurvedic Drug Manufacturer's Association), Mumbai; AMAM (Association for Manufactures of Ayurvedic Medicines), New Delhi; AMMOI (Ayurvedic Medicines Manufacturers Organization of India), Thrissur; AHNMI (Association for Herbal and Nutraceutical Manufacturers of India), Mumbai; FICCI (Federation of Indian Industries), New Delhi and CII (Confederation of Indian Industry), New Delhi.



41. MeitY & NITI Aayog to organize “RAISE 2020” summit

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and NITI Aayog will organize a summit on Artificial Intelligence (AI), RAISE 2020 - 'Responsible AI for Social Empowerment 2020' from October 5-9, 2020. The RAISE 2020 Summit will feature some of the most exciting startups working in Artificial Intelligence-related fields.

RAISE 2020 will be a global meeting of minds to exchange ideas and chart a course for using AI for social transformation, inclusion and empowerment in areas like Healthcare, Agriculture, Education and Smart Mobility, among other sectors.



Ministry of Electronics and
Information Technology
Government of India

42. National Medical Commission comes into existence

The National Medical Commission (NMC), in place of the Medical Council of India (MCI), as the country's apex regulator of medical education and profession came into existence. The Board of Governors (BoG), which superseded the MCI to perform its functions, has been dissolved and the nearly 64-year-old Indian Medical Council Act abolished.

Dr Suresh Chandra Sharma, former head of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences has been appointed as chairman for a period of three years. The NMC comprises a chairman, 10 ex-officio members and 22 part-time members.



43. Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers approved setting up of 10 Plastic Parks

The Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers approved setting up of 10 Plastic Parks in the country. A plastic park is an industrial zone that includes a whole range of companies required by the plastics processing community from material and machinery suppliers, plastics processing companies, plastic recycling companies including waste management system.

Around six parks will be developed in the States of Assam, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Jharkhand. For the setting up of remaining 4 Plastic Parks, the Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for setting up of Plastic Parks in the States of Uttarakhand and Chhattisgarh are under evaluation.



**Department Of Fertilizers
Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers
Government of India**

44. Income Tax Department launched Faceless Income Tax Appeals

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) of the Income Tax Department has launched Faceless Income Tax Appeals. Under it, all income tax appeals will be finalised in a faceless manner with the exception of appeals relating to serious frauds, major tax evasion, sensitive and search matters, International tax and Black Money Act.



The Faceless Appeals system aims to streamline the income tax collection process and check corruption and unfair practices during the resolution of the appeals of the taxpayers. It will include allocation of cases through Data Analytics and Artificial Intelligence.

45. India-Sri Lanka Joint Statement on virtual bilateral summit

Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi and Prime Minister of Sri Lanka H.E. Mahinda Rajapaksa held a virtual summit and discussed bilateral relations and regional & international issues of mutual concern.

The two leaders agreed to enhance cooperation to combat terrorism and drug trafficking, facilitate an enabling environment for trade and investment between the two countries, deepen co-operation in renewable energy and strengthen technical co-operation in the areas of agriculture, animal husbandry etc.



46. Indian Veterinary Research Institute signed Technology License Agreement with Hester Biosciences Limited

Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI) has signed a Technology License Agreement on "Brucella abortus S19 Delta Per vaccine" with Hester Biosciences Limited, Ahmedabad. The vaccine will be of immense help in the National Control Programme on Brucellosis. The S19 Delta Per is a new generation vaccine.

The government has planned to immunise four crore female calves in India in the first phase against Brucella through vaccination.

Brucellosis is one of the most important zoonotic diseases worldwide and also endemic in India causing huge economic losses to dairy industry.



47. Startups in Agriculture Sector

Department of Agriculture, Co-operation & Farmers Welfare (DAC&FW) has launched a new component called "Innovation and Agri-Entrepreneurship Development" under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY-RAFTAAR) in 2018-19 with objective to promote innovation and agripreneurship by providing financial support and nurturing the incubation ecosystem. Five Knowledge Partners (KPs) and 24 Agribusiness Incubators (R-ABIs) have been appointed by DAC & FW.



Under this programme, for idea/pre-seed stage, a selected startup shall be eligible for a maximum financial assistance of Rs. 5 lakhs. For seed stage, a selected startup shall be eligible for a maximum financial assistance of Rs. 25 lakhs.

48. National Agricultural Higher Education Project of ICAR launched 'Kritagya' Hackathon

Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) under National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP) has launched a hackathon named "KRITAGYA". It aims to promote potential technology solutions for enhancing farm mechanisation with special emphasis on women friendly equipments.

Participating students can collaborate with local start-ups, students from technology institutes, and can win Rs. 5 lakhs, Rs 3 lakhs and Rs. 1 lakh as first, second and third prize.



The development and promotion of women friendly equipments would play an important role in enhancing the farm productivity and profitability.

49. First look of India's First RRTS Train unveiled

The first look of India's first high-speed commuter trains Regional Rapid Transit System, RRTS, was unveiled. The prototype is scheduled to roll off the production line in 2022. The state-of-the-art RRTS rolling stock will be first of its kind in India with a design speed of 180 kilometre per hour.

The entire rolling stock for Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut RRTS corridor will be manufactured at Bombardier's Savli plant in Gujarat. The 82 km long Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut Corridor is the first RRTS corridor being implemented in India.



82 km long Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut Corridor is the first RRTS corridor being implemented in India.

50. India & Maldives jointly e-launched direct cargo ferry service

India and Maldives jointly e-launched a direct cargo ferry service between the two nations. It will help boost trade between the two countries. The cargo ferry service will connect the Indian ports of Tuticorin and Cochin ports with Kulhudhufushi and Male ports in the Maldives.

The ferry service is being operated by the Shipping Corporation of India. It will run twice a month and will provide a cost-effective, direct and alternative means of transportation of goods between India and Maldives.



51. CCI approved acquisition of 100% equity shares of Medlife by API Holdings

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) approved acquisition of 100% equity shares of Medlife International Private Limited ("Medlife") by API Holdings Private Limited ("API Holdings") and of up to 19.59% equity share capital of API Holdings by Medlife's shareholders.

API is a private company, incorporated in 2019. API directly or through its subsidiaries carries out various business activities including wholesale sale and distribution of drugs. Medlife, incorporated in 2014 is primarily a healthcare company engaged in the wholesale sale and distribution of drugs.



52. MoRTH notified amendments in Central Motor Vehicle Rules

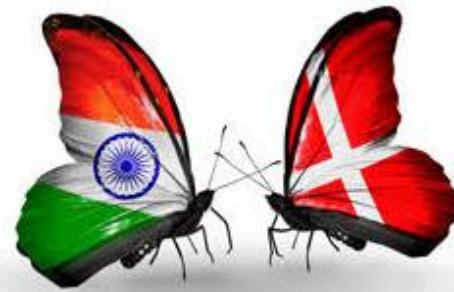
Ministry of Road Transport and Highways notified amendments in Central Motor Vehicle Rules facilitating implementation of Electronic enforcement, Maintenance of Vehicular Documents through Information Technology portal. The amendment inter-alia provides for the definition for Challan, Portal ed as a requirement for providing the services through IT and further the enforcement of electronic monitoring and enforcement.



The use of IT services and electronic monitoring will result in better enforcement of Traffic Rules in the country and will lead to removing harassment of drivers and would facilitate the citizens. The record shall be maintained electronically and further the driver behavior would be monitored.

53. India and Denmark signed MoU on Intellectual Property cooperation

Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade signed MoU in the field of Intellectual Property Cooperation with the Ministry of Industry Denmark. The MoU aims at increasing IP co-operation, collaboration in training programmes, cooperation in the development of automation, exchange of information for disposal of applications for patents etc.



The two sides will draw up Biennial Work Plan to implement the MoU, which will include the detailed planning for carrying out of the co-operation activities, including the scope of action. This MoU will go a long way in fostering the cooperation between India and Denmark, and provide opportunities to both countries.

54. First Advance Estimates of Production of major Kharif crops for 2020-21 released

The First Advance Estimates of production of major Kharif crops for 2020-21 have been released by the Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare. As per First Advance Estimates, the estimated production of major crops during Kharif 2020-21 is as under:

- Foodgrains – 144.52 million tonnes. (record)
- Rice – 102.36 million tonnes. (record)
- Nutri / Coarse Cereals – 32.84 million tonnes.
- Maize – 19.88 million tonnes.
- Pulses – 9.31 million tonnes.
- Tur – 4.04 million tonnes.
- Oilseeds – 25.73 million tonnes.
- Groundnut – 9.54 million tonnes.



(record)

- Soyabean – 13.58 million tonnes.
- Cotton – 37.12 million bales (of 170 kg each)
- Jute & Mesta - 9.66 million bales (of 180 kg each)
- Sugarcane – 399.83 million tones

Persons in News

1. Dwayne Bravo selected as cricket ambassador for “SBOTOP” sportsbook brand

Former West Indies captain Dwayne Bravo was selected as the first cricket ambassador for “SBOTOP” sports book brand. Dwayne Bravo was a key member of the West Indies team that won the 2012 ICC World Twenty20 and 2016 ICC World Twenty20 championships. He became the first bowler to take 400 T20 wickets.

SBOTOP is a global online betting platform that strives to give its customers the best eGaming experience with its comprehensive suite of products ranging from Sports, Live Casino and Slot games available on both desktop and mobile.



2. Australia appointed cricket icon Matthew Hayden as trade envoy to India

Australian government has appointed former cricketer Matthew Hayden and Indian-origin politician Lisa Singh as trade envoys for advancing business ties with India. Trade envoys are a network of Prime Minister appointed parliamentarians, drawn from across the political spectrum to promote country's business and trade interests abroad.



Lisa Singh will be Deputy Chair whereas, Victoria Premier Ted Baillieu and former cricketer Hayden are the other new members. The council will help in advancing Australia's foreign and economic policy interests with India.

3. Iran executed Wrestler Navid Afkari

Iran has executed 27 years old wrestler, Navid Afkari, accused of murder. He was sentenced to death over the murder of a security guard, during a wave of anti-government protests in 2018. Afkari's brothers Vahid and Habib were sentenced to 54 and 27 years in prison in the same case.



Afkari was a national champion in wrestling. In 2018, protesters in cities across Iran took to the streets over economic hardship and political repression.

4. Ayushmann Khurrana appointed as celebrity advocate for children's rights campaign of UNICEF

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has appointed Bollywood Actor Ayushmann Khurrana as its celebrity advocate for children's rights campaign, "For Every Child". The actor will promote and support UNICEF's work around ending violence against children.

Ayushmann will work towards this initiative in India. With this appointment, Khurrana joins the like of former football star David Beckham who is working on this campaign globally. Sachin Tendulkar has also advocated the UNICEF in India in 2013.



5. Amazon signed Amitabh Bachchan for its Alexa voice assistant

Amazon.com Inc has signed up Bollywood actor Amitabh Bachchan for its Alexa voice assistant. Amitabh Bachchan is the first Indian celebrity to lend his voice to Alexa. Alexa is a voice-controlled virtual assistant. Alexa can play audio, control your smart home, answer questions and engage your favorite services to keep you organised, informed, safe, connected and entertained.

Alexa users will be able to access Amitabh Bachchan's voice on Alexa by purchasing the Amitabh Bachchan voice experience. Amazon will apply neural speech technology to make Alexa sound like Amitabh Bachchan.



6. Paytm First Games roped in Sachin Tendulkar as brand ambassador

Paytm First Games, a subsidiary of the digital financial service platform Paytm, signed cricketing legend Sachin Tendulkar as the brand ambassador for the platform. He will raise awareness about fantasy sports and promote all sports including kabaddi, football, and basketball.

Paytm First Games is a fantasy gaming platform for sports like cricket, football, basketball and Kabaddi. The company has also earmarked Rs 300 crore to invest in growing the market for fantasy sports and other online gaming events this fiscal.



7. Indian teenager Udit Singhal named in UN's 2020 list of Young Leaders for Sustainable Goals

The United Nations has named 18-year-old Indian, Udit Singhal, in the 2020 Class of 17 Young Leaders for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Udit is the founder of Glass2Sand, an initiative that is based on a zero-waste ecosystem to tackle the challenge of glass waste in Delhi.

Through the initiative, empty glass bottles are prevented from being dumped into landfills. Singhal's initiative helped in preventing 8,000 bottles from going into landfills and produced 4,815 kilograms of high-grade silica sand.



8. Prime Minister Modi named in Time Magazine's '100 most influential people of 2020' list

Time Magazine released the TIME 100 Most Influential People List 2020. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi was named in the list for the fourth time since coming in power in 2014. US President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping were also among the list.

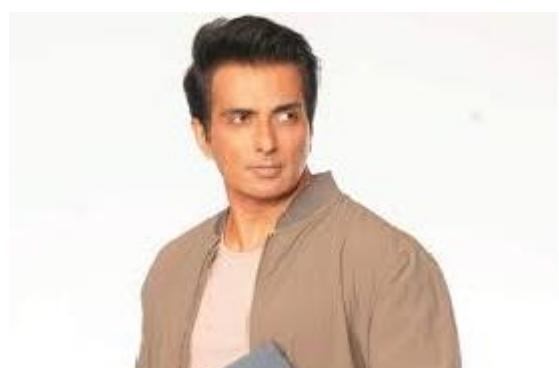
Other Indians who made it to top 100 were 82-year old Bilkis, the 'dadi' who became the face of Shaheen Bagh protest, Alphabet and Google CEO Sundar Pichai, Bollywood actor Ayushmann Khurrana and Professor Ravindra Gupta, known for his work on HIV/AIDS treatment.



9. Sonu Sood appointed as brand ambassador of Acer India

Actor Sonu Sood was appointed as brand ambassador of PC brand Acer India. The actor will promote the range of products of Acer for a campaign to talk about Acer's commitment to improving people's lives through technology.

Sonu Sood has earlier appeared in commercials for Apollo Tyres and Airtel. During the nationwide lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Sood helped thousands of stranded Indian migrant workers to reach their homes by arranging buses, special trains and chartered flights for them.



10. Bollywood actor Aamir Khan becomes Brand Ambassador of CEAT

The tyre giant CEAT Limited signed Actor Aamir Khan as its brand ambassador for two years for various campaigns across media platforms. Aamir Khan will act as a 'dummy' in Ceat Tyres' new campaign, to be featured in two commercials for on-going Indian Premier League (IPL) 2020. He will promote CEAT's SecuraDrive range of car tyres.

The campaign is based on the theme 'don't be a dummy' that emphasizes on the usage of high quality tyres to provide complete safety in any kind of driving conditions. CEAT is company of Rama Prasad Goenka Group.



11. Shivangi Singh set to become India's first woman fighter pilot to fly Rafale

Flight Lieutenant Shivangi Singh of Uttar Pradesh is set to become the first woman fighter pilot of India to fly the Rafale combat aircraft. She was commissioned into the Indian Air Force (IAF) in the year 2017 as part of the second batch of women fighter pilots.

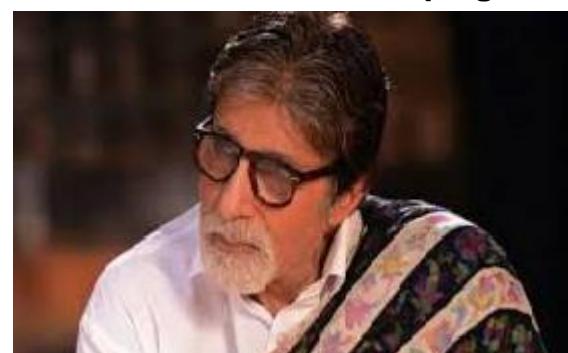
The Rafale is a twin-jet fighter aircraft able to operate from both an aircraft carrier and a shore base. The fully versatile Rafale is able to carry out all combat aviation missions: air superiority and air defense, close air support, in-depth strikes, reconnaissance, anti-ship strikes and nuclear deterrence.



12. RBI roped in Amitabh Bachchan for customer awareness campaign

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has roped in Bollywood megastar Amitabh Bachchan for the customer awareness campaign to prevent gullible account holders from being duped by fraudsters. It has also launched a safety campaign advising people to remain healthy and safe by not going to bank branches due to Covid 19.

As part of the public awareness initiative of RBI, the regulator keeps informing about dos and don'ts that have to be followed by customers to transact safely and securely and prevent public from online frauds.

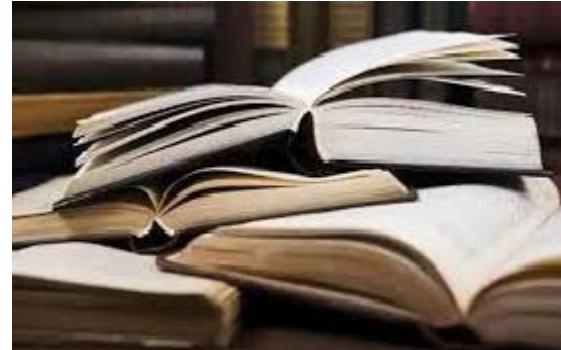


Places in News

1. Conference of Governors on 'Role of National Education Policy 2020 held

The President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind attended virtual Conference of Governors on 'Role of National Education Policy 2020 in Transforming Higher Education' in New Delhi. Governors being Chancellors of State Universities have a crucial role to play in the implementation of NEP.

A discussion session with Governor, Lt. Governors and Education Minister of the States and Union Territories was held during the Conference. The prospect of transformational reforms in higher education under the new National Education Policy-2020 and road ahead was elaborately discussed upon in the session.



2. Virudhunagar district of Tamil Nadu selected as fully Digital Economy district

The Central Government as the state's first Fully Digital Economy district selected Virudhunagar district of Tamil Nadu. All industrial units and commercial establishments in the district are at present implementing various forms of cashless transactions. These include widespread use of ATM debit cards, increased usage of internet banking, widespread use of QR codes etc.

Virudhunagar district of Tamil Nadu houses a large number of small and medium enterprises, especially in the fire crackers and allied sectors.



3. Trump announced Wilmington as 1st WWII Heritage City

President Donald Trump announced Wilmington in southern US state North Carolina as the first World War II Heritage City to mark the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II. The announcement was made to honor WWII veterans and their contributions to secure victory in the war.

During the war, Wilmington was the site of the North Carolina Shipbuilding Company, which built 243 ships in five years.



4. India to host CHG meeting of SCO in New Delhi

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

India will also be hosting two Ministerial-level meetings of SCO Member States. SCO Heads of State council and Heads of Government Council are two independent mechanisms which focus on political & security related matters and trade and economy related matters respectively.



5. India's first Coronavirus airport testing facility launched in Delhi

India's first Corona virus airport testing facility was launched at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport. The facility at the Terminal-3 of the airport offers a walk-in option and ensures a safe journey to all the passengers entering the city or scheduled for domestic connecting flights.

International passengers traveling without a valid COVID negative certificate can also book a slot in advance for testing at the Airport. The test results are available within four to six hours.



6. 13th edition of Aero India-21 to be held at Bengaluru

The 13th edition of Aero India-21 will be held at Air Force Station, Yelahanka, Bengaluru in Karnataka from February 3 to February 7, 2021. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched the website for Aero India 2021.

The website will host and stream all online services related to the event for both the exhibitors and visitors. The Aero India 2021 website will be a contactless online interface. Aero India is Asia's largest air show and aviation exhibition held biennially in Bengaluru since 1996.



Regional

1. Uttar Pradesh decided to set up exclusive anti-electricity theft police stations in every district

Uttar Pradesh government has decided to set up exclusive anti-electricity theft police stations in every district of state to address the problem of frequent cases of power theft. It will be set up in all 75 districts out of which, 63 has already started functioning.

The government has also raised the number of enforcement teams from 33 to 88 to launch a crackdown against those involved in power pilferage. As many as 53 teams are already functioning.



2. J&K Administration issued New Excise Policy for 2020-21

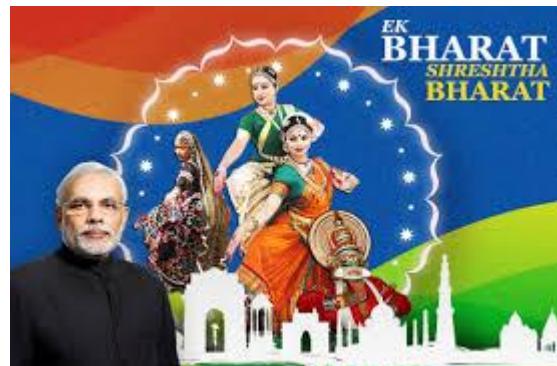
J&K Administration issued New Excise Policy for 2020-21. The new policy aims at rationalising the tax structure to optimise revenues besides encouraging transition from High to Low Alcoholic drinks and providing choice of brands to consumers. 50% Additional Excise Retail Duty commonly known as Corona Tax has been waived off.



Under the new policy, provision for reservation to Ex-servicemen, Specially-abled SC/ ST/ OBC and Economically Weaker Sections @ 2% each has been made while, granting new license fee and new Start-ups will get concession on up-front fee of five lakh rupees.

3. Goa paired with Jharkhand under Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat programme

Under Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat, Goa is paired with Jharkhand, where, various lokotsav programmes and stalls were organized by both states. Folk dances by both the states were presented. Bangle making workshops were held in Goa wherein, experts from handicraft arena of Jharkhand guided Goan artistes.



The Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat programme, aims to actively enhance interaction between people of diverse cultures living in different States. The campaign promotes the spirit of national integration through various cultural activities.

4. Sikkim & Delhi paired for cultural exchanges under Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat programme

Sikkim and Delhi paired for cultural exchanges under Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat programme. Under cultural exchanges, Sikkim and Delhi will have to organise various lokotsav programmes, organise workshops of handicrafts, organise stalls, conduct folk dances unitedly etc.

The Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat programme aims to actively enhance interaction between people of diverse cultures living in different States and Union Territories in India, with the objective of promoting greater mutual understanding amongst them. Under this, Sikkim and Delhi have been paired for cultural exchanges.



Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat

5. Ladakh and Lakshadweep joined 'One Nation-One Ration Card' scheme

Ladakh and Lakshadweep joined ration card portability scheme 'One Nation-One Ration Card', taking the total number of states and union territories linked with the scheme to 26. Under the 'One Nation-One Ration Card' initiative, eligible beneficiaries would be able to avail their entitled foodgrains under NFSA from any fair price shop in the country using the same ration card.



Participating states and union territories have been included on 'Integrated Management of Public Distribution System'(IM-PDS).

6. Madhya Pradesh state launched 'Gandagi Bharat Chhodo' campaign

Madhya Pradesh government has launched a 15-day campaign named 'Gandagi Bharat Chhodo'. The campaign is based on five themes - Cleanliness Oath, Continuous reduction in urban waste emissions, Cleanliness in COVID conditions, Separation of waste from sources of houses and Launching a special cleanliness campaign for public places.

Around 10,000 Corona Warrior sanitation workers were honoured. Awareness programmes were organised in 7178 settlements under the campaign. Urban bodies were awarded by the Chief Minister. Around 35 lakh citizens took part in the campaign in 378 urban bodies in Madhya Pradesh.



7. Punjab state government launched 'I Rakhwali' App

Punjab State Forest Department launched "I Rakhwali" App to ensure greenery, safeguard state forest area and to protect the environment in Punjab. 'I Rakhwali' app will make citizens 'Greenery Saviours' by inspiring people to plant more trees. The application will help user to find geographical location of nurseries, get easy access to free plants and saplings, and report illegal felling of trees and damage to forests.



Complaints reported through this app will be brought to notice of concerned Forest Divisional Officers.

8. World Bank signed \$82 million loan deal with state government of Himachal Pradesh

Himachal Pradesh state government and the World Bank signed \$82 million loan for the implementation of Himachal Pradesh State Roads Transformation Project which will strengthen transport and road safety institutions of Himachal Pradesh by improving the condition, safety, resilience and engineering standards of state road network.

The project will support the Government of Himachal Pradesh to provide greater opportunity to smallholder farmers access domestic and international agricultural markets, attract private investments to enhance value chains and increase jobs and farmers' incomes.

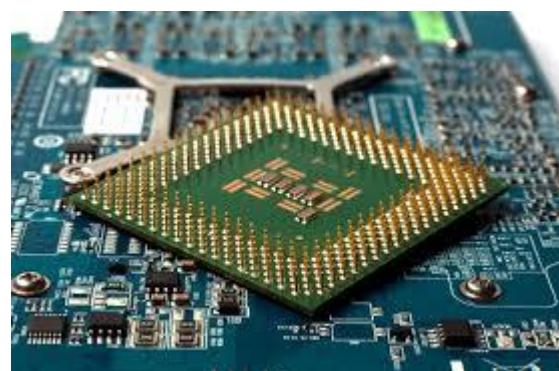


THE WORLD BANK

9. Tamil Nadu released Electronic Hardware Manufacturing Policy-2020

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi Palaniswamy released the state's Electronic Hardware Manufacturing Policy-2020. It envisages making the state contribute 25% of the country's total electronic hardware export. It aims at attracting semiconductor fabrication units to the state.

A target is fixed in the new policy for the manufacturing of electronic goods worth 100-billion US Dollars by the year 2025. Mobile phones, LED's, fabless chips, printed circuit boards, solar photovoltaic cells and medical and automobile electronics are some of the areas that are being given focus in the new policy.



10. Telangana to scrap posts of Village Revenue Officers

Telangana Government decided to scrap posts of Village Revenue Officers as part of major reforms under proposal in the Revenue Department. They are the officials, who hold all major land records at the ground level. A draft bill in this regard was approved by the State Cabinet.

State Cabinet has given its nod to the proposed New Revenue Bill and about half a dozen revenue related amendment bills which will pave way for bringing in reforms in the functioning of the Revenue Department.



11. Punjab state Governor launched POSHAN Maah 2020

Governor of Punjab and Administrator of U.T. Chandigarh V P Singh Badnore launched the POSHAN Maah 2020, for UT Chandigarh. Various webinars will be organised on the topics like Nutrition Rich Food, Anaemia, Diarrhoea and Prevention of Malnutrition.

Poshan Maah POSHAN Abhiyaan (National Nutrition Mission) is India's flagship programme, launched in March 2018. Rashtriya POSHAN Maah will have two major events namely identification and tracking of children with Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) and plantation drives for promotion of kitchen gardens.



Inauguration and Launch
for U.T. Chandigarh
by
H.E. Sh. V. P. Singh Badnore
Hon'ble Governor of Punjab and Administrator of U.T. Chandigarh

12. Jammu and Kashmir launched SPARROW system for J&K Administrative Service officers

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha launched the online portal, Smart Performance Appraisal Report Recording Online Window (SPARROW) for Jammu & Kashmir Administrative Service Officers (JKAS). It will facilitate the electronic filling of PAR by officers, ensure transparency and avoid loss of physical Appraisal Reports during the transition.

The electronic Annual Performance Appraisal Report (SPARROW) is an online system based on the comprehensive performance appraisal and is maintained for each member of Service by the State Government/ Central Government.



13. Assam re-launched SVAYEM Self-employment scheme worth Rs 1,000 crore

The Assam government re-launched a scheme to provide self-employment to around 2 lakh youths of the state, known as Swami Vivekananda Assam Youth Empowerment (SVAYEM). It would provide Rs. 50,000 each as seed money to selected youths to start business ventures. The scheme is re-designed with a budget of Rs 1,000 crore.

In order to avail benefits, 2 lakh beneficiaries would have to be part of self-help groups, joint liability groups and should register themselves at a new portal. The scheme was part of the BJP-led government's budget speech in 2017-18.



14. Jammu and Kashmir established biodiversity council

The Jammu and Kashmir government established a 10-member council for conservation of biological diversity and sustainable use of its components in the Union territory. The bio-diversity council will be headed by J&K Principal Chief Conservator of Forests Mohit Gera and it will comprise five ex-officio members. The director of the Forest Research Institute, Jammu and Kashmir, will serve as the member secretary of the council.

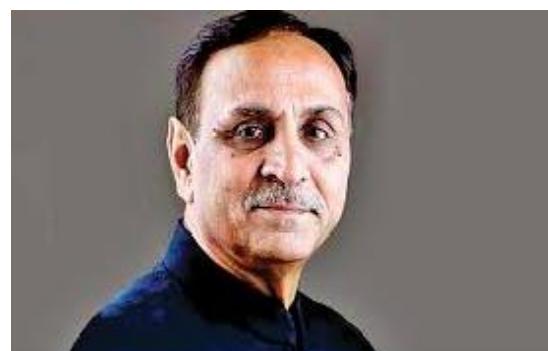
The council consists of non-official members such as former IFS officers and other members such as Chief Wildlife Warden and a representative of the Department of Forest.



15. Gujarat state announced 16% rebate in gas bill to ceramic industry in state

Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani announced 16% rebate in gas bill to the ceramic industry in the state. This will exempt the ceramic industry from Rs.2.50 per standard cubic meter (SCM) hike by Gujarat Gas Company Limited and Sabarmati Gas Limited. This rebate is over and above Rs.2 per SCM rebate given earlier.

The decision will help the ceramic industry, which is passing through difficult times in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic. It will benefit 1,160 units of Ceramic industry in Morbi, Surendranagar and Sabarkantha districts of the state.



16. Andhra Pradesh state and LEAF signed agreement for food processing

Government of Andhra Pradesh and Lawrencedale Agro Processing India (LEAF) signed an agreement for the development of horticulture crops. This agreement is part of the AP government's pivotal Farmer Producer Organisation (FPO) Policy for the Integrated Horticulture Development (IHD) Programme.

The state will help Lawrencedale Agro in establishing infrastructure for value chain development. Lawrencedale Agro's community farming initiative engages with more than 3,000 small land-hold farmers and assures them of the best forward market linkages by avoiding multi-layers of intermediaries.



17. Karnataka implemented Poshan Abhiyan to tackle malnutrition problem

Karnataka implemented Poshan Abhiyan to tackle malnutrition problem. POSHAN Abhiyaan (National Nutrition Mission) is a multi-ministerial convergence mission to ensure attainment of malnutrition free India by 2022. It targets to reduce stunting, under-nutrition, anemia (among young children, women and adolescent girls) and reduce low birth weight by 2%, 2%, 3% and 2% per annum respectively.



Karnataka is one of the states to face the problem of malnutrition among children, pregnant women and nursing mothers. The anemia average in Karnataka is 60.9% as compared to 58.6% at the national level.

18. Organic Food Processing Unit inaugurated in Uttar Pradesh

Smt. Harsimrat Kaur Badal, Union Minister for Food Processing Industries, inaugurated Organic Food Processing Unit in Barabanki, Uttar Pradesh. Around 5,000 farmers will be benefitted and it is expected to leverage an investment of Rs 50.33 crores. The unit namely M/s Organic India Pvt. Ltd is likely to generate direct employment of 100 and indirect employment of 250 persons.



A processing capacity of 3 MT per day has been created and the unit will process agro produce worth Rs 350 crores. Products manufactured in this unit are Tulsi green tea, sweet lemon green tea, lemon ginger green tea, pomegranate green tea, Sweet rose, Tulsi masala.

19. Prime Minister launched PM Matsya Sampada Yojana in Bihar

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched PM Matsya Sampada Yojana, e-Gopala App & several initiatives linked to studies and research in fisheries production, dairy, animal husbandry and agriculture in Bihar. Schemes are launched with an investment of Rs 20,000 Crores which would be spent in the next 4-5 Years for 21 states.

The scheme provides for new infrastructure, modern equipment and access to new markets to the fish producers, along with increased opportunities for through farming as well as other means. The goal is also to double fish exports in the coming 3-4 years.



20. Uttar Pradesh state formed SIT to probe into purchase of health equipment

Uttar Pradesh state government constituted a three-member special investigation team SIT to probe into the purchase of health equipment and sanitisers allegedly at higher prices in several districts. Additional Chief Secretary (Revenue) Renuka Kumar will lead the SIT while Secretary (Medical Education) Amit Gupta and Secretary (Urban development) Vikas Gothwal will be part of it.

SIT will probe authorities in Sultanpur, Ghazipur and other districts who have been accused of buying pulse oximeters and infrared thermometers at more than the market cost.



21. Andhra Pradesh launched 'YSR Sampoorna Poshana' scheme

Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, YS Jagan Mohan Reddy launched 'YSR Sampoorna Poshana' and 'YSR Sampoorna Poshana Plus' scheme to provide nutritious food to women, children. Under these nutritional schemes, state government will distribute nutritious meals to 77 tribal mandals, 8,320 Anganwadi centers.

YSR Sampoorna Poshan Schemes ensure to secure through 55,607 Anganwadi centres, which covers around 27 lakh women and children. It will cover 3.8 lakh beneficiaries such as newborn babies, including pregnant women suffering from anaemia.



22. Assam announced projects worth Rs 12,000 cr ahead of assembly polls

The Assam state government announced projects worth Rs 12,000 cr ahead of assembly polls. Out of the total Rs 11,928.46 crore planned investment, Rs 5,854.46 crore will be put in from the state exchequer, while the remaining Rs 6,074 crore will be funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB).

The government plans to construct four new medical college and hospitals, nine women's colleges, six degree colleges and 10 law colleges.



23. Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh rolled out a smart ration card scheme

Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh has rolled out a smart ration card scheme for providing subsidised foodgrains to 1.41 crore beneficiaries in the state. He also announced a separate state-funded scheme to provide subsidised rations to nine lakh beneficiaries not covered under the National Food Security Act (NFSA).

With this, the total number of beneficiaries in the state will go up to 1.50 crore. The scheme empowers the beneficiary to get his entitled quota of foodgrains from any ration depot in the state of Punjab.



24. Meghalaya launched India's biggest "Piggery Mission"

The Meghalaya Government has launched the country's biggest Piggery Mission, 'Meghalaya Piggery Mission', with assistance from the NCDC (National Cooperative Development Cooperation).

The NCDC has sanctioned Rs. 220.50 crore to the state government towards the project.

The project envisages setting up of 300 satellite pig breeding farms, small slaughter houses, product transport small vehicles and pork vending kiosks. The main objective of the Piggery Mission is to reduce the annual import of Pork worth Rs 150 Crore and make Meghalaya self-sufficient ("Aatma Nirbhar") in pork production over the next 3 years.



25. Rajasthan government to sign MoU with SIDBI to support MSMEs

Rajasthan state government is planning to join hands with the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) to support MSME units. As a part of the MoU, SIDBI would set up a Project Management Unit (PMU) to provide assistance to certain cluster-based sectors like textiles in Bhilwara and handicrafts in Jodhpur.



Under this initiative, SIDBI's partner Grant Thornton will identify the institutional constraints, factor constraints, and demand constraints for MSMEs in the State.

26. J&K announced New Universal Health Insurance Scheme

Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha has announced a scheme to provide universal health insurance to all residents of the Union Territory. The scheme, in line with the Centre's Ayushman Bharat, is budgeted at an annual expenditure of Rs 123 crore.

The Jammu and Kashmir Health Scheme will provide universal health coverage to nearly 70 lakh residents of the Union territory who are not covered under the Ayushman Bharat scheme. It will have an annual health insurance cover of Rs 5 lakh per family on a floater basis.



27. Ranking of states on support to Start-up Ecosystems

The Results of the second edition of Ranking of States on Support to Startup Ecosystems was released by the government. The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) conducted the second edition of the States' Startup Ranking Exercise. The States' Startup Ranking Framework 2019 had 7 broad reform area, consisting of 30 action points.

Gujarat and Andaman & Nicobar Islands have emerged as the best performers among states and UTs. Karnataka and Kerala were “top performers”.



28. Gujarat government announced state's first Heritage Tourism Policy

Gujarat government has announced the state's first Heritage Tourism Policy. The policy has provisions to permit use of pre-1950 historical buildings, such as heritage palaces and forts, as heritage hotels, heritage museums, heritage banquet halls and heritage restaurants, provided that basic heritage structure is not disturbed.



Under this policy, the State Government will provide an aid of five to ten crore rupees to new or existing heritage hotels for renovation and expansion. The developers will be provided an aid of 45 lakhs to one crore rupees.

29. Odisha government launched 'GARIMA' scheme for sanitation workers

The Odisha government launched a statewide welfare scheme for sanitation workers to ensure their safety and dignity named as 'GARIMA'.

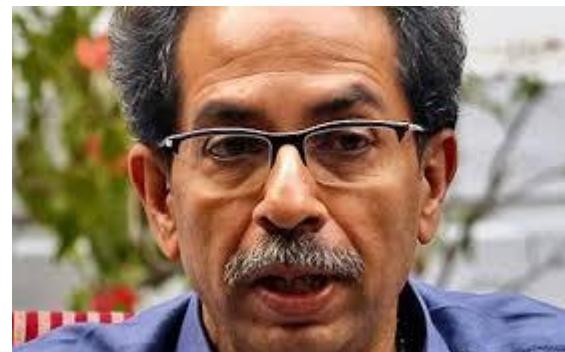
The features of the scheme are as follows:

- To benefit about 20,000 core sanitation workers and their families covering one lakh population.
- Scheme will be implemented in all the 114 Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) of Odisha.
- It ensures provision of necessary machines and appropriate PPEs (personal protection equipments) to ensure safe working conditions.
- It ensures registration of workers and provide training to workers.
- To provide access to EPF, retirement benefits, post service benefits and illness allowance.



30. Maharashtra state government launched 'My Family, My Responsibility' campaign

Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray launched a state-wide campaign 'My family-My Responsibility' to tackle the coronavirus pandemic. Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus Sars-CoV2. The campaign is launched under two phases.



Under this campaign, door-to-door surveyors will check the citizens for fever, low oxygen levels and other Covid-19 symptoms. Authorities will survey 22.5 million families twice a month during the survey. The state will make one doctor available to five teams.

31. ITBP tied up with Uttarakhand govt to promote adventure tourism at Tehri Lake

The Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board (UTDB) and Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to promote adventure sports activities at Tehri Lake in the state.

With the MoU, ITBP along with the department will now work on the building of adventure sports activities like land base adventure centre, water base adventure centre, aero base adventure centre at Rajiv Gandhi Adventure Sports Academy situated at Tehri Lake. ITBP will train over 200 candidates selected by the state government or tourism department every year free of cost.



at Tehri Lake. ITBP will train over 200 candidates selected by the state government or tourism department every year free of cost.

32. Gujarat government launched Mukhyamantri Mahila Utkarsh Yojana

Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani announced Mukhyamantri Mahila Utkarsh Yojana (MMUY). The scheme provides interest-free loans to women's groups in the state. The government is planning to provide total lending up to Rs 1,000 crore to these groups to be registered as joint liability and earning group (JLEG).

Under the MMUY, 50,000 JLEGs will be formed in urban areas. Similarly, 50,000 such groups will also be formed in rural areas. Each group will have 10 women members in it.



Budget 2020-21

33. Karnataka launched "Arthika Spandana" programme

Karnataka Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa launched the "Arthika Spandana" programme of disbursing loans to the tune of Rs. 39,300 crores through various cooperative institutions. Under this scheme, Rs. 15,300 crores would be disbursed to the agriculture sector while a sum of Rs. 24,000 crores would be earmarked for the non-agricultural sector.

Under the scheme, the primary agricultural cooperatives would be upgraded as multi-service centres. As many as 1,549 cooperatives would be benefited by this scheme.



34. Logo and Song of “Destination North East, 2020” festival launched

The Ministry of Development of North-East Region (DoNER) has launched the logo and song for festival “Destination North East-2020”. The logo signifies the unity of all North Eastern states based on theme ‘The Emerging Delightful Destination’.

The event “Destination North East 2020” is an effort to make everyone explore the local destinations, rather than going anywhere abroad. North East offers a very safe and attractive tourist destination in the entire World with its culture, cuisines, entrepreneurship skills, scenic attributes and a society, which is highly disciplined.



35. Rajasthan Chief Minister approved ‘Moksha Kalash Yojana-2020’

The Chief Minister of Rajasthan, Ashok Gehlot approved the Rajasthan State Road Transport Corporation's scheme called 'Moksha Kalash Yojana-2020'. Under this scheme, up to two members of a family will be allowed to travel free of cost and immerse ashes of their loved ones in river on death.

Travelers to provide related documents to RSRTC while, making online registration. RSRTC will act as nodal agency to run the scheme and the expenses would be borne by the Devasthan Department.



36. UP government launched unified portal ‘U-Rise’

The Uttar Pradesh government has launched a unified portal called ‘U-Rise’ to guide students in learning, career counselling and getting employment in the state. The programme would connect students with practical and technical knowledge. Uttar Pradesh is the first state to launch a unified portal along with the implementation of NEP.

This portal would benefit students and empower them by providing information from online exams, digital content, digital assessment, digital examination papers, webinars, internship, e-library, recorded video content to employment.



37. WBTC introduced unique tram library in Kolkata

The West Bengal Transport Corporation (WBTC) has introduced a unique tram library in Kolkata. This Tram Library is a special tram with books, magazines, which can be read while travelling on the tram.

In addition to the books, free Wifi Hotspot will be provided to passengers to read online books while traveling. The tram library, will travel regularly between Shyamazar and Esplanade, traversing 4.5 km through the city's education hub -- College Street.



38. PM launched 'Ghar Tak Fibre' scheme in Bihar

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched "Ghar Tak Fibre" scheme in Bihar. It is an Optical Fibre Internet Service, that will connect all 45,945 villages of the state and enable the Digital revolution.

The 'Ghar Tak Fibre' project would entail implementation of 1 wi-fi and 5 free of cost connections to government institutions including primary schools, Anganwadi Centres, Aasha workers and Jeevika Didi. The Prime Minister also inaugurated highway projects for a road length of about 350 kilometres. The estimated cost of the project is Rs 14,258 crore.



39. J&K launched National Generic Document Registration System

Lieutenant Governor of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, Manoj Sinha, launched the National Generic Document Registration System (NGDRS). NGDRS represents a major shift from the existing manual registration system to online registration of all transactions in sale-purchase and transfer of land.

Stamp papers have been replaced by e-stamps which have been incorporated in coordination with Stockholding Corporation of India. J&K will be the 10th among States and UTs to become part of NGDRS.



40. ADB approved 300-million-dollar loan for Rajasthan's towns

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved a \$300 million loan to finance inclusive water supply and sanitation infrastructure and services in secondary towns of Rajasthan, India. The project is expected to build citywide access for improved water supply services for around 570,000 people and enhanced sanitation services for about 720,000 people in at least 14 secondary towns. These localities have 20,000–100,000 residents.



The project will strengthen the institutional capacity of the local governments and the Rajasthan Urban Drinking Water, Sewerage, and Infrastructure Corporation Limited, a corporate entity established with ADB's technical support.

41. ADB approved \$270 Million for Madhya Pradesh Urban Services Improvement Project

The Asian Development Bank approved a \$270 million loan for the construction of water supply and integrated storm water and sewage management infrastructure in Madhya Pradesh, India. The project will receive support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, specifically for the integration of Citywide Inclusive Sanitation principles.

The loan is an additional financing intended to scale up the scope of the Madhya Pradesh Urban Services Improvement Project, which was approved in 2017 with a \$275 million loan. It will expand the outcome of the current project by benefiting an additional 185,000 households consisting of about 1.3 million people.



Reports

1. India ranked in top 50 countries for first time in Global Innovation Index

India ranked in the top 50 countries for the first time in the Global Innovation Index. India jumped four positions to rank at 48th, since 2019. The index compiled by World Intellectual Property Index (WIPO) presented the latest global trends and annual innovation ranking for 131 countries. India became the third most innovative lower middle economy in the world.

India ranked in the top 15 in indicators such as ICT services exports, government online services, graduates in science and engineering and R&D-intensive global companies.



2. Ease of Doing Business report suspended by World Bank

World Bank suspended publication of its Doing Business report to probe alleged irregularities in the underlying data. It was observed that a number of irregularities have been reported regarding changes to the data in the Doing Business 2018 and Doing Business 2020 reports.

The Doing Business report provides objective measures of business regulations for local firms in 190 economies. World Bank will conduct a systematic review of data changes in the last five Doing Business reports, and independent auditors will probe data collection and review processes.

3. Andhra Pradesh topped Ease of Doing Business rankings

The Commerce and Industry Ministry released the ranking of States and Union Territories (UTs) in terms of ease of doing business. Andhra Pradesh topped the chart among all Indian States and Union Territories in the Business Reform Action Plan (BRAP) 2019 rankings. Uttar Pradesh and Telangana bagged second and third positions respectively.



The BRAP ranking aims at triggering competition among states to improve business climate in order to attract domestic and global investors. The parameters include areas such as construction permit, labour regulation, environmental registration, access to information, land availability and single window system.

4. NSO's Report on Literacy Rate

A report on 'Household Social Consumption: Education' was published by the National Statistical Office (NSO). It shows a state-wise split of literacy rates among the persons aged 7 years or above.

Highlights of the report are as follows:

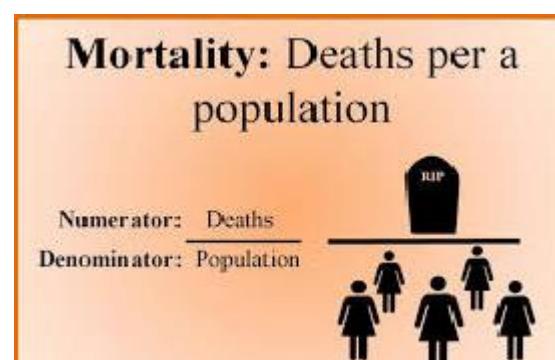
- More than one in five Indians above 7 years still cannot read and write in any language.
- Literacy rates have increased from 71.7% to 77.7%.
- Andhra Pradesh has the lowest literacy rate, at 66.4%.
- Kerala topped with 96.2% literacy rate followed by three northern States: Delhi (88.7%), Uttarakhand (87.6%) and Himachal Pradesh (86.6%).
- The national gap between male and female literacy rate is 14.4%.



5. India's child mortality rate declined substantially between 1990, 2019

According to the new mortality estimates released by UNICEF, the World Health Organization (WHO), the under-five mortality rate (deaths per 1,000 live births) in India declined to 34 in 2019 from 126 in 1990.

India registered a 4.5% annual rate of reduction in under-five mortality between 1990-2019. The number of under-five deaths in India dropped from 3.4 million in 1990 to 824,000 in 2019. The infant mortality rate (deaths per 1,000 live births) in India declined from 89 in 1990 to 28 last year.

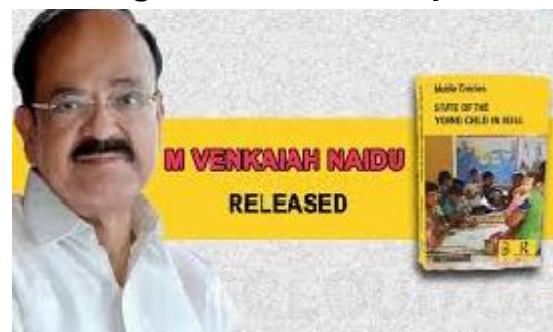


6. Venkaiah Naidu released 'The State of Young Child in India' report

Vice President of India, Venkaiah Naidu released "The State of Young Child in India" report. The report was prepared by a policy advocacy organisation, Mobile Crèches. Report highlighted the issues of poverty, neglect, gendered discrimination and violence.

Key Findings of the report are:

- India contributes the highest number of neonatal, infant, and under-5 deaths in the world.
- India spends a meagre Rs. 1,723 per child annually and calls for a quadrupling of the annual child budget to Rs. 1.25 crore.
- It is release of two complementary Young Child Indices, the Young Child Outcomes Index and Young Child Environment Index.



-Kerala and Goa are the top performers of indices.

7. State Business Reform Action Plan 2019 rankings

According to the State Business Reform Action Plan 2019 rankings released by the Department of Industrial Promotion and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Andhra Pradesh retained the top spot. Uttar Pradesh and Telangana bagged the second and third positions respectively.

The Business Reform Action Plan 2019 released by the Centre contains a list of 80 reforms (187 reform action points) to be implemented by 19 State departments. Andhra Pradesh has achieved 100 percent compliance to the 187 reform action points by DPIIT-World Bank as a part of BRAP 2019.

QUICK PROGRESS FOR UP

State Business Reform Action Plan (BRAP) ranking comparison

State/UT	Rank 2019	Rank 2018	Change (+/-)
Andhra Pradesh	1	1	0
Uttar Pradesh	2	12	10
Telangana	3	2	-1
Madhya Pradesh	4	7	3
Jharkhand	5	4	-1
Chhattisgarh	6	6	0
Himachal Pradesh	7	16	9
Rajasthan	8	9	1

8. India slipped to 105th position on Global Economic Freedom Index 2020

India slipped 26 spots to be ranked at 105th position on the Global Economic Freedom Index 2020. The ranking was released in the Economic Freedom of the World: 2020 Annual Report by Canada's Fraser Institute.

India has been ranked higher than China, which stands at the 124th position. Some of the other countries in that make up the top 10 are New Zealand, Switzerland, US, Australia, Mauritius, Georgia, Canada and Ireland.



9. World Bank's Human Capital Index 2020 released

India ranked 116 in World Bank's human capital index among 174 countries. Singapore topped the index. The report has provided a pre-pandemic baseline on the education and health. The report highlights that, there has been a major decline in remittances.

The 2020 Human Capital Index update includes health and education data for 174 countries covering 98% of the world's population. HCI highlights how current health and education outcomes shape the productivity of the next generation of workers.



10. IMD's Global Smart City Index 2020

The Institute for Management Development, in collaboration with Singapore University for Technology and Design (SUTD), has released the 2020 Smart City Index. Singapore, Helsinki and Zurich have come top in the 2020 Smart City Index.

In the 2020 Smart City Index, Hyderabad was the top Indian city, placed at the 85th position. The Smart City Index ranks cities based on economic and technological data, as well as by their citizens' perceptions of how "smart" their cities are.



11. Mizoram tops India Happiness Report 2020

Mizoram has topped the India Happiness Report prepared by Rajesh K. Pillania of the Management Development Institute in Gurugram. Punjab and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands ranked second and third respectively.



Mizoram Top List

Among the larger states, Punjab, Gujarat, and Telangana have occupied the top three spots in the report. Mizoram, Sikkim, and Arunachal Pradesh are in the top three of the smaller states. Of the union territories, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Puducherry and Lakshadweep have topped the list.

12. India ranked 89th in World Risk Report 2020

India ranked 89th among 181 countries on the 2020 World Risk Index released by United Nations University's Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNUEHS) and calculated by the International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict (IFHV). Vanuatu topped the rankings with highest risk followed by Tonga at 2nd place. Qatar has lowest risk at 181th position followed by Malta at 180th position.



The index is calculated on a country-by-country basis, through the multiplication of exposure and vulnerability and describes the disaster risk for various countries and regions.

Resignations & Retirements

1. England cricketer Ian Bell announced retirement

England batsman Ian Bell announced to retire from professional cricket. He played his last international game in 2015. He played for 11 years and scored 5416 runs. He won five Ashes series out of seven. He is popularly known for his sharp reflexes and often fields in close catching positions.

In 2006, he was appointed Member of the Order of the British Empire for his role in the successful Ashes campaign of 2005. He was awarded the Emerging Player of the Year award by the International Cricket Council.



2. Harsimrat Kaur Badal resigned in protest of Farmers' Produce Trade & Commerce Bill 2020

Union Minister for Food Processing Industries Harsimrat Badal resigned in protest of the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020 and the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020.

Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020 seeks to provide for the creation of an ecosystem, where the farmers and traders enjoy the freedom of choice relating to sale and purchase of farmers' produce which facilitates remunerative prices through competitive alternative trading channels.



3. Japanese PM Shinzo Abe resigned

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and his Cabinet resigned. Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga, was chosen as the new head of the governing Liberal Democratic Party, virtually guaranteeing his election as prime minister in a parliamentary vote.

Shinzo Abe served as Prime Minister of Japan and President of the Liberal Democratic Party from 2006 to 2007. Suga, has promised to tackle with top priorities of country of fighting the coronavirus and turning around an economy battered by the pandemic.



Science & Technology

1. Indian Astronomers discover one of the farthest Star galaxies in the universe

India's first Multi-Wavelength Space Observatory "AstroSat" detected extreme-UV light from a galaxy located 9.3 billion light-years away from Earth. The galaxy called AUDFs01 was discovered by a team of Astronomers led by Dr Kanak Saha from the Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA) Pune.



India's AstroSat/UVIT was able to achieve this unique feat because the background noise in the UVIT detector is much less than one on the Hubble Space Telescope of US based NASA. AstroSat was launched by the Indian Space Research Organization.

2. IISc researchers developed low-cost, on demand printing technique

The researchers at the Centre for Nano Science and Engineering in the Bengaluru based Indian Institute of Science developed a low cost, on demand printing technique. The new technique is useful for 3D printing of living cells, ceramic materials, electronic circuits and machine components.



This new technique replaces the nozzles of an inkjet printer with a mesh covered chemically treated nano wires that repel water. Because of the short contact time of the impacting droplet with the mesh, the chances of clogging the pore are minimised. The mesh can also be easily cleaned and reused.

3. IIT Delhi incubated startup launches "Chakr DeCoV" to decontaminate N95 masks

IIT Delhi incubated startup Chakr Innovation has launched 'Chakr DeCoV' to decontaminate N95 masks. Designed in the shape of a cabinet, Chakr DeCoV is built with an innovative decontamination mechanism, which utilises the high penetrability of Ozone gas for cleaning the pores of the N95 mask, ensuring complete decontamination of its intricate layers.



Ozone is a strong oxidizing agent that destroys viruses by diffusing through the protein coat, resulting in damage to the viral RNA. Proper dosage and exposure of Ozone can result in inactivation of SARS CoV-2 and 99% reduction in bacterial load.

4. IIT-Bombay students launch AI-based scanning app “AIR Scanner”

A pair of students at the Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay (IIT-B) has developed an AI-based document-scanning app 'AIR Scanner'. It is a free-of-cost document-scanning mobile application.

Rohit Kumar Chaudhary and Kavin Agrawal, both students of IIT Bombay, developed the app. The unique feature of app is that it does not collect any information about the user and does not use any cloud storage to store the documents of the users.



5. JNCASR researchers developed diagnostic therapy for Lung Cancer

Researchers from Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research, developed a theranostics (diagnostic therapy) drug candidate for lung cancer. Prof. T. Govindaraju, along with his team from JNCASR, developed a small molecule for selective recognition of BCL-2 GQ on far-red fluorescence response and anticancer activity demonstrating the potential as GQ-targeted lung cancer theranostics.



JNCASR team revealed the selective recognition originating from the distinct loop structure of GQ that alters the overall probe interaction and binding affinity. This methodology can be further exploited to develop cancer-type specific theranostic drugs with tremendous implications in personalised medicine.

6. Scientists discovered interaction between light and molecules that can power optical devices

Bengaluru based scientists have found that UV and blue light combination reversibly switches the system between 3D and 1D photonic structure - a novel interaction that can help make tunable and effective optical devices. Such photoresponsive LCs are attractive for applications, including flexible polarisers, patterned objects, logic devices and energy harvesting materials.



The present study also shows that photonic wavelength variations of over 100 nanometres can easily be achieved reversibly within a few tens of seconds, a feature that can find applications ranging from low reflection lenses and high reflection mirrors to colour changing paints and inks.

7. Asteroid double the size of Pyramid Giza entered Earth's orbit

Asteroid 465824 (2010 FR) is a very small asteroid whose orbit crossed the orbit of Earth. It is twice as big as the Pyramid of Giza and is classified as a Near-Earth Object (NEO). It is up to 270-metre-wide and 886 feet tall.

2010 FR orbits the sun every 440 days (1.20 years), coming as close as 0.72 AU and reaching as far as 1.55 AU from the sun. While crossing the Earth orbit the asteroid was 7.5 million kilometres away from Earth.



8. Russian enterprise 'Zvezda' has started manufacturing of space suits for 'Gaganyaan'

Russian research and development enterprise, Zvezda, has started manufacturing space suits for Indian astronauts, who are likely to be part of the Gaganyaan mission. Zvezda is a subsidiary of Russian space organisation Roscosmos. The firm will also make their individual seats and custom-made couch liners.

Four Indian Air Force fighter pilots are currently under training in Russia and likely to be the potential candidates for Gaganyaan project. Gaganyaan, India's first manned mission to space, is planned around 2022.



9. IPFT developed new "Disinfectant Sprays"

Institute of Pesticide Formulation Technology, IPFT, has successfully developed two new technologies namely "Disinfectant spray for surface application" and "Disinfectant spray for Vegetables & fruits." IPFT has developed alcohol based "Disinfectant Spray" for the surface applications containing botanical anti-microbial.

IPFT has also developed water-based Disinfectant Spray to remove pesticide residues left over on the surface of fruits and vegetables. The simple procedure makes fruits and vegetables totally pesticide free.



10. SCTIMST developed device for prevention of Deep Vein Thrombosis

Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology, Trivandrum (SCTIMST), an autonomous institute of the Department of Science and Technology, developed a device for the prevention of Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT).

The formation of a blood clot in a deep vein, usually in the legs or Deep Vein Thrombosis can lead to life threatening complications. The device can bring relief to patients affected by prolonged immobility, bed ridden state, post-operative immobilization and paralysis of legs.



11. Scientists discover phosphine gas, linked to life, in atmosphere of Venus

A team of scientists have detected traces of phosphine gas in the atmosphere of Venus. Astronomers detected phosphine 30 miles up in the planet's atmosphere and have failed to identify a process other than life that could account for its presence. The team used telescopes in Hawaii and Chile's Atacama Desert in order to observe upper cloud deck of Venus.

Phosphine was used as a chemical weapon during World War I. It is still manufactured as an agricultural fumigant, is used in the semiconductor industry, and is a nasty byproduct of meth labs.



12. FELUDA: First Gene based COVID-19 test approved in India

The Drug Controller General of India approved the gene-based COVID-19 test called Feluda. It stands for FNCAS9 Editor Linked Uniform Detection Assay. This is developed by a research team led by Debojyoti Chakraborty and Souvik Maiti of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and Tata Group.

The test known for its unique feature of detecting corona virus accurately in less than 30 minutes, uses indigenous CRISPR gene-editing technology to recognise and target the genetic material of SARS-CoV2, the virus responsible for COVID-19. Feluda is also the world's first diagnostic test to use a specially adapted Cas9 protein for the successful detection of the virus.



13. World Largest Telescope to have IT controls built in India

The Square Kilometre Array (SKA) programme, an international initiative building the world's largest radio telescope will have control systems designed and built by Tata Consultancy Services (TCS). TCS Research and Innovation (R&I) team partnered with NCRA-TIFR to create a control systems solution for SKA.

The Square Kilometre Array (SKA) is an intergovernmental radio telescope project being planned to be built in Australia and South Africa. The NCRA-TIFR is developing the control systems that will power the telescope.



TATA CONSULTANCY SERVICES

14. HCL & Google Cloud expand partnership to deliver accelerated business intelligence platform

HCL Technologies and Google Cloud announced the expansion of their strategic partnership to bring HCL's Actian portfolio, starting with Actian Avalanche, to Google Cloud. Actian Avalanche is a high-performance hybrid cloud data warehouse designed to power an enterprise's most demanding operational analytics workloads.

Actian Avalanche enables a seamless path to migrate legacy data warehouses, including IBM Netezza and Oracle Exadata, to Google Cloud, through a hybrid-cloud offering leveraging Google Cloud's Anthos application platform.



15. IIT Madras developed “MOUSHIK” microprocessor

Indian Institute of Technology Madras Researchers have successfully booted up MOUSHIK, an indigenously-made Microprocessor. MOUSHIK is a processor cum system on chip that can cater to the rapidly-growing IoT devices, an integral part of Smart Cities of a Digital India. It is an Indigenous RISC-V Microprocessor and is the third chip of the SHAKTI family, all of which were conceptualised and developed by this Centre and were first time silicon successes.



MOUSHIK was conceptualised, designed and developed at the Pratap Subrahmanyam Centre for Digital Intelligence and Secure Hardware Architecture (PS-CDISHA) of the RISE Group, Department of Computer Science and Engineering, IIT Madras.

1. Sumit Nagal became first Indian to win grand slam singles main draw match in 7 years

Sumit Nagal defeated Bradley Klahn of USA 6-1, 6-3, 3-6, 6-1 in the first round of the US Open to progress further into the tournament. With this result, Nagal became the first Indian to win a singles main draw match at a Grand Slam in the last seven years.

Nagal is ranked world number 122. He will now face second seeded Austria's Dominic Thiem in the second round of the tournament. He also won 2015 Wimbledon boys' doubles title and became the sixth Indian player to win a junior Grand Slam title.



2. Cycling Federation of India to host first-ever Cycling Summit in 2021

The Cycling Federation of India will host the first-ever "Cycling Summit" in 2021 across Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore. CFI has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with a new-age marketing exploration firm, Contarctica for the summit.

Cycling Summit is meant to promote the culture of cycling and exchange knowledge with budding and professional cyclists. Cyclesummit is the conference for all cycling tour operators worldwide such as cycling enthusiasts, renowned athletes, and businesses from all over the country.



Cycling Federation of India

3. NTPC won AIMA Chanakya National Management Games 2020

Team NTPC won All India Management Association (AIMA) - Chanakya (Business Simulation Game) National Management Games (NMG) 2020. NTPC won the prestigious National Management Games for the first time in five years. The team from NTPC Vallur, Tamil Nadu achieved the feat of being crowned the national champion after competing against teams from 112 organisations from different parts of the country.



Vallur Thermal Power Station is operated by NTPC Tamil Nadu Energy Company Limited. AIMA Chanakya National Management Games, an online Business Simulation Game, is aimed at ensuring that participating industries gain expertise and skills from this event.

4. India's P Iniyang won World Open Online Chess Tournament

Indian Grandmaster P Iniyang won the 48th annual World Open online chess tournament by scoring seven and half points out of nine with six victories and three draws to finish on top. He defeated 30 Grandmasters such as Baadur Jobava of Georgia, Sam Sevian, Sergey Erenburg of USA and Nyzhyk Illia of Ukraine.

The World Open chess tournament is an annual open chess tournament to determine the world champion in chess, where around 120 players from 16 countries participate. The 48th edition of the annual event was held online due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



5. Pierre Gasly won F1 Italian Grand Prix 2020

Pierre Gasly (Scuderia AlphaTauri, France) bagged the Formula One Italian Grand Prix 2020 held at Autodromo Nazionale Monza, Italy. With this victory, he became the first French Formula One driver to win a race since Olivier Panis won the 1996 Monaco Grand Prix. McLaren's Carlos Sainz finished second followed by Lance Stroll in third place. Lewis Hamilton secured 7th position.

The 2020 Italian Grand Prix was the eighth round in the 2020 Formula One World Championship. This was the first race to not have a Red Bull, Mercedes or Ferrari driver on the podium.



6. Anil Jain selected as new President of All India Tennis Association

The All India Tennis Association (AITA) elected Dr. Anil Jain, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha, as its new President. He served as the Vice-President of AITA from 2016-2020. All the posts of office bearers as well as the Executive Committee members were filled without the need for a contest and all the contestants were declared elected unopposed.

Secretary of the Madhya Pradesh Tennis Association, Mr. Anil Dhupar, was elected as the Secretary General. The All India Tennis Association (AITA) is the governing body of tennis in India.



7. World No. 1 Novak Djokovic disqualified from US Open

World No. 1 Novak Djokovic was sensationally disqualified from the US Open after striking a line judge with a ball during his fourth-round match. This marked a stunning end to his 29-match winning streak and bid for an 18th Grand Slam title.

Djokovic was playing against Spain's Pablo Carreno Busta, when he hit a ball in the direction of the female official. It struck her in the throat. The umpire declared Busta as the default winner.



8. Naomi Osaka defeated Victoria Azarenka to win US Open 2020 Women's Singles Title

Japan's Naomi Osaka defeated Victoria Azarenka of Belarus to win the US Open 2020 Women's Singles Title. It was the third grand slam title for Osaka, after having won the 2018 US Open and 2019 Australian Open.

Osaka is the first women's player in 26 years to win US Open title after dropping 1st set in final. She is also the first Asian player to win three Grand Slam singles titles, breaking the tie she held with China's Li Na.



9. Dominic Thiem beats Alexander Zverev to win men's singles title in US Open

Dominic Thiem defeated Alexander Zverev to win the US Open men's singles title. It marked the first time in the US Open's Open era history that a player had recovered from losing the opening two sets to win the title. It was also the first time the final had been settled by a tie-break.

The title marks Thiem's maiden Grand Slam trophy after three previous defeats in finals of tennis majors. He also became the first new Grand Slam champion since Croatian Marin Cilic won at Flushing Meadows in 2014.



10. Lewis Hamilton won F1 Tuscan Grand Prix 2020

Lewis Hamilton won the first ever Formula One Tuscan Grand Prix held at Mugello Circuit, Italy. Valtteri Bottas (Mercedes-Finland) came second followed by Alexander Albon (Red Bull – Thailand) at third place. Ricciardo finished at fourth position and Sergio Perez finished fifth. Lewis Hamilton's win was the 90th of his career.

The 2020 Tuscan Grand Prix was the ninth round of the 2020 Formula One World Championship. The race was the first race, since the 2016 Brazilian Grand Prix to have two red flags.



11. Italian Open 2020: Simona Halep won Women's title while Djokovic won Men's Singles

Simona Halep won her first Italian Open title after defending champion Karolina Pliskova retired midway through the final with an injury. Halep extended her winning streak this season to 14 consecutive victories. In the men's singles final, Novak Djokovic won a record 36th Masters title by beating Diego Schwartzman.

Marcel Granollers of Spain along with Horacio Zeballos of Argentina won the Men's doubles title. Chinese Taipei Hsieh Su-wei together with Barbora Strýcová of Czech Republic won the Women's doubles title.



12. Sports Ministry to establish Khelo India State Centres of Excellence (KISCE) in Meghalaya and five more states

The Sports Ministry is set to establish the Khelo India Centre of Excellence (KISCE) in Meghalaya and five more states, under the ministry's flagship Khelo India scheme. Besides Meghalaya, five other states of Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Assam and Sikkim have been identified in the second leg.

Earlier this year, the Ministry had identified eight centres including Karnataka, Odisha, Kerala, Telengana and the north east states of Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland in the first leg. Their existing centres will be upgraded into Khelo India State Centre of Excellence (KISCE).



13. Dr Girija Shanker Mungali named in the task force of AFC

Dr Girija Shanker Mungali has been appointed as one of the seven members of the Asian Football Confederation's task force. The task force has been entrusted to regulate football clubs in Asia and Australia. The retired Colonel is the only Indian to be appointed on this committee.

Mungali is currently serving as the Chairman of the Club Licensing Committee of the All India Football Federation (AIFF). He will be on the panel till 2023.



The Future is Asia

14. Ash Barty won Brookwater Golf Club women's championship

Multi-talented Ashleigh Barty has won the Brookwater Golf Club women's championship. Surprisingly, Barty is the top-ranked WTA player in the world and a former professional cricket player. Barty had won her first Grand Slam singles title at the 2019 French Open.

Barty had also played cricket for Brisbane Heat in the Women's Big Bash League in 2015-16. She had withdrawn from participating in US Open and French Open due to coronavirus pandemic.



15. Neetu David appointed as new head of India women's selection committee

Neetu David, the former left-arm spinner, will head the five-member women's selection committee. She is popularly known as one of India's finest woman cricketers in the late '90s and early 2000s. She is regarded as the finest spinner in world cricket. The other members among the newly-elected panel includes Mithu Mukherjee, Renu Margrate, Arati Vaidya and V Kalpana.



Central zone's David took 182 wickets in her international career, 41 in ten Tests and 141 in 97 ODIs, between 1995 and 2008. She continues to hold the world record for the best innings figures in women's Test history, her 8 for 53 against England.

16. Valtteri Bottas won Russian Grand Prix 2020

Valtteri Bottas (Mercedes-Finland) won the Formula One Russian Grand Prix 2020 held at Sochi Autodrom, Russia. Max Verstappen (Red Bull-Netherlands) scored second followed by the 6-time world-champion Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes-Great Britain), who stood third because of penalties.

The Russian Grand Prix is an annual auto race held at Sochi Autodrom – a street circuit built around Olympic Park in Sochi, Russia, as part of the Formula One World Championship.

The Russian Grand Prix is notable for having only ever been won by Mercedes.



17. All India Football Federation awards 2019-20 announced

All India Football Federation (AIFF) announced the awards for the year 2019-20. The AIFF Player of the Year Awards are the annual football awards presented to the best footballers in India by the All India Football Federation (AIFF).

List of awardees is given below:

Category	Winner
Men's Footballer of the Year	Gurpreet Singh Sandhu
Women's Footballer of the Year	Sanju Yadav
Men's Emerging Footballer of the Year	Anirudh Thapa
Women's Footballer of the Year	Ratanbala Devi
Best Assistant Referee	P. Vaira-Muthu
Best Referee	L. Ajit Kumar Meetei
Best Grassroots Development Programme	West Bengal (based on E-licence courses and Golden Baby Leagues).