Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – June 2020

Important Days

Date	Day	Theme/Others
June 1	Global Day of Parents	Appreciate all parents throughout the world
June 1	World Milk Day	Raise a Glass
June 2	International Sex Workers Day	NA
June 2	Telangana Formation Day	Since 2014
June 3	World Bicycle Day	NA
June 4	International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression	Recognized by United Nations
June 5	World Environment Day	Celebrating Biodiversity
June 5	World Day Against Speciesism	NA
June 6	UN Russian Language Day	Established by UNESCO in 2010
June 6	World Pest Day	NA
June 7	World Food Safety Day	Food Safety, everyone's business (1st celebrated in 2019)
June 8	World Ocean Day	Innovation for a Sustainable Ocean
June 8	World Brain Tumor Day	Observed since 2000
June 9	World Accreditation Day	Accreditation: Improving Food Safety
June 12	World Day Against Child Labour	COVID-19: Protect children from child labour, now more than ever!
June 13	International Albinism Awareness Day	Made to Shine
June 14	World Blood Donor Day	Safe Blood Saves Lives
June 15	World Wind Day	NA
June 15	World Elder Abuse Awareness Day	Building Strong Supports for Elders
June 16	International Day of Family Remittances	Remittances are a lifeline
June 17	World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought	Food. Feed. Fibre
June 18	International Picnic Day	NA
June 18	Autistic Pride Day	NA
June 18	Sustainable astronomy Day	Desinated by UN General Assembly
June 19	World Sickle Cell Day	NA
June 19	World Sauntering Day	NA
June 19	National Reading Day	Month Till July 18 will be marked as Reading Month
June 20	World Refugee Day	Every action counts

June 21	International Yoga Day	Yoga for Health – Yoga at Home
3rd week of June	International Father's Day	NA
June 21	World Music Day	NA
June 21	International Hydrography Day	Hydrography – enabling autonomous technologies
June 23	International Olympic Day	NA
June 23	United Nations Public Service Day	NA
June 23	International Widow's Day	NA
June 25	International Day of the Seafarer	Seafarers are Key Workers (Celebrated Since 2010)
June 25	World Vitiligo Day	NA
June 26	International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking	Better Knowledge for Better Care
June 26	International Day in Support of Victims of Torture	Ratified by 162 countries
June 27	World MSME Day	Established in 2017 by United Nations
June 29	National Statistics Day	Sustainable Development Goals -3 (Ensure healthy lie and promote well-being for all at all ages) and Sustainable Development Goals-5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls)
June 29	International Day of the Trophics	NA
June 28 – July 4	World Allergy Week	Allergy care does not stp with COVID-19
June 30	World Asteroid Day	NA

Important Banking News

RBI

RBI to set up Rs.500-cr fund to expand payment infrastructure

- **Reserve Bank of India** announced the creation of a **Rs.500 crore** **Payments Infrastructure Development Fund (PIDF)** to encourage deployment of **Point of Sale (PoS)** infrastructure (both physical and digital modes) in tier-3 to tier-6 centres and the North-East.
- The central bank, stated it will make an initial contribution of Rs.250 crore to the PIDF covering half the fund and the remaining contribution will be from card-issuing banks and card networks operating in the country.
- The PIDF will also receive recurring contributions to cover operational expenses from card-issuing banks and card networks. The Reserve Bank will also contribute to yearly shortfalls, if necessary.

- The PIDF will be governed through an Advisory Council and managed and administered by the RBI.
- Over the years, the payments ecosystem in the country has evolved with a wide range of options such as bank accounts, mobile phones, cards, etc. To provide further fillip to digitisation of payment systems, it is necessary to give impetus to acceptance infrastructure across the country, more so in underserved areas, the RBI stated.

RBI moots comprehensive norms for sale of loans

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has proposed a comprehensive set of norms for sale of loans by banks which could be either **standard or sub-standard**. The move is aimed at building a robust secondary market for bank loans that could ensure proper price discovery and can be used as an indicator for impending stress, the central bank stated.
- At present, the guidelines for sale of loan exposures, both standard as well as stressed exposures, are spread across various circulars of the RBI.
- Observing that loan sales are carried out by lenders for reasons ranging from strategic sales to rebalancing their exposures or as a means to achieve resolution of stressed assets by extinguishing the exposures, the RBI stated, A dynamic secondary market for bank loans will also ensure proper discovery of credit risk pricing associated with each exposure, and will be useful as a leading indicator for impending stress, if any, provided that the volumes are sufficiently large.
- These guidelines will be applicable to commercial banks, all financial institutions, non-banking finance companies and small finance banks.
- The directions will be applicable to all loan sales, including sale of loans to special purpose entities for the purpose of securitisation, the RBI stated.
- The price discovery process has been deregulated to be as per the lenders' policy, the draft norms stated.
- According to the draft framework, standard assets would be allowed to be sold by lenders through assignment, novation or a loan participation contract .
- The central bank has also proposed significant changes in securitisation norms which are aimed at development of a strong and robust market for such transactions.
- The revision in guidelines is an attempt to align the regulatory framework with the Basel guidelines on securitisation that have come into force effective **January 1, 2018**, the RBI stated.
- Only transactions that result in multiple tranches of securities being issued reflecting different credit risks will be treated as securitisation transactions, and accordingly covered under these revised norms.
- The norm has prescribed a special case of securitisation, called Simple, Transparent and Comparable (STC) securitisations with clearly defined criteria and preferential capital treatment.
- The definition of securitisation has been modified to allow single asset securitisations. Securitisation of exposures purchased from other lenders has been allowed, according to the revised guidelines.

RBI proposes upper age limit of 70 years for CEOs, whole-time directors of banks

- The RBI has proposed an **upper age limit of 70 years** for **CEOs and whole-time directors** of banks and a **maximum term of 10 years** for those belonging to the promoter group, as part of the exercise to improve governance in the banking sector.
- The Chief executive officers (CEOs) and whole time directors (WTDs) belonging to the promoter group should pass on the managerial leadership to professionals after ten years.
- The upper age limit for CEO/WTDs of banks is 70 years. Beyond this nobody can continue in the post.

RBI constitutes Internal Working Group to review structure of pvt sector banks

- The **Reserve Bank of India** has constituted a **five-member Internal Working Group** to review the guidelines related to **ownership, governance** and **corporate structure of private sector banks**. RBI informed that RBI Central Board Director **P K Mohanty** will head the committee, which will submit its report by 30th September, 2020.
- The panel will also examine norms for promoter shareholding at the initial/licensing stage and subsequently, along with the timelines for dilution of the shareholding. RBI stated, it is necessary to align regulations to meet the requirements of a dynamic banking landscape as macro-economic, financial market and technological developments continue to influence the future of banking.
- The panel has also been asked to examine and review the eligibility criteria for individuals or entities to apply for banking licence and make recommendations on all related issues.

RBI bars People's Co-operative Bank from granting fresh loans, accepting deposits for 6 months

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)**barredKanpur-based **People's Co-operative Bank** from **granting fresh loans** and **accepting deposits for six months**, due to its weak financial position.
- The central bank has barred the co-operative bank from selling, transferring or disposing any of its properties or assets.
- As per the restrictions, the bank shall not, without prior approval of RBI in writing grant or renew any loans and advances, make any investment, incur any liability including borrowal of funds and acceptance of fresh deposits, disburse or agree to disburse any payment whether in discharge of its liabilities and obligations or otherwise.
- These directions will remain in force for **six months** from the close of business on June 10.
- The bank will continue to undertake banking business with restrictions till its financial position improves

RBI proposes to increase minimum Net Owned Fund size of HFCs

- The **Reserve Bank** proposed to increase the **minimum Net Owned Fund size** of Housing Finance Companies (HFCs).The proposal comes as part of a draft regulatory framework which will be applicable to HFCs.
- The Bank proposes to increase the minimum NOF for HFCs from the current requirement of **Rs 10 crore to Rs 20 crore**, the draft regulatory framework stated.
- For existing HFCs the glide path would be to reach Rs 15 crore within 1 year and Rs 20 crore within 2 years. This step is aimed at strengthening the capital base, especially of smaller HFCs and companies proposing to seek registration under NHB Act."
- The draft guidelines also proposed to have an inclusive definition of the terms 'providing finance for housing' or 'housing finance' means: financing, for purchase or construction or reconstruction or renovation or repairs of residential dwelling units.
- On the loaning part, the guidelines stated: "All other loans including those given for furnishing dwelling units, loans given against mortgage of property for any purpose other than buying or construction of a new dwelling unit or units or renovation of the existing dwelling unit or units will be treated as non-housing loans."
- Besides, the RBI proposed to issue HFC regulations by classifying them as systemically important and non-systemically important, so as to introduce a graded approach as applicable to NBFCs in general.
- In other words, non-deposit taking HFCs (HFC-ND) with asset size of **Rs 500 crore and above**; and all deposit taking HFCs (HFC-D), irrespective of asset size, will be treated as systemically important HFCs, the regulation stated.

- HFCs with asset size below Rs 500 crore will be treated as **non-systemically important HFCs** (HFC-non-SI). While the regulations for HFC-NDSI and HFC-Ds will be as existing under NHB regulations or harmonised with NBFC regulations, the regulations for HFC-non-SI will be brought on par with relevant regulations for NBFC-ND-non-SI.

RBI increases PMC account withdrawal limit to Rs 1 lakh, extends restrictions by 6 months

- The **Reserve Bank of India** increased the withdrawal limit for depositors at the crisis-hit **Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative Bank (PMC Bank)** to **Rs 1 lakh from Rs 50,000.**
- The apex bank also extended the restrictions by another **six months** to **December 23, 2020**, as the resolution process of the lender has been affected by the COVID 19-induced lockdown.
- RBI noted that with the relaxation in withdrawal limit, 84 per cent of the depositors of the bank will be able to withdraw their entire account balance.
- The bank, over a long period of time, had given over Rs 6,500 crore in loans to HDIL, which is 73 per cent of its total advances.

Reserve Bank of India extends enhanced borrowing limit to banks under MSF till Sept 30

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to extend the **enhanced borrowing facility** provided to the banks to meet their liquidity shortages till **September 30.**
- The RBI, as a temporary measure, had increased the borrowing limit of scheduled banks under the marginal standing facility (MSF) scheme from **2 per cent to 3 per cent** of their Net Demand and Time Liabilities (NDTL) with effect from March 27, 2020.
- Under the MSF, banks can borrow overnight funds at their discretion by dipping into the Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR). This relaxation, which was granted till June 30, 2020, has now been extended till September 30. RBI, in its circular stated that banks may continue to access overnight funds under the MSF against their excess SLR holding.
- The marginal standing facility rate currently stands at **4.25 per cent**. The RBI has also extended the relaxation on the minimum daily maintenance of the Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) at 80 per cent for a further period of three months till September 25, 2020.
- On March 27, the minimum daily maintenance of the CRR was reduced from 90 per cent of the prescribed CRR to **80 per cent** till June 26, 2020. This was done in view of the continuing of hardships faced by banks in terms of social distancing of staff and consequent strains on reporting requirements.

<div align="center">Policy Rates</div>

Parameter	Percentage
Repo Rate	4%
Reverse Repo Rate	3.35%
Marginal Standing Facility Rate	4.25%
Bank Rate	4.25%
Cash Reserve Ratio	3%
Statutory Liquidity Ratio	18%

RBI to conduct Special OMOs on 2nd July to Pump up Liquidity

- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced that it will be conducting a special Open Market Operations (OMOs) on 2nd July 2020.

- The Open Market Operations was announced after reviewing the market conditions and evolving liquidity situations in banks.
- Government Securities worth Rs 10,000 crore will be purchased and sold simultaneously during the special Open Market Operations.
- At first, the Reserve Bank of India will be selling short term government securities worth Rs 10,000 crore that are maturing in between 15th October 2020 to 29th April 2021.
- Then it will be purchasing new long term government securities worth Rs 10,000 crore that will have a maturity period between May 2027 to 5th December 2033.
- Such operations were simultaneous selling and purchase of government securities are conducted by the Central Bank of the country are known as Operation Twist.
- This will be the second such operation in this financial year to be conducted by the Reserve Bank of India.
- The first Operation Twist of this financial year was conducted on 27th April 2020 of Rs 10,000 crore.

SBI

SBI creates separate business vertical for financial inclusion, agri biz

- In a major restructuring exercise, **State Bank of India** has created a separate **business vertical** to focus on **financial inclusion and micro-markets** (FI&MM) **in semi-urban and rural areas**.
- Under **FI&MM**, the Bank will offer loans predominantly for agriculture & allied activities, and micro/small enterprises and vastly improve customer experience for the citizens in the hinterland.
- About 8,000 branches in rural and semi urban areas have been identified for providing specialised services to the micro segment including micro credit for small businesses and farmers under new vertical. The thrust will be on improving service quality and availability of banking services through over 63,000 Customer Service Points in rural, semi urban, urban & metropolitan areas, SBI stated.
- At the national level, the FI&MM vertical will be headed by Deputy Managing Director, Sanjeev Nautiyal.
- The new FI&MM vertical provides an opportunity to help customers to run their businesses smoothly, especially in the current times of uncertainty.
- The primary emphasis will be on consolidating the district level presence which will provide constant sales & recovery support to branches in the FI&MM Network. The DSHs will also play an important role in strengthening the reach of Customer Service Points (CSP) and ensure improvement in quality & availability of services rendered to customers, SBI added.

SBI relaunches Aadhaar-based online savings account opening facility

- The **State Bank of India (SBI)** **relaunched** its **Aadhaar-based instant digital savings account** facility for customers who want to open an online account using the **Yono platform**.
- Yono is the lender's integrated banking and lifestyle platform. The '**insta savings bank account**' will offer a complete paperless and instant digital savings account opening with just PAN and Aadhaar number, the bank stated.
- The bank will issue basic personalised **RuPay ATM-cum-debit card** to all the new account holders of insta saving bank accounts.
- To open account, customers need to download the Yono app, enter their PAN and Aadhaar details, submit one-time password, and fill other relevant details, the release stated.
- Nomination facility is also available for account holders along with SMS alerts and SBI's missed call service.

- Once the process is completed, the account holder will get his/her account activated instantly and can start transacting immediately.
- Customers will have the flexibility to upgrade to full KYC (Know Your Customer) account by visiting their nearest SBI branch within one year's time.

SBI working on setting up e-commerce portal "Bharat Craft" for MSMEs

- **State Bank of India** is working on setting up an **e-commerce portal** for advertising of merchandise manufactured by **micro, small and medium enterprises** (MSMEs) within the nation.
- The portal referred to as **Bharat Craft** can be collectively run by the financial institution and the federal government.
- SBI has sanctioned loans to over four lakh accounts underneath the **Rs 3-lakh croreEmergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS)** for MSME sector.

IMF

IMF Executive Board Approves a US$356.5 Million Disbursement to Myanmar to Address the COVID-19 Pandemic

- **The IMF Executive board** has approved an emergency financial assistance worth **356.5 million dollars** for **Myanmar** to address challenges posed by the COVID 19 pandemic.
- The assistance for Myanmar has been approved under the **Rapid Credit Facility and Rapid Financing Instrument** to meet the urgent balance of payment and fiscal needs of the country. It will also support the government's plans to boost spending especially on health and social safety nets.

AIIB

AIIB approves $750 million loan for India's COVID-19 response

- Beijing-based **Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)** stated it has approved a **USD 750 million (around Rs 5,714 crore)** loan to India to help the government strengthen its battle against the adverse impact of COVID-19 on **poor and vulnerable households**.
- Cofinanced with the Asian Development Bank, the budgetary support will go toward bolstering economic aid for businesses, including for the informal sector, expanding social safety nets for the needy, and strengthening the country's health care systems, the multilateral agency stated.
- The disruption in economic activities threatens to impact poor households disproportionately, especially women, many of whom are employed in the informal sector, stated AIIB.
- AIIB's total sovereign loans to India that have already been approved amount to **USD 3.06 billion**, including a recent USD 500 million COVID-19 emergency response.
- The current loan will be the second for India under AIIB's COVID-19 Crisis Recovery Facility (CRF).
- While AIIB does not have a regular instrument for policy-based financing, the Bank is extending such financing on an exceptional basis under the CRF to support its members through projects cofinanced with the World Bank or the Asian Development Bank.
- As per the statement, AIIB is currently reviewing projects from its members.

World Bank

World Bank clears $500 mn to improve quality of education system

- The **World Bank's** Board of Executive Directors has approved a **USD 500 million** (about Rs 3,700 crore) loan **to improve the quality and governance of school education in six Indian states.** The board approved a loan for **Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States Program (STARS).**

- The STARS program builds on the long partnership between India and the World Bank (since 1994), for strengthening public school education and to support the country's goal of providing Education for All.
- At the national level, through the Samagra Shiksha, and in partnership with the states of **Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, and Rajasthan**, STARS will also help improve learning assessment systems, strengthen classroom instruction and remediation, facilitate school-to-work transition, and strengthen governance and decentralised management.

India, World Bank sign loan agreements for housing sector in Tamil Nadu

- The **government of India**, **government of Tamil Nadu** and the **World Bank** signed legal agreements to help **low-income groups** in the state of **Tamil Nadu** get access to affordable housing.
- The legal agreements were signed for two projects – **$200 million** First **Tamil Nadu Housing Sector** Strengthening Programme and **$50 millionTamil Nadu Housing and Habitat Development Project** – to strengthen the state's housing sector policies, institutions, and regulations.
- The $200 million First Tamil Nadu Housing Sector Strengthening Programme supports the government's ongoing efforts to increase the availability of affordable housing by gradually shifting the role of the state from being the main provider to an enabler. It will also aim to unlock regulatory barriers and incentivise private sector participation in affordable housing for low-income families.
- Nearly half of Tamil Nadu's population is urban, and this is expected to increase to 63 percent by 2030. An estimated 6 million people are currently living in slums (representing 16.6 percent of the state's urban population).
- Concurrently, the Board also approved a $50 million Tamil Nadu Housing and Habitat Development Project to support innovations in housing finance and strengthen housing sector institutions in the state. It will finance the newly created Tamil Nadu Shelter Fund (TNSF) – an innovation in housing finance in India – by providing an equity contribution of $35 million.
- This initial support to TNSF will enable cross-subsidisation opportunities where higher returns from commercial and high-income developments will compensate for lower returns from affordable housing. This will make affordable housing commercially viable for potential investors.
- The loans of **$200 million** and **$50 million** from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) have a maturity of 20 years including a grace period of 3.5 years.

World Bank Enhances Support for Rejuvenating the Ganga

- The **World Bank** enhanced its support for the **Government of India's** program to rejuvenate the **Ganga River** with a **$400 million** operation that will help **stem pollution** in the river, and strengthen the management of the river basin which is home to more than 500 million people.
- The Second National Ganga River Basin Project (SNGRBP), approved by the World Bank's Board of Executive Directors, will support the government's **Namami Gange program** and its long-term vision for controlling pollution in the river and restoring its water quality.
- The World Bank has been supporting the government's efforts since 2011 through the ongoing National Ganga River Basin Project, which helped set up the **National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)** as the nodal agency to manage the river, and financed sewage treatment infrastructure in several riverside towns and cities.
- The first World Bank project helped build critical sewage infrastructure in 20 pollution hotspots along the river, and this Project will help scale this up to the tributaries. It will also help the government strengthen the institutions needed to manage a river basin as large and complex as the Ganga Basin.

- Ongoing National Ganga River Basin Project
- Helped set up the National Mission for Clean Ganga
- Helping build sewage collection and treatment infrastructure in 20 towns along the mainstem of the Ganga
- 1,275 MLD sewage treatment capacity created
- 3,632 km of sewage network built
- Helped foster public mobilization for Ganga rejuvenation
- The Ganga Basin covers a quarter of India's landmass, and is a critical economic and environmental resource for the country. It provides over one-third of India's surface water, includes the country's largest irrigated area and is key to India's water and food security. Over 40 percent of India's GDP is generated in the densely populated basin.

<p align="center">Other Banking News</p>

Mohandas Pai to chair IBBI advisory committee on service providers

- The **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI)** has reconstituted its advisory committee on service providers and it would now be chaired by **Manipal Global Education Services Chairman T V Mohandas Pai**. The 12-member panel would advise and provide professional support on regulation and development of the service providers dealt with by the IBBI, according to an order.
- Bharti Infratel Chairman Akhil Gupta, Raksha Shakti University Director General Bimal N Patel, CSB Bank MD and CEO Chinna Veerappan Rajendran, former Sebi ED J Ranganayakulu, former Deloitte India Chairman P R Ramesh and Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs DG and CEO Sameer Sharma are among the members.
- IIM Calcutta Board of Governors Chairman Shrikrishna Kulkarni, ICSI Institute of Insolvency Professionals MD Binoy J Kattadiyil, former IIM Lucknow Dean and Professor Punam Sahgal, Tube Investments of India Managing Director Vellayan Subbiah Murugappa as well as a representative from the corporate affairs ministry are part of the panel.
- The service providers include insolvency professionals, insolvency professionals agencies, insolvency professional entities and information utilities. IBBI is a key institution in implementing the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code.

Yes Bank partners with Chalo launch contactless card for bus passengers

- **Yes Bank** has partnered with **Chalo** to launch of a co-branded **contactless travel card** in Mangalore and Udupi, which would enable users to load money on the card to make '**tap to pay**' payments across buses.
- As the State looks at gradually reopening services, a contactless travel card will eliminate the need for handling cash and paper tickets for commuters, thereby making buses safer for passengers. Through this launch, approximately 4.5 lakh daily city bus commuters will be benefited, Yes Bank stated.
- The passenger will only have to tap the card on the conductor's ticketing machine to buy their ticket instantly. It can be purchased and recharged from any bus conductor or at designated Chalo Card counters

DBS Bank partners with TCIL for real time payments to truck drivers

- **DBS Bank** has partnered with **Transport Corporation of India Limited (TCIL)** to facilitate **real time payments for truck drivers.**
- With this solution, TCIL truck drivers receive an instant credit into their bank account, which they can then swipe at terminals or withdraw cash using ATMs, DBS Bank stated, adding that given the large volumes of transactions, and round-the-clock nature of the operations, it proposed setting up a **UPI-based real-time payments solution** which is available 24x7x365.

- The solution has been set up under the aegis of National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI). **BS RAPID** (Real-time APIs by DBS) and UPI payments, provides a seamlessintegration with the company's Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, it further stated.

IndusInd Bank launches mobile app based facility for opening current accounts

- Gurgaon-based **IndusInd Bank** has announced that it has launched a **first-of-its-kind** assisted mobile application based facility. The service enables the bank to **open current accounts** for **self-employed individuals** and **businesses digitally** within a few hours.
- The facility works in a way where the bank officials can now capture and verify information about customers and their businesses in real-time with the **Indus Corporate mobile app**. This happens at the premise of the customer in a convenient and secure manner.
- The objective of the bank is to make the account opening experience faster and seamless for the customer. The hassle of arranging physical KYC documents of themselves or their firm is eliminated. This makes the KYC documentation process paperless, leading to reducing the usage of paper.
- The app uses multiple Application Programme Interface (APIs) which enables secured validation of KYC documents from authorised government platforms such as the Goods and Service Tax (GST), Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA), National Securities Depository Limited (NSDL), Import Export Code (IEC) and Aadhaar. The facility can be used to open current accounts for all kinds of businesses including proprietorship, partnership as well as private and public limited companies, among others.

Mastercard, Axis Bank and Worldline launch Soft POS to enable smartphones to be used as POS devices

- **Mastercard, Axis Bank and Worldline** launched **Soft POS** to become the first financial payments service in India to transform everyday smartphones into merchant Point of Sale terminals.
- The solution comes with various features for the merchant community. Merchants who have traditionally accepted cash payments, now have a simpler and more secure way to manage transactions.
- The merchant community can start using Soft POS almost instantly as the online registration process with the acquiring bank takes less than 30 minutes. The solution is available as a white label solution to all banks and payment aggregators in the industry.
- The solution enables face-to-face payments with Bharat QR and NFC payments, as well as remote payments for home deliveries via link-based payments. The app also allows banks to have complete visibility of a merchant's transactions, making it easier for small merchants to get business loans.
- Soft POS provides a cost-effective card acceptance solution for all micro-merchants and SMEs in India and eliminates the need to invest in a POS device. Merchants across the country now have an option to accept contactless payments directly via their own Android smartphones.
- This functionality is called **"Tap on Phone"** which means a cardholder can tap his/her contactless card on the merchant Smart phone with NFC functionality and hence encourages social distancing.
- The application is available in eight languages and easily links with platforms such as Google Pay, WhatsApp Pay, Amazon Pay, amongst others. The launch of this app will allow more and more small merchants to accept contactless payments directly through their smartphones. For the cardholders, it is the most convenient payment method with the seamless shopping experience. The app is currently only available to Android users, however, will soon be launched for I-phone users as well.

NABARD provides Rs 270 crore to Assam Gramin Vikash Bank

- National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has made available a **Special Liquidity Facility (SLF)** of **Rs 270 crore** to **Assam Gramin Vikash Bank** for supporting the agricultural activities of the farmers.
- NABARD has provided **Rs 25,000 crore** nationwide for providing liquidity support to **Cooperative Banks, Regional Rural Banks and Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs)** during 2020-21 with a view to ensuring continued flow of credit to farmers to carry out their agricultural operations smoothly even during COVID-19 pandemic period.
- This fund is a front loaded liquidity support and this separate line of credit would prove to be a boon to the agriculture credit of the state at this difficult hour and would enable our farmer friends to intensify their crop production by getting adequate and timely credit.

HDFC Bank launches summer treats

- With the easing of the lockdown restrictions, private sector **HDFC Bank** announced a **special Summer Treatscampaign** with offers for both merchants and, salaried and self-employed customers.
- As part of the campaign, the bank will offer **no cost EMI** and no down payment for large appliances, discounts and cashbacks on select brands and 50 per cent extra reward points on online spend using credit cards.
- It will also have exclusive offers on the bank's lending products as well as extra rewards on online spends via Debit Card Credit Card or Payzapp.

Last October, HDFC Bank had launched a similar Festive Treats campaign.

Tata AIG Launches Telematics-Based 'Pay-As-You-Drive' Cover for Private Cars

- **Tata AIG General Insurance** has joined the list of a select few insurers to offer **usage-based insurance cover** to **private car owners** which reduces the overall premium payout.
- The new policy called '**AutoSafe**' uses telematics-based next-gen application and device to track the usage of the car and decide on the premium. The app helps policyholders save on premium by selecting the kilometres-driven, promotes safe driving, works as an anti-theft device as it comes with a GPS-based tracking facility.
- Available on all policies offering personal accidental cover to the tune of Rs 15 lakh for owner and driver, this app also tracks the distance the vehicle has covered, live speed and other driving patterns and offers bonus kilometres for good driving at the time of the renewal, the company stated.
- The Autosafe device is GPS-enabled and is linked to a mobile app that records all information, tracks the distance travelled and generates reports about vehicle health or driving patterns of the policyholder. This telematics device is fitted or linked to the car as the insurance policy becomes active and must be kept throughout the policy period.
- This device also comes with a motion sensor and generates fuel-saving reports apart from monitoring hard-braking, nighttime driving and acceleration apart from guarding against fuel slippage and dangerous driving habits.
- Tata AIG General Insurance is a joint venture between the Tatas and the American International Group. Its gross written premium stood at Rs 7,862 crore in FY19, up from Rs 5,567 crore in FY18.

PhonePe launches domestic trip insurance with ICICI Lombard

- **PhonePe**, a digital payments platform, announced the launch of a **comprehensive, industry-firstdomesticmulti-tripinsurancecover** in a strategic partnership with **ICICILombard**, the non-life insurance company.
- This **service** is exclusively **available** for **PhonePe users**. The platform provides affordable annual insurance cover for unlimited trips.
- Unlike other traditional travel insurance products, this solution does away with the need to insure every trip separately and will benefit both business and leisure travellers.

Irdai withdraws long-term third-party motor insurance for 3, 5 years from Aug 1

- **The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (Irdai)** withdrew the long-term motor third-party insurance package for **three years and five years** for four-wheelers and two-wheelers, with effect from **August 1, 2020.**
- Distribution of long-term third party policies is challenging as it is unaffordable for vehicle owners.
- Now, customers won't be given an option to buy OD covers on a long-term basis. Earlier, Irdai had asked insurers to give customers an option to choose between one year and multi-year OD plans. The OD cover offers insurance against physical damages to the vehicle due to theft, accidents and natural catastrophe.
- In 2018, the Supreme Court ordered that to ensure vehicles running on Indian roads have valid insurance covers, long-term policies of five years for two-wheelers and three years for four-wheelers would be mandatory. Insurance companies then started offering products on a long-term basis to customers.
- This included an option package of **OD and TP policies** on a long-term basis. However, customers had also started to complain that since OD prices are not regulated by Irdai, pricing was high.

CBIC launches Turant Customs for faceless clearance of imported goods

- **The Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC)** launched its flagship programme, **Turant Customs, at Bengaluru and at Chennai**, paving the way for technology-supported faster Customs clearance of imported goods.
- Under the programme, **importers could now get their goods cleared from Customs after a faceless assessment done remotely by the Customs officers located outside the port of import**. So, the goods imported at Chennai may be assessed by the Customs officers located at Bengaluru and vice versa, as assigned by the Customs" automated system.
- The start of Turant Customs at Bengaluru and at Chennai would be the first phase of the All India roll out which would get completed by **December 31 this year.**
- The first phase would cover imports of mechanical, electrical and electronics machineries at the ports/airports/ICDs of Bengaluru and Chennai.
- Turant Customs would benefit the importers by eliminating routine interface with the Customs officers and providing uniformity in assessment across the country. This would reduce transaction costs and eliminate the practice of port shopping for favourable assessments.
- These steps include self-registration of goods on the system by importers, automated clearances of bills of entry, digitization of bill of entry, paperless processing by uploading documents on the **electronic e-Sanchit platform, etc.** Also, all communications between importers and Customs officers would be done electronically through the **ICEGATE portal.**
- The launch of Turant Customs marks the culmination of a long pilot phase started in August 2019 at Chennai and later extended to Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Delhi, and Visakhapatnam Customs Zones for select commodities.

To Boost Infrastructure spending, Centre infuses Rs 5,298 cr in IIFCL

- The government infused equity share capital of **Rs 5,297.60 crore** in the **India Infrastructure Finance Company (IIFCL).**
- This has increased the paid-up equity share capital of IIFCL to **Rs 9,999.92 crore** against the authorized share capital of **Rs 10,000 crore**.
- IIFCL would be able to maintain its Capital to Risk Adjusted Ratio (CRAR) as per RBI regulations and directions and approach the markets to attract more borrowings and also have increased exposure limits for individual projects and developer groups.

PNB extends credit line of Rs 750 cr for Gorakhpur Link Expressway

- **Punjab National Bank (PNB)** has extended a credit line of **Rs 750cr** for the **Gorakhpur Link Expressway**, estimated to cost **Rs 5,876 crore.**
- The 91-km expressway will connect Gorakhpur district,with another expressway project, the 340-km Purvanchal Expressway.
- Gorakhpur Link Expressway is the fifth greenfield expressway project in UP after Yamuna Expressway, Agra-Lucknow Expressway, Purvanchal Expressway and Bundelkhand Expressway.
- Another mega Ganga Expressway project has also been proposed, for which the bidding process is likely to be initiated after the state cabinet nod. The government is looking to provide jobs to the migrant workers in these infra projects.
- The Gorakhpur Link Expressway was divided into two packages and awarded to Apco Infratech and Dilip Buildcon for development.
- While, the PNB has provided a loan of Rs 750 crore for Gorakhpur Link Expressway, earlier Rs 2,300 crore had been extended as credit for Purvanchal Expressway, which is touted to cost Rs 23,000 crore.
- Purvanchal Expressway was divided into eight packages and awarded to different companies for ensuring time bound completion. It runs across nine districts viz. Lucknow, Barabanki, Faizabad, Ambedkarnagar, Amethi, Sultanpur, Azamgarh, Mau and Ghazipur.
- Last month, UPEIDA had estimated the civil work and land cost of the 628-km Ganga Expressway project at Rs 21,000 crore and Rs 9,000 crore, respectively, thus totalling Rs 30,000 crore.

ICICI Bank launches digital overdraft facility

- **ICICI Bank** has launched an **online overdraft facility** for its salaried customers.
- Called '**Insta Flexicash**', the fully digital facility can be availed using the Bank's internet banking platform and is available to pre-approved customers who can apply for the OD without visiting a bank branch.
- The bank offers customers a credit limit worth up to three times their net salary. The facility can be sanctioned immediately while customers can start using the approved OD limit within 48 hours, ICICI Bank stated, adding that the interest payable on the OD is calculated on the basis of the actual amount availed by the customer, not on the full amount of the OD sanctioned.

Airtel Payments Bank launches new salary account for MSMEs

- **Airtel Payments Bank** launched a **new salary account** for **micro, small and medium enterprises**.
- Called the **Suraksha Salary account**, it will enable MSMEs and other organisations to make cashless payments and provide a financial security blanket to their employees.
- Suraksha Salary account offers a wide range of benefits including Hospicash Insurance and Personal Accidental insurance cover given the low penetration of insurance in India, Airtel Payments Bank stated.
- The account has no minimum balance condition. It offers no charges on cash withdrawals of upto **Rs 50,000** and deposits of upto Rs 20,000 in one month. The account holder also gets two free cardless cash withdrawal via IMT at ATMs across the country. The account holder can make online money transfers to any bank across India.
- To begin with the product will be available only to new to bank customers, the bank stated, adding that it will be soon made available to the existing customers.

HDFC Ergo launches country's first drone cover

- The third largest private sector general insurer **HDFC Ergo** tied up with tech firm **Tropogo** to offer commercial drone owners and operators third-party liability cover for **property damages and physical injuries** from the flying machines.
- This policy will be offered on-demand to customers on a "pay as you fly" concept.
- Drones were effectively used by the police to implement lockdowns as they have proved to be efficient and beneficial for public surveillance, crowd monitoring and in certain areas even for delivery of essentials like medicines.

EXIM Bank extends $215 million line of credit to Malawi

- India based finance lender **Export-Import Bank of India (EXIM Bank)** announced to extend **$215.68 millionLine of Credit (LOC)** to the **Malawi** government.
- Exim Bank in its issued statement Stated, The bank has extended a line of credit (LOC) worth of $215.68 million to the Malawi government for **drinking water supply schemes** and other
- Projects covered under the LOCs extended to Malawi include supply of irrigation network, tobacco threshing plant, cotton processing facilities, green belt initiative, sugar processing equipment, fuel storage facility, and construction of a new water supply system from Likhubula River in Mulanje to Blantyre, the statement Stated.
- With the signing of this agreement, Exim Bank, so far, has extended five LOCs to Malawi, on behalf of the Indian government, taking the total value of LOCs extended to $395.68 million, the statement added.

EPFO launches multi location claim settlement facility

- The **Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)** stated it has launched a **multi-location claim settlement facility** towards ensuring **uniform standards of service delivery** across the country and optimum utilisation of its workforce during COVID-19 pandemic.
- The facility will bring a paradigm shift by allowing its offices to settle online claims from any of its regional offices, across the country. All types of online claims i.e. provident fund, pension, partial withdrawal and claims and transfer claims can be processed under this novel initiative, EPFO stated.
- The EPF organization stated to reduce the delays by uniformly distributing the claim settlement related workload nationwide, the organization has moved away from the existing system of geographical jurisdiction for claim processing by rolling out **multi-location claim settlement facility**.
- This facility will allow offices with lesser workload to share the burden of offices that have accumulated a higher level of pendency, due to COVID-19 restrictions. It enables fast-tracking of settlement process through most appropriate engagement of EPFO's workforce in all its regional offices across the country.
- The EPFO stated, despite its functioning being adversely impacted due to COVID-19 restrictions, the organization is settling more than 80,000 claims amounting to Rs.270 crore per working day since 1 April 2020. With multi-location claim facility the organization is set to achieve higher benchmarks in service delivery ensuring social security for its more than 6 crore subscribers during the time of crisis.

Karnataka Bank launches COVID-19 health insurance in partnership with Universal Sompo

- **Karnataka Bank** has launched **a health insurance policy** for COVID-19 in a tie-up with **Universal Sompo General Insurance Company.**
- The health cover can be availed at a nominal premium of Rs 399, inclusive of all taxes.

- The policy will cover in-patient hospital expenses up to Rs 3 lakh, outpatient treatment expenses of Rs 3,000, and will also provide a sum of Rs 1,000 per day towards expenses incurred towards 14 days of quarantine at a government or military hospital.
- The validity of this policy is for a period of 120 days. The policy is available to all the customers of the bank in the age group of 18-65 years.

ICICI Home Finance launches affordable housing loan scheme SARAL

- **ICICI Home Finance** has launched a **special affordable housing loan scheme**, with special rates for women, lower and middle income groups. Called **SARAL**, it aims to fund homes in urban and rural areas.
- The product has been developed for women, lower, middle income customers and economically weaker sections having maximum household income up to Rs.6 lakh annually.
- SARAL offers affordable housing loans up to **Rs.35 lakh** at an interest rate starting from **7.98 per cent** onwards, for a maximum tenure of **20 years**. It added that customers with pre-existing loans can also transfer their loans.
- ICICI HFC's SARAL loan requires a mandatory woman ownership in rural areas of the country for a household income of Rs.3 lakhs to Rs.6 lakhs.

Bank of Baroda to completely digitise lending operations

- **Bank of Baroda** is set to completely **digitise it's lending operations** including home, agriculture, MSME, personal and auto loans. The bank which is looking to completely do away with paper-based lending has reached out to the big four and some white shoe consultants like McKinsey and Boston Consulting Group to help set up a "**digital lending department**".
- The validation and disbursal of fresh loans will happen via this digital platform while past loan will also be digitised to cut costs and improve profitability. The bank is planning to digitise a large proportion of its retail and MSME processes in the next six months.
- As per a 18-month action plan laid out by the bank, it's aiming to set-up and operationalise the digital lending department within two months. A later leg of the plan includes consolidating the bank's ongoing digital initiatives within this new set up. After which the department will be integrated across the bank's systems.
- While the digital interface has been in the works, people in the know stated that the spread of the pandemic and its fallout has hastened the process.

Yes Bank partners Affordplan to launch co-branded cashless healthcare card

- **Yes Bank** has partnered with fintech startup **Affordplan** to launch a **co-branded health card** to address healthcare needs.
- The co-branded healthcare card will enable families plan and manage their finances for their healthcare needs.
- Yes Bank's wallet has also been integrated on **Affordplan Swasth** to enable wallet QR scan for making payments to merchant partners empanelled on the app.
- People will be able to get a goal-based savings projection chart for medical treatment based on treatment input, access healthcare services and treatments at a discounted price.
- The co-branded card will have flexible recharges from Rs 100 up to a maximum balance of Rs 1 lakh.

EXIM Bank extends USD 20.1 mn credit line to Nicaragua govt

- **Export-Import Bank of India (EXIM Bank)** stated it has extended a **line of credit (LOC)** of **USD 20.10 million** to the government of **Nicaragua** for reconstruction of Aldo Chavarria Hospital.

- With signing of this agreement, EXIM Bank, so far, has extended four LOCs to Nicaragua, on behalf of the Indian government, taking the total value to USD 87.63 million, a release stated.
- Projects covered under the LOCs include supply of equipment for building two substations, construction of transmission lines, building new substation, expansion of the existing substations and reconstruction of a hospital.
- Post the signing of this LOC agreement, EXIM Bank has now in place 261 LOCs, covering 62 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the CIS, with credit commitments of around USD 25.70 billion, available for financing exports from India.

Karnataka Bank launches KBL Micro Mitra for micro enterprises

- **Karnataka Bank** has launched a new product **KBL Micro Mitra,** wherein financial assistance **up to Rs.10 lakhs** can be provided to the **Micro manufacturing and service enterprises** either for working capital or for investment purposes.
- The facility comes with a simplified procedure and competitive rate of interest.
- 'KBL Micro Mitra' will be a true friend of the micro entrepreneurs. This facility is available across India through all the branches of Karnataka Bank.

UCO Bank partners with four insurers to sell their products

- **UCO Bank** tied up with **four insurers** to offer various insurance products to its customers through its network of branches across the country.
- The lender teamed up with **SBI Life Insurance Company**, the **Oriental Insurance Company** and **Religare Health Insurance Company, Star Healthand Allied Insurance Company** for selling their products.
- With these new partnerships, the lender will now be offering a much wider range of insurance products, UCO Bank MD and CEO Atul Kumar Goel stated.
- The fresh tie-ups have strengthened the bank's partnerships with insurers from existing two to six, an official stated.
- These will enable us to reaffirm our commitment to our customers for their financial well being. We would digitise and automate the customer interface for availing these facilities,UCO Bank executive director Ajay Vyas stated.

Pension fund FDI cap proposed at 49%

- The draft rules propose that **total foreign investment** covering **both direct and indirect investments** can go up to **49 per cent** in an Indian pension fund and the calculation would be done under regulations to be framed by **PFRDA** along with the Centre's Consolidated FDI policy.
- This is the first time the government is directly introducing an FDI limit of 49 per cent in the legislative framework for the pension sector.
- Till date, the PFRDA Act, 2013, stipulated that FDI in pension funds will be capped at **26 per cent** or the level specified under the Insurance Act (which now specifies the FDI limit at 49 per cent), whichever is higher.

Sachin Bansal's Navi launches new instant lending app with paperless KYC

- Flipkart co-founder **Sachin Bansal's** financial services startup **Navi** has launched a **mobile app** to provide **instant personal loans** targeted at consumers in the middle-income segment.
- **The Navi lending app** will provide instant loans of up to **Rs.5 lakh** with repayment tenures of up to **36 months.** The loan process is done completely using **digital and contactless process for customers**.
- To assess loan applicants and prevent fraudulent transactions, app-based lenders source customer data from trading and brokerage accounts, and credit and debit card transactions directly from banks.

- Besides, a customer's employment information and credit history are also accessed from credit bureaus approved by the Reserve Bank of India.

J&K Bank launches products to provide financial support to business communities

- In **Jammu and Kashmir**, in order to provide adequate **financial support** to different business communities to overcome business challenges due to the prevailing conditions, J&K Bank has launched two products titled '**J&K Bank Business Support Loan Scheme 2019-20**' and '**J&K Bank Business Support Loan Scheme 2019-20 for Hotels and Guest Houses**'.
- Launching the schemes, the Lt Governor G C Murmu stated the bank's schemes are a timely financial intervention for businesses of the region especially hotels and guest-houses which are crucial for the sustenance and development of the tourism sector and calling for collaborative efforts by all stakeholders in this direction.
- R K Chhibber, CMD, J&K Bank, stated that the purpose of tailoring J&K Bank Business Support Loan Scheme 2019-20 for businesses is to provide them much needed financial cushion so that they are able to meet the temporary mismatch in their cash flows caused by the business challenges during 2019 followed by COVID-19 pandemic.
- In the case of 'J&K Bank Business Support Loan Scheme 2019-20 for Hotels and Guest Houses', the aim is to support the units financially for meeting their expenditure towards salaries to staff and other recurring fixed costs. It was informed that the credit scheme titled '**J&K Bank Business Support Loan 2019-20**' has been engineered keeping **SMA1 & SMA2** borrowers into consideration.
- The highlights include 10% enhancement in existing working capital limit in the form of a 3 year working capital term loan (which includes one year moratorium on principal), subject to an upper limit of Rs 5 cr for SMA2 and Rs 20 cr for other standard loans.

IRDAI sets up panel on insurance for use drones

- The **Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)** has formed a working group to suggest **insurance products** covering the various risks involved in the **use of drones**.
- There is an immediate need to make available suitable insurance products covering the various risks involved in the use of drones, the insurance regulator stated.
- Drones are emerging as one of the fastest growing technologies and are being used for a variety of purposes and are playing a 'significant' role in the present Covid-19 situation helping the authorities in several activities, IRDAI stated.
- The **nine-member panel**, headed by **Anjan Dev**, **General Manager**, New India Assurance Co, has been asked to study and understand the insurance needs of Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS) owners and operators.
- Apart from making recommendations on design and development of products meeting the needs of RPAS owners and operators, including third party liability, the group will suggest measures relating to underwriting of different risks.

PhonePe partners with ICICI Bank on UPI multi-bank model

- Flipkart-owned **PhonePe** has partnered with **ICICI Bank** on **UPI multi-bank model**, giving its users the option to create and use multiple **UPI IDs** with ICICI and Yes Bank's handles.
- Giving its users the option to create and use multiple UPI IDs with ICICI Bank's '@ibl' handle and YES Bank's '@ybl' handle on the PhonePe app.

- This addition, in partnership with ICICI Bank, enables quick and contactless payments to over 200 million registered PhonePe users.

DGFT to launch new digital platform for delivery of services

- The commerce ministry's foreign trade arm **DGFT** is launching a **digital platform** for delivery of services like **issuance of Import-Export Code (IEC),** a move aimed at promoting **ease of doing business** for traders.
- The platform will be rolled out in phases and the first phase is scheduled to go live on July 13.
- In the first phase, the website will be catering to the services related to IEC issuance, modification, amendment process along with a Chatbot (a virtual assistant) catering to queries of users.
- Other online modules relating to Advance Authorisation, EPCG (Export Promotion Capital Goods), and exports obligation discharge, which are part of the next phase will be rolled out subsequently after the first phase stabilises.
- Digital signature /Aadhaar based e-sign will be required for applying and modifying IEC or adding or updating the IEC-linked users.
- The IEC applications and modification process would be suspended from July 10-13 for system integration related works. A person looking to start an export import business needs an IEC number. It is issued by DGFT. **IEC is a 10-digit code** which has a lifetime validity.

MSME comes out with consolidated notification for classification and registration

- **The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME)** has come out with a consolidated notification in the form of **guidelines for classification and registration** of MSMEs. Earlier, the Ministry had published a Notification on 1st June with new criteria for classification of MSMEs based on Investment and Turnover.
- The Minister of MSME, Nitin Gadkari while releasing the new guidelines stated that the new system of classification, registration and facilitation of MSMEs will be an extremely simple and a revolutionary step towards Ease of Doing Business. These steps and strategies also give a strong message that the Ministry is standing behind the MSMEs which are facing several challenges at this time.
- This Notification which was issued provides the detailed criteria for classification of MSMEs and the procedure for registration and the arrangements made by the Ministry for facilitation in this process. As per the notification, an MSME will be known as **Udyam**, as this is more closer to the word Enterprise and accordingly, the registration process will be known as **Udyam Registration**.
- It can be filled online based on self-declaration with no requirement to upload documents, papers, certificates or proof. An enterprise can be registered just on the basis of **Aadhaar number** and other details can be given on self-declaration basis without any requirement of uploading or submitting any papers.
- The notification also clarified that **Exports of goods or services** or both shall be excluded while calculating the turnover of any enterprise whether Micro, Small or Medium.
- The Ministry of MSME has established a strong facilitation mechanism for the MSMEs. This process is in the form of Single Window System at the district level and regional level.
- It will help those entrepreneurs who are not able to file the Udyam Registration for any reason. At the district level, the District Industry Centres have been made responsible for facilitating the entrepreneurs. Similarly, the Ministry's recent initiative of Champions Control Rooms across the country have been made legally responsible for facilitating such Entrepreneurs in registration.

- The Ministry also stated, those people who do not have a valid Aadhaar Number can also approach the Single Window System for facilitation along with aadhaar enrollment request or identity, bank photo passbook, voter ID card, passport or driving license.

Yes Bank launches full service digital savings account

- **Yes Bank** has launched a **full service digital savings account** which would ensure **physical distancing** and eliminate the need for a branch visit, physical documentation or any in-person interaction in times of the current pandemic.
- It will also help the lender to cater to a diverse customer base, especially in tier 1 and tier 2 cities, in line with its strategy of building a transformed '**Digital Bank'**.
- **Yes Bank's digital savings account** comes with a **virtual debit card**, unlocking over 100 features on mobile through **YES Mobile** and web including transactions, fund transfers and online shopping using the virtual debit card, it stated in a release, adding that the account will offer **six per cent interest**.

SOLV partners with Standard Chartered Bank to launch credit card for MSMEs

- **SOLV, a B2B digital platform** for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), has launched a **credit card tailor-made** for the **MSME segment**, in partnership with **Standard Chartered Bank**, India.
- SOLV, registered as Standard Chartered Research & Technology India Pvt. Ltd., is a fully-owned entity of the London-headquartered Standard Chartered Group.
- The digital platform, stated the **SOLV MSME Credit Card** provides business owners with a ready means to meet ongoing business expenses including supplier payments, fuel, logistics, purchase of raw material, utility payments and working capital outlays.
- The SOLV platform will help small businesses trade goods with each other and expand their customer base across India.
- The platform stated MSMEs are not charged any credit card joining fee, and the card comes with cashback, including 5 per cent cashback on fuel transactions, and reward features.
- Nitin Mittal, CEO, SOLV, stated, This credit card will help small business owners' tide over immediate crises such as paying for daily expenses and logistics costs with ready access to funds from a reputed, reliable partner at an affordable rate.

Instamojo launches InstaCash to solve the liquidity challenge for MSMEs

- **Instamojo**, has launched '**InstaCash'** to enable merchants to gain access to working capital. Merchants can avail **loans for upto Rs 1 lakh**, for a period of **7–14 days**.
- Instamojo will transfer the amount to the customer once the request has been placed.
- The MSMEs have faced cash-flow and access to loans challenges owing to lack of sufficient data on credit worthiness. The coronavirus pandemic has left micro-businesses reeling under pressure to source funds for procuring raw materials, production, pay wages etc.
- Through InstaCash they aim to empower micro businesses through digitization.
- Presently, Instamojo enables more than one million MSMEs to build, manage and grow their business.

Sidbi sets up fund to facilitate free onboarding of MSMEs on TReDS platform

- **Small Industries Development Bank of India (Sidbi)** stated it has set up a fund to support free onboarding for **micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs)** on trade receivables discounting system (**TReDS**).
- The free onboarding of MSMEs would be available till September-end, according to a release.

- The fund, **Swavalamban Crisis Responsive Fund**, is an open-ended fund and the target is to onboard 10,000 MSMEs during the period, a Sidbi spokesperson stated.
- Usually, an MSME has to pay a fee of Rs 5,000 to Rs 10,000 for getting registered on a TReDS platform.
- The fund would be utilised to offset the cost of joining/registration fee on the TReDS platform, Sidbi stated.
- Three TReDS platforms -- **Receivables Exchange of India Ltd (RXIL),M1xchange and Invoicemart** -- will help MSMEs gain access to working capital through invoice discounting via multiple financiers.
- TReDS is an electronic platform where receivables of MSMEs drawn against buyers, including large corporates, public sector undertakings and government departments, are financed through multiple financiers at competitive rates through an auction mechanism.

RBL Bank's chatbot 'RBL Cares', now enables banking transactions

- **RBL Bank** has now enabled **additional banking transactions** and added a host of new features to '**RBL Cares**', its **AI-powered conversational Chatbot** that can provide real-time customer service assistance on a range of questions related to banking and credit card products and services.
- The Chatbot has been built in partnership with **Senseforth.ai**, a leader in the Conversational AI space. It has successfully answered over 4 million queries in less than 6 months of its launch in January, 2020, with an accuracy of over 95%.
- In addition to helping customers find answers to their queries, **RBL Cares** also enables them to check account balance, credit card balance & statement; block/ unblock debit & credit card, manage beneficiaries, request a cheque book, request stop payment, enable/disable international transaction on credit card, update email ID, reset PIN and find their credit score. The new feature facilitates transactions like fund transfers via NEFT or IMPS. Information related to the COVID-19 moratorium facility can also be accessed through this chatbot.

Revision Points

Name of the Organization	Headquarters	Head of the Organization
Reserve Bank of India	Mumbai	Shaktikanta Das
Bank of Baroda	Vadodara	Hasmukh Adhia
Karnataka Bank	Mangalore	Mahabaleshwara MS
NABARD	Mumbai	Govinda Rajulu Chintala
Axis Bank	Mumbai	Rakesh Makhija
Securities and Exchange Board of India	Mumbai	Ajay Tyagi
Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India	Hyderabad	Subash Chandra Khuntia
HDFC Bank	Mumbai	Aditya Puri
IndusInd Bank	Pune	Sumant Kathpalia
Axis Bank	Mumbai	Rakesh Makhija
State Bank of India	Mumbai	Rajnish Kumar
ICICI Lombard	Mumbai	Bhargav Dasgupta
ICICI Bank	Mumbai	Sandeep Bakshi

Federal Bank	Aluva	Shyam Srinivasan
PhonePe	Bengaluru	Sameer Nigam
Punjab National Bank	New Delhi	S.S Mallikarjuna Rao
Tata AIG General Insurance	Mumbai	Neelesh Garg
Bank of Baroda	Vadodara	Hasmukh Adhia
Airtel Payments Bank	New Delhi	Anubrata Biswas
RBL Bank	Mumbai	Vishwavir Ahuja
YES Bank	Mumbai	Prashant Kumar
DBS Bank	Singapore	Piyush Gupta
Master Card	New York	Ajaypal Singh Banga
EXIM Bank	Mumbai	David Rasquinha
HDFC Ergo	Mumbai	Ritesh Kumar
Employees' Provident Fund Organization	New Delhi	Sunil Barthwal
UCO Bank	Kolkata	Atul Kumar Goel
Standard Chartered Bank	London	Bill Winters
J & K Bank	Srinagar	RK Chhibber
Small Industries Development Bank of India	Lucknow	Mohammad Mustafa
Lakshmi Vilas Bank	Chennai	Parthasarathi Mukherjee
IDBI Bank	Mumbai	Rakesh Sharma
UTI Mutual Fund	Mumbai	Imtaiyazur Rahman
Catholic Syrian Bank	Thrissur	Pralay Mondal

Important Financial & Economy Affairs

Organization	GDP Rate (2020 – 21(FY21))
Moody's	- 4%
Reserve Bank of India	- 1.5%
Moody's	- 3.1% (CY 2020)
India Ratings	- 5.3%
International Monetary Fund	- 4.5%
S & P	- 5%

India GDP may contract by 2 per cent in FY21, says BoA Securities

- The extension of the lockdown by the government will have a deep impact on economic activity, a foreign brokerage stated, sharply cutting India's GDP forecast for this financial year to a contraction of **2 per cent**.
- The estimate has been arrived at with the assumption that the lockdown will extend till mid-July and a restart of the economy will get stretched to August, analysts at **Bank of America Securities** stated. It can be noted that the RBI also expects the economy to contract in FY21 (2020-2021), but has not given a level to it.

- Some analysts have pegged the contraction as high as **5 per cent**. It now expects the GDP to contract by **2 per cent**, 0.70 per cent wider than the previous estimate.
- The brokerage was quick to add that if the lack of a vaccine forces the government to continue with the semi-lockdown phase, the economy will contract by as much as 5 per cent.
- The sharp reduction in the GDP contraction also led the brokerage to revise up the fiscal deficit estimate by 0.50 per cent to 6.3 per cent as against 4.6 per cent achieved in FY20.

SEBI extends deadline to implement power of attorney norms till August 1

- **Sebi** has extended to **August 1, 2020** the date for implementing norms pertaining to power of attorney given by clients to trading members or clearing members. The regulator had in February 2020 specified guidelines with regard to margin obligations to be given by way of pledge and re-pledge in the depository system. The provisions of the circular were to come into effect from June 1, 2020.
- In a bid to curb the misuse of **power of attorney (POA)** given by the clients to the trading member (TM) or clearing member (CM), Sebi had prescribed that margin obligations to be given in the form of securities by client will be by way of pledge or re-pledge in the depository system. Besides, title transfer of securities to the client collateral demat account of the TM/ CM for margin purposes will not be permitted.
- In cases where a client has given a POA in favour of a TM / CM, such holding of POA will not be considered as equivalent to the collection of margin by the TM/ CM in respect of securities held in the demat account of the client with effect from June 1, the regulator had stated. However, amid the situation arising due to COVID-19, the regulator received representations from stock brokers and broker associations regarding difficulty in implementing the provisions due to work in progress by market infrastructure institutions.

Moody's downgrades India's sovereign rating to 'Baa3', maintains negative outlook

- **Moody's** has also revised its **FY21 GDP** estimate for India to **4% contraction** against **0% growth** projected earlier.
- Both Moody's and Fitch Ratings had in April warned that deterioration in India's fiscal outlook as a result of lower growth could put pressure on its sovereign rating
- India's sovereign credit rating was cut by a notch to the lowest investment grade with negative outlook by Moody's Investors Service, which cited growing risks that Asia's third-largest economy will face a prolonged period of slower growth amid rising debt and persistent stress in parts of the financial system.
- The country's credit rating was downgraded to **Baa3** from **Baa2**, according to a statement. The outlook remained unchanged.
- India's fiscal deficit in FY20 widened to 4.6% of GDP against the budgeted 3.8%. Mint on 31 May reported that the country's fiscal deficit in FY21 may breach the level of 6.4% of GDP, last seen in the aftermath of the global financial crisis in FY10.
- India's economic growth in the March quarter slowed to a 11-year low at 3.1%, partially reflecting the ongoing nationwide lockdown with fresh data suggesting a sharp contraction in GDP in the June quarter of FY21.

India's GDP may contract by 1.5% in FY21, says RBI survey

- A survey released by the **Reserve Bank** has showed that Indian economy may contract by **1.5 percent** in **FY21** though the next fiscal is expected to be much better.
- Real gross domestic product (GDP) is likely to contract by 1.5 per cent in 2020-21 but is expected to revert to growth terrain next year, when it is likely to grow by **7.2 per cent**, stated the Survey of Professional Forecasters (SPF) sponsored by the RBI.

- It added that real gross fixed capital formation (GFCF) is likely to register negative growth of 6.4 per cent in 2020-21 but is expected to grow by 5.6 per cent in 2021-22.
- Real gross value added (GVA) is expected to decline by 1.7 per cent this fiscal but record 6.8 per cent growth in 2021-22, supported by uptick in industrial and services sector activities, stated the SPF survey based on response of 24 panellists.
- The study added that Real private final consumption expenditure (PFCE) is expected to decline by 0.5 per cent during 2020-21 but likely to record 6.9 per cent growth during 2021-22
- Headline consumer price index (CPI) inflation is expected at 5.6 per cent in Q1:2020-21, but moderate thereafter to 2.8 per cent by the fourth quarter of 2020-21, the study stated

RIL raises Rs 4,546.80 Cr from Silver Lake

- Reliance Industries raised **Rs 4,546.80 crore** from sale of further **0.93 percent stake** to **Silver Lake,** taking the cumulative fundraising to **Rs 92,202 crore** that will help pare debt at the oil-to-telecom conglomerate.
- Silver Lake had previously taken **1.15 percent** stake in Jio Platforms for Rs 5,655.75 crore. The additional investment would take its stake to **2.08 percent.**
- Reliance announced the sale of 1.85 percent stake in Jio Platforms to Abu Dhabi-based sovereign investor Mubadala Investment Company for Rs 9,093.60 crore.
- Jio Platforms has now raised Rs 92,202.15 crore from leading global technology and growth investors, including Facebook, Silver Lake, Vista Equity Partners, General Atlantic, KKR, and Mubadala in less than six weeks.

Sebi approves regulatory sandbox framework for stock market ecosystem

- The **Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi)** approved the **regulatory sandbox framework** for the stock market ecosystem.
- The term is used for live testing **new financial technology (fintech)** solutions on customers, without having to be fully licensed, but under strict regulatory supervision.
- Sebi's new framework allows live testing on a small set of customers for a limited period of time. Entities regulated by Sebi shall be granted certain facilities and flexibilities to experiment with fintech solutions in a live environment and on limited set of real customers for a limited time frame. These features shall be fortified with necessary safeguards for investor protection and risk mitigation, Sebi stated.
- The framework is based on a discussion paper floated by the regulator a year ago.

Indian economy to grow at 9.5 pct in next fiscal, says Fitch Ratings

- After a contraction in the current financial year, India's economy is forecast to bounce back with a sharp growth rate of **9.5 percent** next fiscal, Fitch Ratings has stated. It has forecast a **5 percent contraction** in the GDP in the ongoing financial year.
- Fitch Ratings stated after the global crisis, India's GDP growth is likely to return to higher levels than **'BBB'** category peers.
- To support the economy, the Reserve Bank of India has eased monetary policy by cutting policy rates and providing liquidity through long-term repo operations. Prudential requirements for banks have also been eased to free up liquidity for lending.
- The government has announced stimulus measures amounting to **10 percent of GDP.**

Customs duty hiked on bamboo imports from 10% to 25%

- Union Government has hiked **Customs duty** on bamboo imports by agarbatti manufacturers from **10 per cent to 25 per cent** with immediate effect. Finance Ministry has stated that the decision has been taken to encourage use of domestic bamboo under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat scheme.
- The **25 per cent customs** duty rate shall now uniformly apply to any import of bamboo, including by traders.
- Government stated, uniform rate will help in avoiding misuse and rate-related disputes. This measure is seen to benefit farmers and MSME agarbatti manufacturers.
- Earlier, the gains were utilized by only the large agarbatti manufacturers as they were able to import bamboo at lower rate.

Developing Asia to 'barely grow' in 2020; India's GDP to contract by 4 per cent this fiscal: ADB

- The **Asian Development Bank** stated countries in **Developing Asia** will "barely grow" in 2020, while India's economy is forecast to contract by **4 per cent** this fiscal due to the adverse effect of the coronavirus pandemic.
- Developing Asia' refers to a group of over 40 countries that are members of the ADB. Excluding the newly industrialised economies of Hong Kong, China; the Republic of Korea; Singapore; and Taipei, China, Developing Asia is forecast to grow 0.4 per cent this year and 6.6 per cent in 2021, it stated.
- Hit hard by COVID-19, South Asia is forecast to contract by **3 per cent** in 2020, compared to 4.1 per cent growth predicted in April. Growth prospects for 2021 are revised down to 4.9 per cent from 6 per cent, it stated.
- India's economy is forecast to contract by 4 per cent in fiscal year (FY) 2020, ending on 31 March 2021, before growing 5 per cent in FY2021 (to be ending March 2022), according to the ADO supplement.
- In the ADO published on April 3, ADB had had projected that India's economic growth rate will slip to 4 per cent in the current fiscal on account of the global health emergency created by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- For countries in Developing Asia, ADB forecasts growth of 0.1 for the region in 2020. This is down from the 2.2 per cent forecast in April and would be the slowest growth for the region since 1961, it stated.
- Growth in 2021 is expected to rise to 6.2 per cent, as forecast in April. Gross domestic product (GDP) levels in 2021 will remain below what had been envisioned and below pre-crisis trends.

SEBI announces relaxations for listed companies having stressed assets

- **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** decided to relax the pricing methodology for **preferential issues** by listed companies having **stressed assets** and exempt allottees of preferential issues from open offer obligations with immediate effect.
- Eligible listed companies having stressed assets will now be able to determine the pricing of their preferential allotments at not less than the average of weekly high and low of the volume-weighted average prices of related equity shares during the two weeks preceding the relevant date.
- Allottees of the preferential issue in such eligible companies will be exempted from making an open offer if the acquisition is beyond the prescribed threshold or if the open offer is warranted due to change in control in terms of takeover regulations.
- The framework is aimed at helping stressed companies raise capital through timely financial intervention and protecting the interest of shareholders, stated SEBI in a statement

Moody's projects India GDP to shrink 3.1% in 2020, flags geopolitical risk

- **Moody's Investors Service** projected the Indian economy to shrink **3.1 per cent** in **2020** and stated clashes with China on the border also suggest rising **geopolitical risks** in the Asian region where countries are particularly vulnerable to changes in geopolitical dynamics.

- While it pegged India's annual growth at **0.2 per cent** in April, the forecast has been sharply revised after taking into consideration the disruptions due to the coronavirus pandemic.
- However, Moody's expects the economy to register **6.9 per cent growth** in 2021.In its June update to Global Macro Outlook (2020-21), Moody's stated it has revised down its 2020 growth forecast for India as incoming data show the extent of coronavirus-related disruption in January-March and April-June quarters.
- Moody's expects G-20 economies to contract by **4.6 per cent** in 2020 as a whole, followed by 5.2 per cent growth in 2021.
- Earlier this month, Moody's had cut India's credit rating by a notch to lowest investment grade **'Baa3'** citing challenges in implementing policies to boost growth and restrict fiscal slippage.

India's GDP to contract by 5.3% in FY21, bounce back in FY22: Ind-Ra

- India's economy is likely to shrink by **5.3 percent** this fiscal, the **lowest GDP growth** in the Indian history and the sixth instance of economic contraction, India Ratings and Research stated.
- The disorder caused by the COVID-19 pandemic unfolded with such a speed and scale that the disruption in production, breakdown of supply chains/trade channels and total wash out of activities in aviation (some activities have started now), tourism, hotels and hospitality sectors will not allow the economic activity to return to normalcy throughout FY21, the rating agency stated.
- As a result, besides contracting for the whole year, GDP will contract in each quarter in FY21 (April 2020 to March 2021).
- However, the agency believes the GDP growth would bounce back in the range **of 5-6 per cent** in **FY22** (April 2021 to March 2022), aided by base effect and return of gradual normalcy in the domestic as well as global economy.
- India Ratings (Ind-Ra) stated India's gross domestic product (GDP) will contract **5.3 per cent in FY21**.
- This will be the lowest GDP growth in the Indian history (Indian GDP data is available from FY51) and sixth instance of economic contraction, others being in FY58, FY66, FY67, FY73 and FY80; the previous low was negative 5.2 per cent in FY80, it stated.

IMF projects sharp contraction of 4.5% in Indian economy in 2020; a historic low

- The **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** has projected a deeper **4.5%** contraction for India in **FY21** than earlier estimated, citing a longer lockdown period and slower than anticipated recovery.
- In the June update – A Crisis Like No Other, An Uncertain Recovery – of its flagship World Economic Outlook (WEO), the IMF has forecast a –4.9% global growth in 2020, 1.9 percentage points below the April 2020 estimate.
- The IMF had forecast a **1.9% growth** for India in the April edition of the WEO and **3% contraction** for the world.
- India's economy is projected to contract by 4.5% following a longer period of lockdown and slower recovery than anticipated in April, the fund stated.
- The latest assessment has also toned down the bounce back in FY22 to 6% against a stronger 7.4% growth forecast in April. In 2021, global growth is projected at 5.4%, marginally lower than 5.8% it expected in April.

India's economy in deep trouble, growth may contract 5 pc in FY21: S&P

- **S&P Global Ratings** stated that Indian economy is in deep trouble with growth expected to contract by **5 per cent** in the current financial year **2020-21**.
- India's economy is in deep trouble. Difficulties in containing the virus, an anemic policy response and underlying vulnerabilities -- especially across the financial sector -- are leading us to expect growth to fall by 5 per cent this fiscal year before rebounding in 2021, it stated.

- The pandemic remains the key driver of the country's prospects. "Even though lockdowns have eased in less populated areas, urban growth engines are still held back by rising infections, severe mitigation policies and consumer risk aversion."
- S&P projected that **Asia Pacific's economy** will contract by **1.3 per cent** in 2020 but show **6.9 per cent growth** in **2021**, implying 2.7 trillion dollars of lost output over these two years, even assuming broad containment of the coronavirus.
- It saw China's economy expanding by 1.2 per cent in 2020 before growth surpasses 7 per cent next year. The largest downward revision of our growth estimates is for Japan where we now expect a 5 per cent contraction in 2020 as consumers save more.

Government launches 7.15% floating rate bonds

- The **government** is launching the **Floating Rate Savings Bonds 2020** (Taxable) scheme from **July 01**, 2020. The Floating Rate Savings Bonds 2020 (FRSB Bonds) will have a tenure of **7 years** and the interest rate will keep varying during the tenure of the scheme. Currently, the rate of interest has been set at **7.15 per cent** per annum payable half-yearly. The minimum investment amount is **Rs 1000**, while there will be no maximum limit for investments made in the Bonds. The maximum investment in cash can be made up to **Rs 20,000**.
- In addition to debt funds, bank fixed deposits, post office NSC and other fixed-income investments, the investors will now have another option in the form of Floating Rate bonds to choose from.
- The resident Indians or HUF can invest in the FRSB taxable bond, without any monetary ceiling. The Bonds will be on tap till further notice and issued in non-cumulative form only. Premature redemption shall be allowed for specified categories of senior citizens.
- Interest on the Bonds will be taxable under the Income-tax Act, 1961 as amended from time to time and as applicable according to the relevant tax status of the Bond holder. There will be an incidence of TDS unless certificate of exemption is provided to not deduct TDS.

Some other salient features of the Floating Rate Savings Bonds 2020 (Taxable) are:

- Eligibility for investment: The Bonds are open to investment by individuals (including Joint Holdings) and Hindu Undivided Families. NRIs are not eligible for making investments in these Bonds.
- In the case of an individual, the Bonds may be held by a person resident in India in her or his individual capacity, or in individual capacity on joint basis, or in individual capacity on any one or survivor basis, or on behalf of a minor as father/mother/legal guardian.
- Form of the Bonds : The Bonds will be issued only in the electronic form and held at the credit of the holder in an account called Bond Ledger Account (BLA), opened with the Receiving Office.
- Where to invest: One can invest through branches of State Bank of India, Nationalised Banks and four specified private sector banks.
- Interest (Floating):
- Interest payments– The interest on the bonds will be payable at half-yearly intervals on Jan 1st and July 1st every year. There is no option to pay interest on a cumulative basis.
- Interest Rate – The coupon/interest of the bond would be reset half yearly starting with Jan 1st, 2021 and thereafter every July 1st and Jan 1st. The coupon rate for the first coupon period, payable on January 1, 2021 is fixed at 7.15%.

- Base Rate – The coupon rate will be linked/pegged with prevailing National Saving Certificate (NSC) rate with a spread of 35 basis points over the respective NSC rate.

Important Business News

ISED launches business clinic for MSMEs in Kerala

- **Institute of Small Enterprises and Development (ISED)** has rolled out a unique platform for extending advisory services to Covid19-affected MSMEs in **Kerala**.
- The initiative is aimed at offering free guidance to entrepreneurs to make self-evaluation for improving their performance.
- **ISED Centre for Financial Education and Research, a division of the ISED,** has opened a dedicated window to address issues related to MSMEs, with specific focus on Covid. ISED Finance Clinic for Small Enterprises (ISED-FCSE) will service the interests of MSMEs, entrepreneurial aspirants such as return migrants, start-ups, educated unemployed, and women entrepreneurs.
- **Kerala** is ranked 31 in terms of the number of self-employed, and second in relation to the size of casual labour. The pandemic has shattered the budgets and operations of most SMEs in India and the situation is graver in Kerala. Post-lockdown, operational problems are likely to get aggravated. Beyond the broad macro-level projections and debates, it is now time to act at the grassroot level. Many entrepreneurs need appropriate clinical assessment, and moral and psychological support, says ISED Director PM Mathew.
- ISED-FCSE is a social responsibility initiative of the institute, which considers it a small professional support to the State and Central government in their efforts to fight and manage the fallout of the pandemic.

OPPO partners T-Hub to support India's startup ecosystem

- Consumer electronics company **OPPO** and **T-Hub**, a startup incubator headquartered in **Hyderabad,** announced a tie-up to support **India's startup ecosystem**.
- The collaboration aims to help startups scale up in areas of Artificial Intelligence, 5G, battery, camera and image processing, gaming, and system performance.
- The selected startups will receive incubation support from OPPO along with technical mentorship and access to new markets.
- T-Hub will bring its vast experience and expertise in running various programmes and will provide the startups with the right mentorship and exposure to the domestic and global incubation and innovation ecosystems.
- Startups will be selected based on their innovative prototypes and strategic fitment with OPPO products which has the potential to accelerate.
- According to reports, by the end of 2020, worldwide 5G wireless network infrastructure revenue will reach $4.2 billion. According to GSMA, India alone is expected to have over 88 million 5G connections.

Microsoft launches programme for agritech start-ups

- **Microsoft** has announced the launch of a programme for **agritech start-ups** in India that are committed to driving transformation in agriculture. The Microsoft for **Agritech Startups programme** is designed to help start-ups build industry-specific solutions, scale and grow with access to deep technology, business and marketing resources.
- This programme offers the best-in-class tech and business enablement resources to help agritech start-ups innovate and scale fast. Start-ups can also get access to **Azure FarmBeats**, which can help them focus on core value-adds instead of the undifferentiated heavy lifting of data engineering.

- Available on the Azure Marketplace, Azure FarmBeats enables aggregation of agricultural datasets across providers and generation of actionable insights by building AI/ML models based on fused datasets.
- Sustainable agricultural technology can transform the global food landscape. Agritech start-up innovations are addressing some of our key challenges connected to agriculture and food production. The Microsoft for Agritech Startups programme is among the early steps in our journey towards empowering these start-ups in India and transforming global agricultural practices, stated Sangeeta Bavi, Director, Startup Ecosystem, Microsoft India.

BSE Ebix Insurance Broking launches health insurance

- **BSE Ebix Insurance Broking**, a joint venture of BSE and Ebix Fincorp Exchange, announced the beta launch of **health insurance** on its platform by enrolling **Religare Health Insurance**.
- Through this launch, BSE Ebix will be able to offer various health insurance products to its participants, it stated.
- BSE Ebix had beta launched its operations on February 7 with the offering of private car and two-wheeler auto insurance.

Facebook signs a global licensing deal with music label Saregama

- **Facebook** has struck a global licensing deal with **Saregama** to bolster the library of its music products across its flagship social networking platform and Instagram.
- This partnership will allow users to add the label's music across various formats like videos, stories via music stickers, and other creative content on Facebook and Instagram. They will also be able to add songs to their Facebook profile.
- Saregama claims to currently offer a catalog of over 100,000 songs across several different genres including film songs, devotional music, ghazals & indipop in more than 25 languages.
- **Facebook** had **earlier signed** similar deals with three of India's top music labels **including T-Series, Zee Music Company, and Yash Raj Films** in March last year and rolled out its music products in the country in September last year.
- **Saregama,** which is among India's oldest music labels, had **also signed** a licensing deal with **Spotify** last month, enabling the music streaming service to offer the label's catalog on its platform.

Hyundai introduces upgraded online retail platform 'Click to Buy'

- **Hyundai Motor India** Ltd (HMIL) introduced its upgraded online ene-to-end automotive retail platform **'Click to Buy'** curated to provide future retail experience to customers in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic.
- The company, which had launched the platform in March, has invested around **USD 1 million** (around Rs.7.5 crore) to develop it to offer customer services from booking of cars to test drive to financing and delivery at home.
- Through the platform, the company has now integrated all of its over 600 dealerships, providing them another additional channel to draw customers and sell cars, he added.
- The company claimed that 'Click to Buy' will become the 'new normal' for buying car by providing a one-stop solution for customers' car ownership requirement.
- The platform provides full-spectrum car buying journey, transparency with on-road prices, dedicated sales consultants, online finance options from leading banks, special online promotions, estimated time of delivery for car purchase, online test drive booking of sanitised cars and home delivery of fully sanitised cars, it added.
- The company is offering the online service across India in English initially and in the next phase it plans to add eight languages.

Hero MotoCorp launches a fully-digital online sales platform called eShop

- **Hero MotoCorp** has launched a **fully-digital online sales platform** called **eShop.** The world's largest two-wheeler manufacturer has also introduced multiple digital after sales services.
- Hero MotorCorp eShop has been created to enhance the customer's overall experience by providing a fully-digital and seamless buying process. The eShop has been integrated on the company's official website and all the purchase-related information and actions are built into the system.
- To make a purchase via eShop, customers need to visit Hero MotoCorp's website and access the online sales platform from the homepage. The intuitive system guides the customers through all the relevant steps of making a decision, buying the vehicle and taking delivery.
- Hero MotoCorp has also launched multiple digital aftersales services. These include the industry-first initiative of digital service job card and acknowledgement receipt, app-based service booking, and increased hours of workshop operations.

Recykal in pact with UNDP, HCCB for plastic waste management

- **Recykal,** a digital technology company in the **waste management space**, has partnered with **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** and **Hindustan Coca-Cola Beverages (HCCB)** for **Project Prithvi**, a joint initiative for developing sustainable plastic waste management practices in the country.
- As part of this partnership, Recykal will leverage its cloud and mobile applications to raise consumer awareness on segregation and recycling.
- It will enable collection, channelisation of plastic waste from schools, colleges, corporates, RWAs, and bulk generators to connect with recyclers, closing the loop of the recycling ecosystem.
- The initiative will also focus on informal sector inclusion activities like providing soft-skills training, opening of bank accounts, enabling digital transactions for waste pickers, kabadiwalas, aggregators, etc.
- The programme aims to collect over 5,000 metric tonnes of recyclable and non-recyclable plastic waste over the next 12 months and channelise them to registered recyclers and co-processors.

Amazon Business launches 'MSME Accelerate'

- **Amazon Business**, a platform that provides purchasing solutions for **registered businesses** to shop for business supplies on Amazon, has launched '**MSME Accelerate'**. This event will run till June 20.
- MSME Accelerate will feature selection, deals, discounts and savings to help small businesses kick start operations as they cater to new demands. The event will feature selection from both brands and MSMEs with over 3.7 lakh sellers on the marketplace.
- The event provides an opportunity for them to sell in larger quantities to Businesses. And Businesses can get access to over 4000 exclusive deals in addition to a 10 per cent cashback on orders above Rs 1,499 and save more with GST input tax credit and bulk discounts.
- MSME customers can leverage the event, as a one-stop destination to access a wide range of products from top categories to cater to their various needs especially, that of creating a safe work environment.
- Businesses which have employees coming back to office can buy a wide range of products to ensure safety of employees, create clean and hygienic work spaces, ensure social distancing set up is created in office, have essential Covid-19 protection and screening supplies and cater to basic work supplies like Office stationery, IT Peripherals, Breakroom supplies, Air Conditioners and Air Coolers. Businesses can also buy essentials to create efficient work from home setup for employees choosing to work from home.

Adani Green wins world's largest solar project worth $6 billion

- Adani Green Energy Ltd has bagged a **manufacturing-linked solar contract** from the **Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI)** to develop **8 GW** of projects. The transaction is valued at **Rs.45,000 crore**, or $6 billion, according to a stock exchange filing.
- As part of the order, Adani Solar will establish 2 GW of additional solar cell and module manufacturing capacity.
- With this win, Adani Green will have **15 GW capacity** under operation, construction or under contract. The company targets achieving an installed generation capacity of **25 GW** of renewable power by **2025** at an investment of Rs.1.12 trillion, or $15 billion, in the renewable energy space in the next five years.
- Based on the awarded agreement, the 8 GW of solar projects will be implemented over the next five years. The first 2 GW of generation capacity will come online by 2022 and the subsequent 6 GW capacity will be added in 2 GW annual increments by 2025.
- The projects will include a variety of locations, including a 2 GW single-site generation project. The solar cell and module manufacturing capacity of 2 GW will be established by 2022, and along with the existing 1.3 GW of capacity, will make the group India's largest solar manufacturing facility.

Wipro, IBM collaborate to help clients accelerate their cloud journeys

- **Wipro Limited**, a leading global information technology, consulting and business process services company, announced a **collaboration with IBM** to assist it's **customers** to embark on a seamless and **secure hybrid cloud journey.**
- Through the alliance, Wipro will develop hybrid cloud offerings to help businesses migrate, manage and transform mission-critical workloads and applications, with security across public or private cloud and on-premises IT environments.
- Wipro IBM Novus Lounge, located at Wipro's Kodathi campus in Bengaluru is a dedicated innovation centre. It will offer a suite of solutions leveraging Cloud, Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning and Internet of Things capabilities to foster innovation for enterprises, developers and start-ups.
- Customers will have remote access to IBM and Red Hat solutions, designed to help them scale their technology investments for improved experience and business agility with connected insights.
- Additionally, Wipro will leverage IBM Cloud offerings and technologies alongside in-house services to develop industry solutions for clients in Banking and Financial Services, Energy and Utilities, Retail, Manufacturing and Healthcare space. Wipro recently received the IBM Beacon Award for Best IBM Hybrid Multi Cloud Practice at IBM Partner World 2020.

Apple becomes the first US company to hit $1.5 trillion market cap

- **Apple** has become the **first US company** to cross **$1.5 trillion-mark** in market cap as its valuation hit **$1.53 trillion** at over **$352 per share**.
- While **Microsoft** briefly hit $1.5 trillion m-cap, its valuation declined to **$1.49 trillion.**
- Apple may become the first company ever to touch the $2-trillion valuation mark in next four years, a top analyst forecast recently.

Facebook Joins Google, Microsoft to fight child exploitation online

- **Facebook** joined **Google, Microsoft** and **15 other tech companies** to announce the formation of **Project Protect** to combat **child sexual abuse** on its platforms.
- **Project Protect** is a renewed commitment and investment from the Technology Coalition expanding its scope and impact to protect kids online and guide its work for the next 15 years.

- Project Protect will focus on five key areas: **tech innovation, collective action, independent research, information and knowledge sharing, and transparency and accountability.**
- Facebook has made its photo and video-matching technologies open source, which allows industry partners, developers and non-profits to more easily identify abusive content and share digital fingerprints of harmful content and allow hash-sharing systems to communicate with each other.
- It also helps keep the broader internet safer as all violating content is shared with the **National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC)** who work with local law enforcement around the world.
- This includes running PhotoDNA on links shared on all our apps from other Internet sites and their associated content to detect known child exploitation housed elsewhere on the internet.
- Last month, Facebook announced a new safety feature in Messenger that provides tips for spotting suspicious activity, encourages people under the age of 18 to be cautious when interacting with an adult they may not know, and empowers them to block or ignore someone when something doesn't seem right.

Two US companies buy stake in Jio Platforms for a total of Rs 6,440 crore

- Reliance Industries had sold a **0.93% stake** in its digital services arm **Jio Platforms** to American investment company **TPG Capital** for **Rs 4,546.80 crore**.
- Reliance also announced that **L Catterton**, another US-based capital market company, will buy a **0.39% stake** in Jio Platforms **for Rs 1,894.50 crore.**
- With this investment, Jio Platforms has raised **Rs 102,432.45 crore** from leading global technology investors including Facebook, Silver Lake, Vista Equity Partners, General Atlantic, Mubadala, Abu Dhabi Investment Authority, and TPG.

ePaisa joins hand with First Alliance Bank to promote POS solutions in Africa

- **ePaisa, a point of sale (POS)** solution provider in India, has entered into a partnership with **First Alliance Bank (Z) Ltd in Zambia, Africa**, to provide mobile point of sale (mPOS) solution to small and medium enterprises and other businesses in the country.
- ePaisa will be the solution provider for First Alliance Bank, which will further provide it to businesses across Zambia, the company stated.
- This partnership comes as the first global expansion for ePaisa where the company will help First Alliance Bank to **digitalise POS** and payment services within Zambia. As most of the country's businesses operate traditionally, this partnership would positively impact the growth and economy of Zambia.
- The prime focus of the partnership for First Alliance Bank (FAB) is to empower all businesses with the POS solution in various industries across Zambia starting with the much-required contactless payment feature.
- Amid the pandemic situation, the partnership comes as significant news for both the companies. The commercial bank would benefit as it brings in awareness towards digitalising payments in Zambia with the smart mPOS as a co-branded solution.

Wipro launches digital inspection solution to improve workplace safety

- **Wipro Ltd**, has launched a **digital inspection solution** to improve **workplace safety and experience**.
- The solution will be available to clients both in perpetual or subscription-based license model, with no additional cost for mobility.
- The solution will enable safety and compliance inspections for customers across industries such as retail, construction, financial services, hospitality, manufacturing and supply chain management.

- It increases inspection efficiency, reduces risk, lowers costs and increases workplace safety. The environment, health, and safety (EHS) market can leverage this solution to inspect workplace infrastructure and protect the well-being of workers.
- The solution also has an adaptable architecture that enables integration with the latest digital technologies such as augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR) and remote collaboration.

Vivendi partners My Earth Concert for Kids initiative in cooperation with UNICEF

- **Vivendi,** the French integrated content, media and communications group, has partnered with Grammy winner **Ricky Kej**, an Indo-American composer, music producer and environmentalist **for My Earth Concert for Kids.**
- The event will be live streamed and broadcast globally on **World Music Day, June 21 at 8 pm** across MyEarthSongs.com, Dailymotion, Facebook and Instagram, as well as on Dish TV, Tata Sky, TikTok, Zee5, MX Player, Vodafone Play, Hungama Music , Idea and on TSeries' YouTube page.
- Vivendi brings forth this event with the support **UNICEF** and other International Bodies like WWF, UN Climate Change, Earth Day Org, 50 Years Earth Day 2020.

India's foreign exchange reserves cross $500 bn for the first time

- India's**foreign exchange reserves** crossed the **$500 billion** mark for the first time as the central bank absorbed inflows at a time when there was not enough demand for foreign currencies from the oil marketing companies amid a lockdown and collapse in oil prices.
- India had forex reserves of $501.7 billion as of June 5, a rise of $8 billion in a week. This is the highest weekly increase since September 28, 2007. Most of the rise is owing to foreign currency assets.
- Currency dealers say there was dollar inflow on account of Reliance Jio and Airtel deals, which the central bank absorbed. If the flows were not absorbed, rupee would have appreciated substantially, which is detrimental to exports.
- Besides, the increased forex reserve means the country's import cover is also improving. As of May 22, when the RBI announced its monetary policy, the reserves — at $486 billion — were enough to cover one year's import. The import cover has improved with accumulation of reserves.
- The forex reserve comprised of foreign currency assets ($463.63 billion), gold ($32.35 billion), Special Drawing Rights of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) of Rs $1.44 billion, and reserve position in the IMF of $4.28 billion, showed data released

Maruti Suzuki partners with Karur Vysya Bank for flexible financing schemes

- **Maruti Suzuki India (MSI)** stated it has partnered with **Karur Vysya Bank** to offer simpler and flexible **financing schemes for new customers**.
- Through the partnership with the bank, the company is seeking to offer prospective buyers special scheme of up to 100 per cent on road funding with six months holiday period on all models, except van EECO), loans for both salaried and self-employed customers and repayment period up to 84 months, Maruti Suzuki India stated in a statement.
- Karur Vysya Bank offers customers in-principle loan sanction in 15 minutes and existing customer of the bank can get their loans disbursed on the same day with the entire process from application to disbursement of the loan being digitalised with no manual intervention.

Bharti Airtel acquires strategic stake in edtech startup Lattu Media

- **Bharti Airtel** has acquired a **10%** stake in **Edtech startup Lattu Media Pvt Ltd (Lattu Kids)** as part of the Airtel Startup Accelerator Program. Mumbai-based Lattu Kids specializes in digital learning tools for children.
- Lattu Kids app focuses on improving English vocabulary, English reading and maths skills for children under the age of 10 years through entertaining, fun learning animated videos and games.
- It is estimated that in India Edtech will become a **$2 billion-plus** industry by 2021. The investment will enable Airtel to add Edtech to its premium digital content portfolio and give distribution scale to quality learning material from Lattu Kids.
- Lattu Kids becomes the **fourth company** to join the Airtel Startup Accelerator Program, which allows start-ups to leverage Airtel's ecosystem, including its core strengths in data, distribution, networks and payments.

Jio may capture nearly half the Indian telecom market by FY25: Bernstein

- Mukesh Ambani's **Reliance Jio** is likely to capture **48 per cent** of Indian mobile subscriber market share **by 2025** with over half a billion users.
- Facebook kicked-off the party, investing Rs 43,573.62 crore to secure 9.99 per cent stake. This was closely followed by a further **Rs 60,753.33 crore** in investment spread across eight different private equity investors.
- **Bernstein** expects an initial public offer (IPO) of Jio sometime over the next few years as its market share approaches 50 per cent.
- It projected Jio's mobile subscriber base to cross 500 million mark in FY23, up from 388 million in FY20. The subscriber base is expected to touch 569 million in FY25 and 609 million in FY28.
- Jio's market share is expected to rise from 36 per cent in FY20 to 40 per cent in the current fiscal and to 48 per cent in FY25.

TCS, IBM tie up to drive digital and cognitive enterprise transformations

- **TCS** has collaborated with **IBM** to assist clients accelerate their **digital** and **cognitive enterprise** transformations to the **IBM public cloud platform**.
- Under the terms of this partnership, TCS and IBM plan to co-develop solutions designed to help clients migrate workloads across applications, analytics, data estate and platforms using IBM Cloud Paks, enterprise-ready software solutions running on Red Hat OpenShift technology.
- Further, TCS will establish an IBM Enterprise Cloud Architecture Unit, which will include technical professionals from both companies. TCS will offer services around IBM's cloud native and open technologies leveraging the IBM Cloud Pak portfolio, including IBM Cloud Paks for applications, data, integration, automation, multicloud management and security.
- These services can help clients migrate, manage and transform their enterprise workloads and applications on the IBM public cloud.

Infosys joins Amazon's The Climate Pledge to be net zero carbon

- Bengaluru-based IT major **Infosys Ltd** has joined **The Climate Pledge**, an initiative co-founded by e-commerce firm **Amazon** and **environment firm Global Optimism**, to make a commitment to meet the **Paris Agreement** 10 years early.
- The Climate Pledge calls on new signatories to be **net zero carbon** across their businesses by **2040**, a decade ahead of the **Paris Accord's goal of 2050**. Amazon plans to announce many more signatories throughout 2020.

- Infosys and other companies that sign The Climate Pledge agree to regularly measure and report greenhouse gas emissions, implement innovation-led de-carbonization strategies in line with the Paris Agreement, and neutralize any remaining emissions to achieve net zero annual carbon emissions by 2040.

- Infosys made a voluntary commitment in 2011, long before the Paris Agreement, to become carbon neutral and is on track to achieve it well ahead of 2040. Infosys is the first signatory to RE100 (the global corporate renewable energy initiative) from India and is committed to completely transitioning to renewable power for its electricity requirements.

- Infosys has already invested in **60 MW** of captive solar photovoltaic capacity and nearly 45% of its electricity is coming from renewable sources. Infosys stated in its Annual Sustainability Report 2020 that even while its workforce grew 166% over the last 10 years, its electricity consumption grew only 20%. Infosys' total global headcount as of 31 March stood at 2,43,454 employees.

- Amazon earlier announced an order of 100,000 electric delivery vehicles from American automaker Rivian to deliver packages to customers by 2021. It plans to have 10,000 of the new electric vehicles on the road as early as 2022 and all 100,000 vehicles on the road by 2030 saving millions of metric tons of carbon per year by 2030.

Zomato's new startup to offer mental health online

- **Zomato** co-founder **Pankaj Chaddah** unveiled his latest venture with former Zomato executive **Pooja Khanna** called **Mindhouse**, a **mental wellness startup** that offers users guided meditation sessions and techniques.

- The mobile app provides meditation and yoga content through a mixture of live classes and an on-demand library of audio and video content. It also recommends content based on various goals chosen by the user like sleep, relaxed mind, patience, and focus among others along with their past experience in meditation.

- The company offers this service through various plans starting with Rs 499 for a monthly plan and going up to Rs 999 for a three-month plan and Rs 1,999 for a yearly plan. It also offers a free tier with access to limited features and content.

BP to set up major new global business services centre in Pune

- UK energy Petroleum major**British Petroleum** announced plans to set up a **major new centre** for its **global business services (GBS)** operations in **Pune**.

- New centre will employ around 2000 people and will support digital innovation across BP globally.

- The centre is expected to begin operations by January 2021 and will provide business processing and advanced analytics capabilities in support of bp businesses worldwide.

- The new centre in India will assume operational ownership of third-party business processes and seek to further extend its work with analytics and data science capabilities to pursue better business outcomes.

- India is a growing market with growing digital talent pool. The new centre in India will allow bp to tap into this pool and will lead bp's development and application of cutting-edge digital solutions.

Reliance Industries becomes India's first firm to hit Rs.11 trillion market cap

- **Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL)** became the first Indian company to reach a market capitalisation of **Rs.11 trillion** as its shares doubled since mid-March.

- The tune of Rs.1.15 trillion through the sale of 24.71% stake in its digital services arm, Jio Platforms Ltd (JPL), to 10 global investors.

- RIL also raised Rs.53,124 crore through rights issue. Its net debt was at Rs.1.61 trillion as of 31 March, 2020.

Amazon to host Small Business Day on June 27 to help SME sellers

- E-commerce major **Amazon** will host the **third edition** of its sale **event Small Business Day (SBD) 2020** on **June 27** to help small businesses, artisans, weavers, micro-entrepreneurs and start-ups rebound from economic disruption created by the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The sale, which will coincide with the **Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSME) Day**, will offer customers the opportunity to discover and purchase unique and hard-to-find products from start-ups, women entrepreneurs, artisans and weavers under its various programmes such as Local Shops, Amazon Launchpad, Amazon Saheli, and Amazon Karigar.
- Products across categories, including work from home essentials, regional weaves in fashion, hand-crafted accessories and footwear, wall decor and hangings, idols and figurines, kitchenware, and sports essentials will be available in several theme stores like 'India Bazaar', 'Budget Buys' and 'Bestsellers' among others

Hyundai Motor India partners with HDFC Bank to offer online car loans on Click to Buy

- **Hyundai Motor India** has announced a partnership with **HDFC Bank** to offer online auto retail financing solutions to the customers on its **Click to Buy digital car** buying platform. A customer can purchase any Hyundai vehicle, including 2020 Creta, 2020 Verna, Venue, Elite i20, Grand i10 Nios and Santro, through the Click to Buy platform.
- Under the partnership, the customers will be offered customised car financing solutions from HDFC Bank on the Click to Buy online car buying platform. The customers can now get loans without physically visiting any branch of HDFC Bank.
- The partnership with Hyundai Motor India is in line with our belief that a digital eco-system needs to be created to enhance customer experience, particularly in the current environment. An eco-system that brings OEMs, dealerships and financiers together and enables a customer to purchase a new car sitting in the comfort of their homes, Country Head for Retail Lending at HDFC Bank Arvind Kapil stated.

Biocon ties up with DKSH to distribute 7 products in Singapore, Thailand

- Bio-technology major **Biocon** stated it has signed an agreement with **market expansion** services provider **DKSH** for distribution of seven generic products in **Singapore** and **Thailand**.
- **Biocon Pharma Ltd**, a subsidiary of the bio-tech firm, and **DKSH Business Unit Healthcare**, have inked an agreement in this regard, Biocon Ltd stated in a statement.
- Under the terms of the pact, DKSH will gain an exclusive license to register and commercialise the seven generic formulations from various therapeutic areas like diabetology, cardiology, oncology and immunology, which will be sold under Biocon's brand in Singapore and Thailand, it added.
- DKSH will manage marketing and sales as well as logistics for Biocon Pharma, helping drive sales growth through its capabilities and strengths in the medical and pharmacy channels, Biocon stated.
- The company's generic formulations pipeline comprises of difficult-to-make, complex molecules and leverages strong track record of quality and reliability of supplies to patients and customers.
- DKSH together with Biocon Pharma can help a lot of patients in Asia who require advanced therapies for chronic diseases, he added.

Haryana govt, Reliance Jio TV enter agreement to educate 52 lakh students

- **Haryana** government and **Reliance Jio TV** have entered an agreement that is expected to benefit around 52 lakh school children in rural areas.
- This new agreement is done under the **Chief Minister's Distance Education Programme** in order to expand education in rural areas without jeopardizing social distancing during the Covid-19 pandemic.

- Under the agreement, all four channels of **Eduset** will now be available on the Jio platform free of cost.
- The agreement will help students to watch all four channels of Eduset through television, laptop, desktop, tablet and smartphone.
- The minister claimed that this new initiative will benefit 52 lakh Hindi and English medium students that are studying in both government and private schools under the Haryana School Education Board, the CBSE Board and other boards.
- Students preparing for competitive exams like JEE (Joint Entrance Examination) and NEET (National Eligibility cum Entrance Test) will also get separate material.

World's First Gold-backed Digital Gold Currency Launched in India

- **IBMC Financial Professionals Group**, an internationally recognized financial services institution and business consultants, has joined hands with **US Gold Currency Inc** and **Blockfills** to bring the **world's first monetary gold-backed digital gold currency** to India. The currency is also being simultaneously introduced in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Middle East and Africa.
- For this, IBMC, which has a presence in India, has partnered exclusively with US Gold Currency Inc, the issuer of the US Gold digital currency, and Blockfills, the transaction platform provider.
- Each US Gold digital currency is backed by a US American Eagle one ounce (33.931 gram) gold coin, minted by the US Federal Agency, US Mint. The holders of the currency can redeem their digital assets as physical gold coins or in US dollars anywhere in the world.
- IBMC is introducing the digital asset to customers ranging from retail and corporate investors, banks, financial institutions and sovereign wealth funds to treasuries and asset management companies.
- Consumers and businesses benefit from a secure digital asset token that is not subject to the volatile swings of the markets, and from the opportunity to easily exchange their digital currency into a tangible asset, monetary gold coins produced by the US Mint. A customer can login with a secured user ID and password on the trading platform for buying and redeeming the coins.
- With the launch of the digital gold currency, investors in India will have the significant opportunity to reduce the cost of their transactions as well as have the flexibility of time for making payments.

Hindustan Zinc launches "Koi Bacha Rahe Na Bhookha" campaign

- **Hindustan Zinc Limited (HZL)**, in association with Government's **Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)**, has launched **"Koi Bacha Rahe Na Bhookha"** campaign – aimed at improving the health and well-being of the children in the age group of **0-6 years** across 3089+ Anganwadis in **Rajasthan.**
- Through this campaign, HZL aims to break the chain of malnutrition and provide good health for children, lactating women and families, who have been severely impacted by the aftermath of Covid-19 pandemic.
- The project is being implemented in partnership with reputed NGOs like Gramin Avam Samajik Vikas Sanstha (Ajmer), CARE India (Bhilwara & Chittorgarh), Jatan Sansthan (Rajsamand) and Seva Mandir (Udaipur) and would cover five districts of Rajasthan.
- The campaign has been launched under Khushi Anganwadi programme which is a unique tri-partite Public-People initiative.

SAP launches Global Bharat program to equip MSMEs with digital technologies

- **German technology firm SAP** India launched the **Global Bharat program**, designed to enable Indian **micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs)** become globally competitive by equipping them with digital technologies.

- In association with **Nasscom Foundation**, **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** and **Pratham InfoTech Foundation**, the program further compliments government of India's vision to empower the MSME sector by providing them access to global marketplace, digital skilling for the workforce and transforming business processes, SAP India stated.
- According to SAP, 80% of the company's customer base comprises of SMEs that have adopted digital technologies and witnessed exponential growth.
- As part of providing access to the global marketplace, MSMEs will have open access to B2B marketplace SAP Ariba Discovery, where buyers can post their sourcing needs and the suppliers on Ariba Network can respond with their ability to deliver the goods and services, with no fees through 31 December.
- For reskilling its workforce, business owners will have access to SAP India's digital skilling initiative Code Unnati's 240 courses on digital finance, soft skills, and productivity technologies. The curated courses will be made available through a mobile application for people to access via their android smartphone devices. Under this digital literacy program, SAP India has already trained over 1 million youth through 1,500 physical training centres.
- Through Global Bharat, SAP India will also offer MSMEs access to their enterprise resource planning (ERP) software through the Business One Starter Pack on the cloud made available at competitive rates.

Swiggy ties up with ICICI Bank to launch digital wallet

- To enable a 'single-click' checkout experience on its platform, on demand delivery platform **Swiggy** launched its own digital wallet '**Swiggy Money'** in partnership with **ICICI Bank**. The digital wallet will enable its customers to store money and be used for all food orders on Swiggy.
- 'Swiggy Money' is powered by ICICI Bank's '**insta wallet service'**, which is built on a cloud platform with API integration. It enables Swiggy to create a digital wallet instantly for its customers. If the Swiggy customer happens to be an existing ICICI Bank customer, he/she can instantly start using the wallet.
- Non-ICICI Bank customers can also start using this immediately by providing details of a government ID to ICICI Bank. This integration offers benefits such as higher scalability, improved performance, quick to market and high-speed processing for reconciliation.
- Swiggy is currently present in over 500 cities in the country and continuously deepening its presence and value in existing markets through newly launched services '**Swiggy Grocery'** and **'Swiggy Genie'**.

Important State Wise National News

List of Festivals

Festivals	Place	Inaugurated by /Others
Raja Parba (3-day)	Odisha	NA
Jagannath Puri Rath Yatra	Odisha	Given order by a 3-judge bench, headed by Chief Justice of India SA Bobde

Andhra Pradesh

Andhra Pradesh govt gives Rs 10,000 each to 2.62 lakh auto, cab drivers in state

- **Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy** announced the transfer of a total amount of **Rs 262.49 crores** to 2,62,493 beneficiaries under the **YSR Vahana Mitra scheme** during a digital conference with district collectors and beneficiaries.

- The YSR Vahana Mitra was launched on October 4, 2019, with an aim to provide an annual allowance of **Rs 10,000** to auto and taxi drivers to meet insurance premium, license fees and other recurring expenses.
- The annual payment of allowance under the scheme was **advanced by four months** as the auto and taxi drivers had no source of income during the past few months due to the lockdown clamped to fight COVID-19.
- The government plans to disburse next week financial assistance under a state scheme for barbers, washermen, and tailors, and to handloom weavers on June 24.

Andhra Pradesh CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy launches online portal to manage waste collection and disposal in state

- The **Andhra Pradesh** government launched an **online waste management platform** on the occasion of World Environment Day. The platform will look after the collection and disposal of liquid waste, air pollutants, and hazardous and non-hazardous solid waste in a comprehensive manner.
- The State government has decided to set up **APEMC** to resolve the existing insufficiency in managing the waste generated and making the waste management sector or market more organised.
- The APEMC has been set up as a government company to handle the industrial waste, The APEMC will work in close coordination with the **Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board (APPCB),** with a strong regulatory framework to handle the waste from cradle to grave.
- APPCB will consider and make necessary provisions for industries/organizations to hand over the waste generated by their units, which cannot be treated within their premises, to APEMC for management of waste, in accordance with Environmental Rules and Regulations, the officials stated.
- The APEMC is **"India's first online waste exchange platform"** that can deliver 100 per cent safe disposal of toxic wastes. It will properly hold tracking, scrutiny and audit of the waste.

Andhra CM launches 'Jagananna Chedodu' scheme for tailors, barbers and washermen

- A scheme to provide financial assistance to **barbers, dhobis (washermen) and tailors** in the state was launched by Andhra Pradesh chief minister Jagan Mohan Reddy.
- The scheme, christened as '**Jagananna Chedodu** (Handholding by Jagan)', was unveiled by the CM transferring the cash into the accounts of beneficiaries from his camp office at Tadepalli.
- It involves direct cash transfer of **Rs 10,000** into the bank accounts of each of 2,47,040 beneficiaries every year. The government has released an amount of **Rs 247.04 crore** for the implementation of this scheme.
- The government has followed a completely transparent procedure for the selection of beneficiaries through village and ward volunteers. Those who are eligible but couldn't apply for the scheme can complete the application through village secretariats, he stated.

Andhra Pradesh: Rs 6,885.60 cr allocated for 'Rytu Bharosa-PM Kisan' scheme in agriculture Budget

- **Andhra Pradesh** Agriculture Minister **Kurasala Kannababu** introduced agriculture budget for 2020-21 in the State Assembly. The budget has allocated **Rs 6,885.60 crore** for the **'Rytu Bharosa-PM Kisan' scheme**.
- In the Budget Rs 3,000 crore is allocated for Market stabilisation Fund, Rs 100 crore for 'Rytu Bharosa Kendras' - (RBKs) (Farmer Support Centers), Rs 500 crore for 'Dr YSR Free Crop Insurance Scheme', Rs 65 crore for YSR agriculture laboratories.
- Further**, Rs 1,100 crore** is allocated for **'YSR Interest-Free Crop Loans'**, Rs 20 crore is allocated for payment of ex gratia of Rs 7 Lakhs for the families of farmers who committed suicides, Rs 2.61 crore is allocated for State Agriculture Mission (AP SAM), Rs 200 crore for the supply of seeds under subsidy to the farmers.

- Also Rs 207.83 crore is allocated for the agricultural mechanisation scheme and Rs 141.73 crore is allocated for the integrated agricultural program, under the National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) scheme.
- While, Rs 2,000 crore is allocated for Natural Calamities Relief Fund
- The minister announced that Rs 29,159.97 crore has been allocated for agriculture and allied sectors in the 2020-21 budget.

Jagan Mohan Reddy releases Rs 15,000 each to Kapu community women

- Chief Minister **YS Jagan Mohan Reddy** Launched the **YSR Kapu Nestham** scheme intended to provide financial assistance of **Rs 15,000 per annum** each to members of the **Kapu community.**
- About **Rs 354 crore** was transferred to over 2.36 lakh women aged between 45 and 60 having rice cards and belonging to Kapu, Balija, Telaga and Ontari communities as part of the scheme.
- The eligible beneficiaries will get the benefit within one month and, on the same day next month they will be given the financial assistance.
- Rs 4,470 cr sanctioned for 23 lakh people of Kapu community under Amma Vodi, Vasati Deevena, Vidya Deevena, Vahana Mitra, Chedodu, Videsi Vidya Deevena and Kapu Nestham in 13 months.
- Rs 75,000 to be given to each beneficiary in five years i.e., Rs 15,000 every year

YSR Jagananna colonies with 30 lakh houses to be built in Andhra Pradesh

- The State Government of Andhra Pradesh will take up the construction of 3 Million (30 lakh) houses under the YSR Jagananna Colonies project after distributing the house sites to the beneficiaries on 8th July 2020.
- Jagananna Colonies is part of the State Government's Navratnalu- Pedalandariki Illu (houses for all the poor) Program.

<p align="center">Chhattisgarh</p>

Chhattisgarh govt launches 'Spandan Campaign' to check suicide and fratricide

- **Chhattisgarh government** launched the **Spandan Campaign** to contain incidents of **suicide and fratricide** involving police personnel, and instructions were issued to senior officers to strictly adhere to guidelines in this regard.
- Chhattisgarh's director general of police DM Awasthi issued an order to all superintendents of police and commandants of armed police forces, saying they should strictly follow instructions to curb suicides and incidents of fratricide.
- All superintendents of police will start a parade at police lines in their districts every Friday, keeping in mind social distancing, and grievances of personnel will be redressed after the event. The order made it mandatory for superintendents of police to facilitate counselling and medical treatment for depressed officers and staff by psychiatrists or psychologists in their district headquarters.
- Arrangements should be made for yoga classes for police personnel in all district headquarters. A roster should be prepared for this and the cooperation of local yoga teachers should be sought, the order stated.

Chhattisgarh government to launch Adarsh police station scheme

- In **Chhattisgarh**, efforts will be made to develop all **police stations** in the state as **Ideal police stations**. The Chhattisgarh government will launch **Adarsh police station scheme** from July 1. Certain parameters have been fixed and those police stations meet the set criteria will be rewarded.

- These parameters include the conduct of the police station in-charge and other staff with the general public, the environment of the police station should be such that victims, women and children can speak out their problems at police stations without fear as well as maintenance of records in the police station should be up to the mark.
- Moreover, the state government has also decided to review and withdraw petty cases registered against tribal people in Bastar region of the state.
- The Director General of Police has instructed officials that those tribal persons who do not have serious cases registered against them, should immediately be released.

Chhattisgarh to be the first state of the country to procure cowdung for welfare of cattle owners

- 'Godhan Nyay Yojana' to be launched in **Chhattisgarh** to promote environment conservation, cowdung management and to make animal husbandry more profitable.
- This innovative scheme will be implemented in Chhattisgarh from the day of **Hareli Festival.**
- It is an important festival of Chhattisgarh's 'Gond' Tribe and is celebrated in The new moon day of Srawan (Sawan Amavsya) month of the Hindu calendar between July and August in the rainy season.
- Animal Husbandry and cowdung management to become more profitable for Livestock owners.
- Implementation of Godhan Nyay Yojana to generate employment opportunities and additional income
- Cowdung to be procured on fixed rate, vermi compost to be sold from cooperative societies.

Delhi

Delhi CM launches app to help track hospital beds, ventilators for COVID-19 patients

- **Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal** launched a **Delhi Corona App** for people to give accurate information about **beds and ventilators** availability in city's hospitals. He urged the people to download the App.
- Mr. Kejriwal stated, this app will be two times in a day. He stated, a web page has also been created www.delhifightscorona.in to provide the latest status of the vacant beds in hospitals. He stated, if people are denied beds for COVID-19 patients, people may call at helpline number 1031.
- On Delhi's preparedness to deal with the Corona virus, he stated, it is a matter of concern that cases in Delhi are rising but there are sufficient arrangements of beds

Plasma Bank to be set up in Delhi to treat COVID-19 patients

- In a first for India, the **delhi government** launched a **plasma bank** for treating covid-19 patients.
- Delhi was one of the first states to give the go-ahead for plasma therapy in April. It has now stated that the proposed plasma bank will be up and running in two days, chief minister Arvind Kejriwal stated.
- The facility is to be set up at the **Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences (ILBS),** and will be made available to government and private hospitals.
- Kejriwal stated the bank was needed because patients were facing problems accessing blood plasma. It will, however, not be mandatory for patients to contact the bank for plasma therapy.
- The therapy requires drawing blood from patients who have recovered from covid-19 and using the plasma and antibodies from that blood in active patients. Unlike blood donation, only the plasma is drawn from the blood. Doctors involved in the trial stated they use the therapy on patients who have gone to the second stage of the disease, in which the lungs are affected.
- If a patient wants to get plasma on their own, they can continue doing that. If someone needs plasma, they will need a doctor's recommendation. The hospital or doctor will approach ILBS, he stated.

- Several states, including Punjab, are running trials to see the efficacy of plasma therapy in the recovery of coronavirus-positive patients.

<p style="text-align:center; color:red">Karnataka</p>

Karnataka introduces Covid-19 tracking platform built by Nasscom

- **Karnataka** government has efficiently handled Covid-19 with the use of technology and now with **new data analysis tool** developed by **Nasscom**
- The minister after launching the data analysis tool developed by the Nasscom in a video conference stated, it is an excellent solution which combines data and analytics. This helps the authorities make strategic decisions to aid the control of Covid-19.
- The product can provide all the relevant Covid related information including source of infection, its classification, infection rate, statistical information, detecting the infection as well as treatment along with real-time information on available infrastructure and human resources. This will be of immense help in making our efforts more efficient," he stated.
- According to Nasscom, from spread analysis to hospital bed occupancy, a quick look at the multi-faceted tracking platform that Nasscom #TaskForce has created to assist Karnataka fight the pandemic.

Karnataka Observes Mask Day on June 18th

- **Karnataka** observed June 18th as **'Mask Day'** to create awareness in the masses about the importance of wearing one amid the Covid pandemic.
- The civic body is already raising awareness about the infection through announcements and pamphlets.
- Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) marshals and staff are sharing pamphlets to pedestrians and motorists about Covid precautions, wearing a mask and not spitting in the public.

NGT imposes Rs 10 lakh fine on Karnataka government over pollution in Bengaluru's Kithiganahalli Lake

- **The NGT** has imposed an **interim penalty** of **Rs 10 lakh** on the **Karnataka government** over pollution in the **Kithiganahalli Lake**, near Bommasandra suburb in Bengaluru, saying criminal offence is being committed by the authorities in not stopping the discharge of pollutants into the water bodies.
- A bench headed by National Green Tribunal (NGT) **Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel** also slapped a fine of **Rs 5 lakh** on the municipal council of **Bommasandra** for failure to discharge its duties.
- Discharge of untreated sewage into water bodies causes a huge damage and the prevention of the same is the duty of the state authorities as the trustees of people's rights.

Karnataka Becomes First State To Amend Industries (Facilitation) Act For Small, Medium & Large-Scale Industries

- The **Karnataka government** amended the long pending industrial reform "**The Karnataka Industries (Facilitation) Act, 2002**" to facilitate and attract investment in the state. The decision was taken by the state Cabinet meeting chaired by Hon'ble Chief Minister of Karnataka BS Yediyurappa.
- Currently, only **Gujarat** and **Rajasthan** are the two states in the country that have amended this Act for **small scale industries** only. In Karnataka, the amended act includes **small, medium and large scale industries**.
- Under the amended Act, an industry would not need any statutory permissions for the **first three years**, or whichever is earlier to set up operations in the state. These permissions include approvals from under multiple state laws, including trade licence and building-plan approval, measures that would save lot of time and cost for industries.

- The objective of the amended Act is to simplify regulations and reduce procedural requirements and create a conducive investment environment.
- In the midst of this sobering business environment, the Karnataka State Cabinet cleared the (Facilitation) Act, 2002. This Act has been a long pending demand by the investors and will usher in investments to the state in coming days.
- In the past, numerous procedures and clearances have resulted in delay of setting up industries and escalated the project cost for the investors, thus resulting in a huge economic toll and delayed investment to the state. Keeping that in mind, the newly amended Act shall ensure the investors are insulated by the delays.
- In order to kick-start the economic activity post-covid-19, the Karnataka government in the last few weeks has stressed on Ease of Doing Business, with a single window for investors, simplified processes, regular consultation with Industry, stable policy-driven. The state has also simplified land and labour laws to promote Karnataka as an investment destination.

Gujarat

Asiatic lion population in Gujarat rises to 674 in five years, up by almost 29%

- The **population of Asiatic Lions** in Gujarat has witnessed a massive jump in the last five years, from 523 in 2015 to **674 in 2020.** The growth rate is a jump of almost **29%.**
- The last population estimation exercise was conducted in May 2015 which pegged the lion numbers at 523, a 27 per cent increase from the estimation of 2010.
- Also, the population of the lions has spread over an area of 30000 sq. km in 2020 from 22000 sq. km in 2015, increasing the distribution area by 36%.
- The use of modern technology, wildlife health care, habitat management, increase in prey base and human-lion conflict mitigation to name a few of the strategies employed by the state department.
- The Gir forest is located in the state of Gujarat and is also known globally for housing Asiatic lions.

3rd phase of SAUNI scheme to be completed by 2021 to fill Saurashtra dams

- **Gujarat Chief Minister, Vijay Rupani** announced that the **phase 2 and phase 3** of the **Saurashtra Narmada Avtaran Irrigation (SAUNI) scheme** to fill Saurashtra's 115 dams with Narmada water will be completed by August 15 and March, **2021** respectively.
- SAUNI is a significant scheme reflecting the engineering feat to bring the Narmada river waters to fill 115 dam reservoirs in Saurashtra and thereby provide drinking and irrigational waters to 737 villages and 31 cities of 11 districts of Saurashtra region. The first phase of the scheme is completed and now filling of 16 dam reservoirs is possible.
- The state government has spent **Rs 14,707 crore** in four links of the scheme where Rs 6,854 crore have been spent to finish the first phase and **Rs 6,973 crore** have been utilised for the second phase which is nearing completion.

Tata Power Renewable Energy to develop 120 MW solar project in Gujarat

- Leaders in power utility Tata Power Stated, Its subsidiary **Tata Power Renewable Energy Ltd (TPREL)** will develop a **120 MW solar project** for **Gujarat Urja Vikas Nigam**. In a regulatory filing, Tata Power Stated, Tata Power Renewable Energy Limited (TPREL), the company's wholly-owned subsidiary of Tata Power, has received a Letter of Award from Gujarat Urja Vikas Nigam Limited (GUVNL), to develop a 120 MW solar project in Gujarat.

- The energy will be supplied to GUVNL under a power purchase agreement (PPA), valid for 25 years from the scheduled commercial date. The company has won this capacity in a bid announced by GUNVL under Phase VIII dated February 2020, the filing added.
- Adding to the filing, the company Stated, The project is required to be commissioned within 18 months from the date of execution of the PPA, and the plant is expected to generate about 300 MUs of energy per year and will annually offset approximately 300 Million Kg of C02.

<p align="center">Himachal Pradesh</p>

HP govt launches online portal Skill Register to create database of migrants

- In **Himachal Pradesh**, the State Government launched an **online portal Skill Register** to create a sound database of migrants, who have recently entered the state during the lockdown in the wake of the Corona pandemic. Skill Register would provide industries in getting information regarding skilled manpower.
- In order to utilize the services of skilled migrants who recently returned to the state the IT Department has created an online portal Skill Register. Chief Minister Jairam Thakur while launching the portal in Shimla stated it would help the industries to get consolidated information of skilled workers according to their requirements. He stated, various companies and industrial houses can also register their requirements on this portal.
- In this online portal, interested persons can register through skillregister.hp.gov.in . Reports regarding skill would be prepared districtwise, educational qualification wise and on work experience. Registration would be based on the unique mobile number and Aadhaar number.

Himachal CM launches green belt development scheme for rural senior citizens

- **Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur** launched 'Panchvati Yojna' under which parks and gardens would be developed for **senior citizens** of **rural areas** in the state.
- The scheme is being implemented by the **rural development department**.
- The CM stated the main objective of the scheme is to provide opportunity to the elderly to spend their leisure time strolling in parks and gardens.
- He stated such green belts would be developed on minimum of one bigha land with convergence of MGNREGA, Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) and 14th finance commission to enhance the life expectancy keeping in view the health requirements of senior citizens.
- Ayurvedic and medicinal plants would be grown in these parks and gardens besides providing recreational equipment, walking tracks and other basic amenities for aged people.

Himachal Pradesh Government to open Varishth Nagrik Suvidha Kendra for senior citizens

- **Himachal Pradesh Government** would open **Varishth Nagrik Suvidha Kendra** on pilot basis to offer **comprehensive day care services to senior citizens** to lead a healthy and dignified lifestyle.
- These centres apart from having day care facilities such as recreation activities, upgradation of skill would also have facilities of free health check up for senior citizens, wellness programmes such as yoga sessions etc.
- The scheme was committed for welfare of the senior citizens and about 3.91 lakh old age persons were provided social security pension at the enhanced rate.
- An integrated Scheme for Older Persons has been formulated for running and maintenance of oldage homes, day care centres, helpline and counselling for older persons.

<p align="center">Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh</p>

J-K agri dept to be called Agriculture Production & Farmers Welfare Department

- **Jammu and Kashmir Administration** approved the proposal of the **Agriculture Production Department** to change its nomenclature to **"Agriculture Production and Farmer Welfare Department"** with a greater focus on farmers" welfare. The decision to change the nomenclature is in line with the Centre renaming Agriculture Ministry as **"Ministry of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare"**, and many states following the suit, an official spokesman stated.
- He stated the decision underscores the changing role of the Agriculture Production Department in socio-economic transformation of J&K and is aimed at providing greater rigour and focus on farmer welfare by optimizing and helping farmers realize the true value of their produce. The department with a greater focus on farmer welfare has expanded its role beyond arrangement of inputs, extension activities and on-farm activities.
- The issues of farmers" welfare through various schemes have become the priority areas which include Public Private Partnership mode, greater investments in agriculture, enhancing credit flow and insurance coverage in the interest of farming community, the spokesman stated.

<p align="center" style="color:red">Jharkhand</p>

<p style="color:blue">Jharkhand to launch job guarantee scheme for urban poor</p>

- **Jharkhand** is set to launch a **100-day employment scheme** for urban unskilled workers similar to the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) amid the coronavirus pandemic and increasing unemployment.
- The scheme will be known as **Mukhyamantri SHRAMIK (Shahri Rozgar Manjuri For Kamgar) Yojna**, which is aimed at enhancing livelihood security for urban poor.
- Jharkhand will be **the second state** in the country **after Kerala** to launch an employment guarantee scheme for the urban poor. Kerala runs **Ayyankali Urban Employment Guarantee Scheme** (AUEGS).
- Like MGNREGS, the scheme will also have a provision for unemployment allowance, if any urban local body fails to provide work to job seekers within 15 days.
- A worker will be entitled to one-fourth of the wages for the first 30 days of unemployment and it will be half in the second month. If the worker does not get a job for third, they will be entitled to equal to basic minimum wage.
- The scheme will be conducted by the urban development and housing department through the state urban livelihood mission. Municipal commissioners, executive offices or special officer of municipal bodies will be the nodal officer of the scheme.

<p align="center" style="color:red">Kerala</p>

<p style="color:blue">Kerala's free internet project to be commissioned in December</p>

- The **Kerala government**has announced that its ambitious **Kerala Fibre Optic Network(K-FON) project,** envisaged to provide free internet access tothe poor, would be rolled out by December this year.
- Kerala is the first state to declare the internet as afundamental right of the citizen.
- A project was launched to provide quality internet free of costto the poor and at affordable rates to others. No other state in India has implemented such a scheme.
- The consortium comprises public sector companies, **BharatElectronics Limited (BEL) and Railtel**, and private companiessuch as **SRIT and LS Cables.**
- The project is being implemented by Kerala State ITInfrastructure Limited and Kerala State Electricity Board.Optical fibre cables were being laid across the stateusing KSEB posts.

- K-Fon will be a major support for the government'sefforts to develop Kerala as the world's leading industrial,educational and tourism destination.

Kerala implements 'Food forest' project in tribal belts of Attapady

- On this World environment day, **Kerala's** first **'food forest'** is being prepared at **tribal belts** of **Attapady** in **Palakkad district**.
- As part of the Tribal Comprehensive Development Programme in Kerala the "food forest" project is being implemented in cooperation with the **Mahila Kissan Saktheekaran Pariyojana** of the Central Government. The project aims to provide food security to 192 tribal villages in Attapadi.
- The cultivation of various food crops that are part of the food forest, has been initiated by the Kudumbasree units, the largest women self help group in the State. The project that spans across a year, began, with the planting of tree saplings, in this World environment day.

<p align="center" style="color:red">Madhya Pradesh</p>

Plantation drive named "Thank Mom" started in Madhya Pradesh

- **In Madhya Pradesh**, a plantation drive named **"Thank Mom"** has been started on the premises of Social Justice and Disabled Welfare Directorate on World Environment Day.
- All the plants which are planted during this period are being fitted with a plaque in the name of the mother of each employee.
- The employees will take care of the plant just like her mother. Plants of Neem, Guava, Mango, Moonlight, Parijat and Tulsi were planted in the premises.
- Online and offline programs were organized in all the districts on the theme of **'Time for Nature'**, focused on conservation of biodiversity across the state.
- Essay, painting, discussion etc. were also organized online to raise awareness about environmental protection in different sections of the society.

Madhya Kshetra Vidyut Vitaran Company starts Nishtha Vidyut Mitra Scheme for women empowerment

- In **Madhya Pradesh**, the **Madhya Kshetra Vidyut Vitaran Company** has started the **Nishtha Vidyut Mitra Scheme** for women empowerment in one of its kind of initiatives. In this scheme, women Self-Help Groups at Gram Panchayat level will work as Nishtha Vidyut Mitra.
- This scheme will increase the revenue collection of the company as well as women will also earn extra. This scheme has been implemented in all the Gram Panchayats of all 16 districts of Bhopal, Narmadapuram, Gwalior and Chambal divisions of the company's jurisdiction.
- Under the Nishtha Vidyut Mitra scheme, women Self-Help Groups will motivate consumers to pay bills online or through the **UPAY App**, redress of various complaints of consumers like faulty meters and provide new connections through online processes.
- Apart from this, they will also help the company to provide information about the electricity theft and illegal use of electricity. The company will pay an incentive to Nishtha Vidyut Mitra for recovery of dues and new connections.

MP govt to launch 'Kill Corona' campaign from July 1

- **Madhya Pradesh government** will launch a **'Kill Corona' campaign** from July 1 to control the spread of coronavirus in the state. Under the campaign, **a door-to-door survey** will be conducted and tests would also be done on citizens for other diseases.

- During the 15-day 'Kill Corona' campaign in MP, 2.5 lakh tests will be carried out and 15,000 to 20,000 samples would be collected daily. Health department officials informed that the testing capacity in the state will be doubled from 4,000 per 10 lakh people to 8,000 per 10 lakh people.
- The recovery rate in Madhya Pradesh is 76.9 per cent, which is better than the national recovery rate.

Madhya Pradesh launches 'Hamara Ghar-Hamara Vidyalaya' campaign

- In **Madhya Pradesh**, the school bell will be ringing in the houses of the state too from July 6. Children will read, perform yoga, write and listen to stories and make notes on them.
- In order to maintain the academic regularity of students during the Corona crisis, the State Education Center has prepared a **'Hamara Ghar-Hamara Vidyalaya'** means **My Home-My school scheme**, in which children will be taught at home in a school-like environment.

<p align="center" style="color:red">Maharashtra</p>

Maharashtra renames its environment ministry as 'Environment and Climate Change Ministry'

- **Maharashtra** has renamed its **Environment Ministry** as **Environment and Climate Change Ministry.** The department is handled by Shiv Sena MLA Aaditya Thackeray.
- On the occasion of World Environment Day, Thackeray and Minister of State Samanjay Bansode had hinted that the department would be renamed to include the larger domain of climate change within its ambit.
- He had reportedly stated that the new, renamed department will work on **'the five elements of the nature'**. The proposal, however, needed a clearance from the state cabinet and was accordingly cleared during a Cabinet meeting convened under Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray.
- Maharashtra is among a few states in the country which have a dedicated department to address climate change. Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana are some other states to have such a department.

Maharashtra govt inks MOUs worth Rs. 16,100 crore with 12 global corporations for various developmental projects

- The state government signed **Memorandum of Understanding-MOUs** with **12 global corporations** from USA, China, South Korea and Singapore and India.
- Some of the prominent companies investing in Maharashtra include Great Wall Motors Company, API Motors, United Phosphorus and ExxonMobil.
- The Memorandum of Understanding worth **Rs. 16,100 crore** were signed for various developmental projects in information technology, I-T enabled services, automobile, oil and petroleum, chemicals, logistics and food processing sectors.
- The state's industries department has informed that about 40,000-acre land has been earmarked for these projects.
- The Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation will develop the physical infrastructure so that these companies can start production at the earliest.
- Meanwhile, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has approved a set of **Standard Operating Procedures** for reopening of schools.
- While all the schools will have to begin imparting online education to students for the first few months, classroom teaching can begin for secondary and higher secondary students from July in areas where not a single COVID case has been reported for atleast a period of one month.

Maharashtra CM Uddhav Thackeray launches Mumbai's new flood warning system

- **Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray** inaugurated the **new integrated flood warning system (IFLOWS)** developed for Mumbai, calling it "boon" for the city.
- Dr Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Science and Technology, and Earth sciences, who was also present during the ceremony, Stated the system will help the people of Mumbai in a "big way" as it can predict floods.
- The Ministry of Earth Sciences has developed this system using in-house expertise and in close coordination with the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC). "The flood management system is a boon for the city and it will be helpful in saving Mumbai," Thackeray Stated.
- As Maharashtra had received a warning about cyclonic storm Nisarga 2-3 days in advance, the state government could shift people to safer locations and hence there was hardly any loss of human life,he added.
- IFLOWS-Mumbai has been developed as a state-of-the-art flood warning system for Mumbai to enhance the resilience of the city by providing early warning for flooding especially during high rainfall events and cyclones, an official statement Stated.
- Using this, it will be possible to have an estimate of the flood inundation three days in advance, along with immediate weather updates, it added.

Maharashtra government declares 29.53-sq-km area in Konkan a conservation reserve

- The **Maharashtra government** declared **29.53 square kilometre (sq km) area**, comprising 10 villages in Dodamarg taluka, Sindhudurg district, as the **Tillari Conservation Reserve**.
- This is the first notified conservation reserve along the **Konkan coast** and the **seventh** in the state.
- With this decision, a certain section of the **Dodamarg-Sawantwadi** corridor, which has been under threat from mining, receives protection under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.
- Conservation reserves are protected areas that act as buffer zones or migration corridors between established national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, reserved and protected forests of India. However, these protected areas do not have surrounding eco-sensitive zones (protected buffers) as sanctuaries or national parks do. Also, any developmental or agricultural activity proposed within the reserve needs approval from the state and central wildlife boards.
- Tillari Conservation Reserve is a source of perennial water bodies, and an integral part of the Sahyadri-Konkan wildlife corridor. With this declaration, development activities are restricted, while mining is prohibited across 29.53 sq km areas, safeguarding the rich biodiversity of the tropical semi-evergreen and moist deciduous forests. We will be setting up a committee to look after management and conservation of the reserve, stated Nitin Kakodkar, principal chief conservator of forest (wildlife), Maharashtra.
- Located in the heart of the biodiversity hotspot, Western Ghats, the protected area falls between Maharashtra, Goa and Karnataka. This will be the 13th protected area along the Western Ghats in Maharashtra and 62nd across the state (including sanctuaries, national parks and tiger reserves).
- The reserve will act as a connector through the Western Ghat ridges, connecting the Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary in north Goa and the Bhimgad Wildlife Sanctuary in Karnataka's Belgaum district in the south to the Radhanagari Wildlife Sanctuary in Kolhapur district which lies in the north, stated Kakodkar.

Maharashtra government announces Maha Parwana plan to attract fresh investments in industries

- **Maharashtra,** the state government announced a new plan called **'Maha Parwana',** which will offer several incentives and offer a **single-window clearance system** for project execution.

- The government has decided that henceforth companies investing in a project costing **Rs 50 crore or more** would not be burdened with getting clearances from several departments. Such companies would be given an assurance letter (Maha Parwana).
- All that these companies need to do is to apply at the **Maharashtra Industry, Trade and Investment Facilitation Cell (MAITRI)**, a single-window system, and if there is no lacunae in the application, then an online permission would be given within 48 hours.
- The state has assured that under the **Maha Parwana system**, such industries would get all the 25 odd statutory permissions and clearances from other state departments within a prescribed time (30 days). In case, these industries don't get these clearances within the stipulated time, it would be deemed cleared automatically.

Maharashtra set to launch a plasma therapy trial 'Project Platina' on COVID-19 patients

- The **Maharashtra government** launched the **largest plasma therapy** trial for Covid-19. Launching the programme, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray stated Maharashtra will be **the first state in the country** to conduct an overarching trial on convalescent plasma therapy. Mr. Thackeray stated that plasma donors are saviours.
- He stated the first plasma therapy trial was first conducted in April this year, after which permission was sought from the Centre to undertake more trials.
- The Chief Minister also stated the Central team which visited the state has lauded the measures taken by the state government in containing Covid.
- According to Mr. Thackeray the Centre has granted permission to conduct convalescent plasma therapy trials at 23 centres but as of now it will be done at 17 centres only. He further stated a person who has recovered from the coronavirus infection can register himself on www.plasmayoddha.in and can express his willingness to donate plasma.

Manipur

Manipur CM inaugurates three projects undertaken by PHED

- **In Manipur**, State Chief Minister N. Biren Singh inaugurated three projects undertaken by **State Public Health Engineering Department (PHED)** through video conferencing.
- Out of the three projects, one is **Sewage Treatment Plant Phase-I** located **in Imphal** West district and it is the only such plant in the **whole North East India.** It has a capacity of 27 MLD and constructed with a project cost of **Rs. 345.43 crore.**
- The remaining two projects are **Integrated Water Supply Projects at Imphal East and Imphal West** respectively. Both the projects are constructed in an aim to provide potable water supply to various places of the districts.
- New Development Bank has sanctioned **Rs. 3000 crores** to provide potable water to every household of the State and all the necessary processes including issue of work order has been completed. Construction of the projects will start very soon.

Meghalaya

Meghalaya plans to provide tap connection to all rural households by December, 2022

- **Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)** launched by Central Government last year aims to provide **"Functional Household Tap Connection" (FHTC)** to every rural household by **2024.**

- Meghalaya presented the Annual Action Plan to achieve 100% household tap connections to National Jal Jeevan Mission, Ministry of Jal Shakti for approval.
- **Meghalaya** proposed **100% tap connections** to all the households by **December, 2022**. Out of 5.89 lakh total rural households, the State is planning to provide 1.80 lakh tap connections in 2020-21. It was appreciatively noted that Meghalaya is planning to cover 1096 villages with 100% tap connection in 2020-21.
- Under JJM, States are given additional funds in form of performance grants based on their performances in terms of outputs achieved i.e. the household tap connections. Government of India approved **Rs.175 crore** for implementation of **JJM in 2020-21.**

<p align="center" style="color:red">Odisha</p>

"Bande Utkala Janani" gets state anthem status in Odisha

- The **Odisha** Cabinet approved a proposal to give state anthem status to **"Bande Utkala Janani"**.
- This patriotic poem was written by **Kantakabi Laxmikanta Mohapatra** in 1912. It was the opening song of Utkal Sammilani during the fight for the formation of a separate province.
- It will now be played at all government functions and state Assembly without instruments. All government schools and colleges, functions can play this song with instruments.

Odisha Becomes First State to Get ISO Certification for Tribal Hostels

- **Odisha** has become the **first state** in the country to receive **ISO certification** for **hostels meant for tribal students.**
- The ST&SC Welfare Department had earlier launched the **'Mission Suvidya'** project to provide all the tribal hostels of the state uniform standards of infrastructure, amenities and human resources.
- In the first phase, hostels of Keonjhar and Sambalpur districts were taken up for assessment. Out of 156 hostels of Keonjhar, 60 were selected for intensive interventions.
- Similarly, out of 90 hostels of Sambalpur, 12 were selected for the purpose.
- Comprehensive assessment and evaluation of all hostels under the department were conducted with the objective of improving the standard and quality of the hostels to lead them to **achieve ISO 9001:2015 certification**

Naveen Patnaik plans to increase green cover under 'Sabuja Odisha' over 1.30 Lakh Hectares

- The **Odisha Government** planned to implement a new initiative **'Sabuja Odisha'** to increase **green cover** through extensive plantation over 1,30,264 Hectares of land.
- This has been decided in a high-level meeting held under the Chairmanship of Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy.
- Tripathy has directed to put a web-based system for real-time monitoring and supervision of the programme. The department has asked to form district-level committees led by the collector for proper coordination and implementation of the program at the ground level, the statement stated.
- The Divisional Forest Officer headquarters would work as Plantation Officer in the district. Chief Secretary directed all districts to have their own micro-level work plan for plantations.
- PCCF stated, The people will be given the seedling of their choice at Rs 1 per seedling. The plantation sites with geographic information system coordinates will be uploaded on the website for continuous monitoring through satellite applications.
- This year's all-time high number of seedlings have been raised in the 5,222 nurseries.
- So far, around 13.11 crore seedlings of various varieties like the medicinal plant, fruit-bearing species, timber species, multi-purpose plants, aesthetic and shade bearing species, endangered species have been raised. The groundwork for raising more 2 crore seedlings has been started.

<p style="text-align:center; color:red">Punjab</p>

Punjab Chief Minister launches anti-COVID awareness drive

- **Punjab** Chief Minister Captain **Amarinder Singh** has launched a month-long drive, as part of **'Mission Fateh'**, to **spread awareness** about COVID-19.
- He urged the people of Punjab to follow social distancing norms, wash hands properly and wear face masks to make the state win the battle against the virus.
- Describing 'Mission Fateh' as a symbol of the resolve of the people of Punjab to check the spread of novel coronavirus through discipline, cooperation and compassion, the Chief Minister stressed the need for adherence to all safety protocols, cooperation with the state government through compliance with the lockdown restrictions, and compassion towards the poor.
- A series of activities will be launched as part of the campaign, which will be driven collaboratively by the Department of Information and Public Relations, as well as various NGOs, charitable institutions and social organisations, which will be encouraged to undertake similar drives within their localities, according to an official release.
- Other focus areas include creating awareness on the importance of home quarantine, symptoms of flu and actions thereafter, restrictions during Lockdown 5.0 and penalties/fines in case of violations, community mobilisation to jointly fight against the pandemic.

Punjab Governor along with Petroleum Minister inaugurated Battery Swapping Facility, QIS

- **Punjab Governor** and Administrator of Chandigarh **V P Singh Badnore** along with **Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas & Steel Dharmendra Pradhan** inaugurated **Battery Swapping Facility, Quick Interchange Service (QIS)** at **Chandigarh** in a function organised online.
- Battery swapping technology offers the best alternative to slow charging and helps the drivers to make optimum use of the operational hours. The battery swapping model is initially targeted at the commercial segment-electric autos, rickshaws and the electric vehicle which is either factory fitted or retrofitted.
- **Indian Oil** has signed a non- binding Strategic cooperation document with M/s Sun Mobility to explore setting up of Energy infrastructure for Electric vehicles through Battery Swapping model across Indian Oil Retail outlets in select cities covering New Delhi, Gurugram, Bengaluru, Chandigarh, Amritsar and others.
- These initiatives include introduction of BS-VI fuels, spreading the network of CNG and PNG stations, making available LPG to the majority of the population, targeting 20 per cent ethanol blending, producing Biodiesel from Used cooking Oil, and widespread use of solar energy for mobility purposes. He stated, an Atamnirbhar Bharat will have clean, affordable, multi-source and multi-dimensional energy solutions, with focus on domestic resources.

<p style="text-align:center; color:red">Rajasthan</p>

Rajasthan CM Gehlot launches Online Labour Employment Exchange

- Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot recently launched the **Raj Kaushal Portal** and **Online Shramik Employment Exchange** through video conferencing.
- It is a major initiative taken by the state government after the lockdown, to make it easier for the workers to get employment who are suffering from livelihood losses and to make the labour available to the industries facing labour shortage.
- This centralised system ensures jobs for migrants which will also help to start industries in the state

- Along with nearly 13 lakh migrants who have come back home to the state following the Covid crisis, the portal has a database of more than 50 lakh people categorised by their skill set and work experience. It also holds information of over 11 lakh registered business institutions in the state that can be a potential employer for these workers. Many of these businesses are open for hiring as many of their previous workers from other states have returned home.
- **Raj Kaushal app** acts as a **bridge between industry and labourers**, to improve availability of opportunities and empower the economy.
- The portal has details of 13,13,679 migrants workers, 22,33,233 registered construction workers, 3,37,724 Rajasthan Skill and Livelihood Development Corporation-trained individuals and 1,21,253 ITI-trained individuals, amongst others. There are 11,18,810 employers also registered on the portal.

Rajasthan govt to launch Indira Rasoi Yojna: CM Ashok Gehlot

- Rajasthan **Chief MinisterAshok Gehlot** announced that his government will soon launch the **Indira Rasoi Yojna** for the poor to ensure that "**no one sleeps hungry**" in the state.
- Under this scheme, **pure and nutritious food** on concessional rates will be provided to the needy twice a day, the chief minister stated.
- He stated the state government will spend **Rs 100 crore** every year on the Indira Rasoi Yojna (Indira Kitchen Scheme).
- Local NGOs will also be roped in for the successful implementation of the scheme and its effective monitoring will be done with the help of information technology, Gehlot stated.
- The chief minister was addressing a state-level inauguration meeting for the Covid-19 awareness campaign through video conference from his official residence. During the meeting, he launched five different types of posters, audio jingles and video films on the campaign.
- He also flagged-off five mobile vans loaded with publicity material and equipment for the awareness campaign by the National Health Mission and UNFPA.

Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu government cancels Class 10 and 11 exams

- **TamilNaducancelledClass10** board **exams** scheduled to begin on June 15. Chief Minister E Palanisami declared that all students will be promoted **due** to the **coronaviruspandemic**.
- **Apartfromclass10exams**, the state government **alsocancelled** the **pendingclass11exams**. **Decision** on **class12exams** for **absenteestudents** has **notbeentaken** yet.
- **TamilNadu** is **following** the **lead** of **theTelanganagovernment**. Telangana announced on June 08 that all students would pass class 10 students.

Tamil Nadu govt's launches new portal to assist job seekers in post Covid-19 scenario

- The **Tamil Nadu government'sEmployment and Training department** has started a **new portal** to **assist job seekers** in the post Covid 19 scenario. The **Tamil Nadu Private Jobs portal** is a unique venture that aims to connect job seekers with job providers digitally.
- The portal also provides facilities for conducting interviews online. The portal, which was formally launched, is also unique because of the fact that it takes into consideration the needs of the private sector also. Job providers as well as job seekers have been asked to register their names as well as various relevant details at the website address tnprivatejobs.tn.gov.in

- More details of the scheme is available online as well as from the district offices of the Employment and Training department. The initiative assumes added significance against the background of the Prime Minister's call for the "Vocal about Local" initiative, in which the private sector is also expected to play a significant role.

Tamil Nadu CM, Petroleum Minister inaugurate compressed bio gas plant

- Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami and Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Dharmendra Pradhan inaugurated a **Compressed Bio Gas Plant (CBG) at Namakkal** and **five CBG fuel stations in Pudhuchattiram and Rasipuram.**
- The CBG plant has been set up by IOT Infrastructure and Energy Services, a joint venture between **Indian Oil Corporation Ltd**. and **Germany's Oil tanking GmbH** at a cost of Rs.25 crore.
- The plant will be able to manufacture 15 tonne CBG and 20 tonne bio-manure everyday.
- This was the first time that an alternative to natural gas was being sold by oil marketing companies and the number of such projects were to increase manifold in the coming years.

<p align="center">Telangana</p>

Chief Minister of Telangana inaugurates Kondapochamma Sagar

- Chief Minister **K Chandrashekhar Rao** has inaugurated the **15 TMC Kondapochamma Sagar** reservoir by switching on pumps at the Markook pump house under Gajwel Assembly segment.
- The water will flow from the reservoir through gravity to surrounding districts of Medak, Siddipet, Sangareddy, Yadadri-Bhongir and Medchal Malkajgiri which did not have any irrigation facilities till now.
- The Rs 3,500 pump house and Kondapochamma Sagar Reservoir is located 210 kms away from Godavari and is at a height of 618 metres.
- The Rs 1 lakh crore **Kaleswaram multi-purpose irrigation project** is divided into different packages to lift the water from Godavari River and 20 of the state's 31 districts will get drinking and irrigation water.

Hyderabad airport receives ACI recognition for green practices

- GMR-led Hyderabad based **Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA)** International Airport received the **highest Platinum Recognition** in the **Airports Council International (ACI)Asia-Pacific Green Airports Recognition 2020** in the 15-35 million passengers per annum (MPPA) category.
- Airports Council International (ACI) Asia-Pacific has announced the results of the region's annual Green Airports Recognition 2020 for efficient water management practices.
- The recognition was the outcome of the submissions shared this year focussed on water management documenting approaches to waste-water treatment, water harvesting, recycling and reduction.
- ACI's Green Airports Recognition programme promotes best environmental practices to minimise the aviation sector's impact on the environment and recognises ACI Asia-Pacific's members for outstanding accomplishments in their environmental projects.
- Stefano Baronci, Director General, ACI Asia-Pacific, in a statement stated, Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA) has been recognised for their outstanding environmental accomplishments in the ACI Asia-Pacific Green Airports Recognition 2020. The panel of judges highly praised the water sustainability project at RGIA through using the 4Rs concept of Reduce, Reuse, Recycling and Replenishment.
- Apart from deploying water conservation measures all over the airport complex and the surrounding areas, it has set up efficient sewage treatment plants.

- Apart from a 40-acre recharge basin, the airside contains 10 artificial recharge wells. It has set up a cloud-based automatic irrigation system across the 80 acres of landscape spread along the 8.4-km stretch of the airport spine road.

'STREE' Launched In Hyderabad to Support and Empower Women against Domestic Violence

- **Hyderabad City Security Council (HCSC)** in association with **Hyderabad City Police** has launched the **'STREE'** programme. The name reflects the vision - **"She Triumphs through Respect, Equality, and Empowerment"** **(STREE).**
- The programme has been ideated on the lines of women's empowerment to bring about a sustainable and impactful change by involving women in the community.
- The main aim of the programme is to create a platform for women from various walks of the community to come together and joint forum for women and Police to work together on issues of safety and security of women and girls.
- Further, it will create awareness among the women on their rights, entitlements, laws and support systems available while building a network of partners to ensure women's safety, equality and empowerment.

Telangana CM Launches Sixth Phase Of Haritha Haram Programme

- **Telangana** Chief Minister **K Chandrashekhar Rao** launched the **sixth phase** of **Haritha Haram programme** by planting a Black Plum (Neredu) sapling in the Narsapur forest area in Medak district.
- The CM inaugurated the **Narsapur Urban Forest Park**, which was developed in 636 acres.
- The CM personally examined the Forest and Forest revival programme being implemented in Narsapur forest area. He also examined the works related to natural Forest, Rock fill Dam, Water harvesting.
- The CM stated that forest is there in the river valley regions like Khammam, Warangal, Karimnagar and Adilabad districts. Other than these districts, Narsapur is the only area where there are thick forests. He urged that the more importance should be given to protect the forests and afforestation should be done in the deforested areas.

<p align="center" style="color:red">Tripura</p>

Tripura to start ' Play little, Study little' scheme for school students

- With uncertainty prevailing over reopening of schools due to COVID-19 pandemic, the **Tripura** government has decided to start a scheme called **'Ektu Khelo, Ektu Padho'** which means **'Play little, Study little'**, from June 25.
- As per the scheme, the students would be getting audio and video contents on learning activities , projects alongwith fun and gaming activities via SMS or WhatsApp services.
- The Education state headquarters would share the learning contents to different district academic coordinators and they would share the same to headmasters of the schools in their concerned areas. The headmasters would give the responsibility to the teachers to share the contents among the students.
- After closure of the educational institutions from March, the state introduced online classes through local TV channels and social media, for the students so that they could continue their studies amidst the pandemic. But it was found that many children could not utilise the initiative due to poor network connectivity.
- The students can access the scheme through smartphones of their parents. If any children can't access through smartphone, they will get learning activities via SMS services. We want to make sure that the students should invest their time in study during this period," Education Minister Ratan Lal Nath told.
- The students would get their daily lessons and activities on their phones every morning and their feedback would be received every afternoon.

Tripura announces schemes to combat infant, maternal mortality, malnourishment

- **Tripura** announced **Mukhyamantri Matru Pushti Uphaar**, an ambitious scheme to **provide nutrition kits to pregnant and lactating women.**
- Pregnant women would be tested four times in nearby **Primary Health Centers (PHC),** and be given a nutrition kit after each test as per the Matru Pushti Uphaar scheme.
- The kit, costing **Rs500,** would have food items and grocery supplies, such as peanuts, soyabeans, mixed pulses, jaggery and ghee.
- As many as 40,000 women will benefit annually under the scheme. The state government estimates to incur an expense of around Rs 8 crore for the scheme.
- The state scheme will be in addition to the **Pradhan Mantri Matru Bandana Yojana.**
- The revised guidelines will grant them six eggs per week, along with 20 gm jaggery and 200 ml milk on six days of a week.

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Uttarakhand

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Gairsain declared summer capital of Uttarakhand

- **Gairsain** in **Chamoli district** was declared as the **summer capital of Uttarakhand**.
- The governor has granted her assent to declaring Gairsain the summer capital of Uttarakhand. It fulfills Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat's announcement about Gairsain in the Vidhan Sabha and a major promise made by the party in its manifesto for the 2017 Assembly polls, Mr. Bhasin stated.
- Mr. Rawat had made the announcement about Gairsain being made the summer capital of Uttarakhand during the budget session of the state assembly on March 4.
- The Chief Minister had made the announcement soon after finishing his budget speech in the Assembly at Gairsain.
- Mr. Rawat dedicated the summer capital status to Gairsain to thousands of men and women of Uttarakhand who fought for its statehood.

Uttarakhand forest department develops India's first lichen park in Kumaon

- **Uttarakhand forest department** has claimed to have developed the **country's first lichen park in Kumaon's Munsiyari area,** spread over 1.5 acres with over 80 species of lichens collected from across the Himalayan state.
- Lichens found in the Himalayas up to 5000 metres, are important species as they are the best bioindicators of the pollution levels.
- Jurassic-era lichen species are used in food, perfumes, dyes and traditional medicines.
- Aim of developing this Lichen Park is to create awareness among people about their importance in the overall Himalayan ecology and how to link the livelihood of these locals with these species and check their incriminating exploitation.
- One of the lichen species called **Jhula Ghas** is used as a **flavouring agent in Hyderabadi biryani** and some non-vegetarian dishes in North Indian cuisine. Their potential for antibiotics and sunscreen chemicals is also being explored by researchers. Some species can also withstand high levels of radiation and can be used as biological sensors that give us information about the environment

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Uttar Pradesh

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UP introduces a MoU Monitoring Mechanism for efficient implementation of investment proposals

- Uttar Pradesh has introduced a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) Monitoring Mechanism** in a move that aims at better implementation of investment proposals through handholding interested investors and better tracking of the MoUs signed.
- A new **MoU tracking portal** that will be integrated with its single window system **Nivesh Mitra**. Besides, all concerned departments will have to assign nodal officers for implementation of the MoUs and multi -level review meetings will be held by the MoU department every month.
- There are two key changes that will be brought about with the introduction of this mechanism- firstly, all interested investors will have one dedicated officer to reach out to and secondly, the concerned department will have to take ownership which will help in fixing accountability.
- As part of the mechanism, review meetings of MoUs with investment proposals of more than Rs 2,000 crore of agriculture and allied sectors will be presided over by the commissioner of agriculture production whereas proposals greater than Rs 2,000 crore for other departments will be chaired by the IIDC.
- Similarly, review meetings with MoUs of investment amount between Rs 500 crore and Rs 2,000 crore will be presided over by the additional chief secretary or principal secretary or secretary of the department which the MoU concerns. All proposals below Rs 500 crore will be reviewed by divisional commissioners.

Uttar Pradesh govt. clears ordinance to prevent cow slaughter

- To protect cows and prevent their slaughter, the Uttar Pradesh government approved a **draft ordinance,** providing a maximum rigorous **imprisonment** of **10 years** and a **fine up toRs.5 lakh.**
- For the first offence, a person can be given a rigorous punishment of one to seven years with a fine ranging from Rs.1 lakh to Rs.3 lakh.
- For the second offence, the person can be given a 10-year rigorous imprisonment with a fine up to Rs.5 lakh.
- The State cabinet cleared the draft of the **Uttar Pradesh Cabinet Cow Slaughter Prevention (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020** at a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Aditynath.
- In case of the illegal transportation of cows and other bovines, the driver, operator and the owner of the vehicle shall be charged under the new Act, unless proven that the transportation was done without the owner's knowledge by someone else for committing the crime.
- If someone puts the life of a cow in danger by not providing food and water with the intention of endangering its life, one-year rigorous imprisonment may be awarded, which may extend to seven years for the first offence. Additionally, a fine of Rs.1 lakh may be imposed, which may be extended to Rs.3 lakh.
- The Uttar Pradesh Prevention of Cow Slaughter Act, 1955 was implemented in the state on January 6, 1956. The Act was amended in 1958, 1961, 1979 and 2002. The rules were amended in 1964 and 1979.

UP govt to launch state level sample collection campaign

- The **Uttar Pradeshgovernment** is launching **a state level sample collection campaign** to find out the level of corona infection among the different sections of society. The campaign will run for one week in which various clusters of the society will be tested which includes delivery boys, newspaper vendors and other daily workers. Principal secretary health, Amit Mohan Prasad stated that under this campaign samples to those people will be taken who move frequently due to their work.
- On the first day the campaign team of health workers will visit old age homes, women's hostels, orphanage and juvenile homes and will take samples of the inmates and samples will be taken from slums of city areas. Similarly

those people who are involved in home delivery, newspaper vendors, employees of hospitals, milk suppliers, security guards, pharmacist salesman, and clerical staff of hospitals will be tested on different days.

- The aim of this exercise is to get the information about the spread of Corona infection so that measures can be taken to control this. He stated that such a campaign was launched among migrant workers in 18 districts of state to know the level of infection.
- In these districts 72 villages were chosen where 50 or migrants have been returned and after completion of their 15 days Quarantine other persons of the village were tested to get the information about the spread of virus. The motive was to understand how successfully the workers spent the quarantine period and whether they infected other villages also or not.

Uttar Pradesh govt decides to adopt scheme of Flatted Factory Model

- In **Uttar Pradesh**, the State Government has decided to adopt the scheme of **Flatted Factory Model** which will ensure **easy availability of land for industries**, and in turn, generate employment also. In a high level meeting, it was decided by **Uttar Pradesh State Industrial Development Authority (UPSIDA)** that flatted factories that means multi-storeyed buildings in which multiple non-polluting units can operate will be allowed.
- The new policy will allow the owner of an industrial land of at least five acres to develop one-fourth of it as flatted factory. Principal Secretary (Infrastructure and Industrial Development) Alok Kumar stated all industrial development authorities were on board with the uniform policy. The model can be adopted only for non-polluting manufacturing unit permitted by industrial development authority like manufacturing of readymade garments, handicrafts.
- A minimum structure of four storeys, including ground floor, will be permitted. Industrial Development Minister Satish Mahana stated the state is trying to become self-reliant to minimize imports and sectors like IT, electronics, garment manufacturing could easily adopt the flatted factory model so that land for other space requiring industries like defence and automobiles could be provided easily.

UP CM Yogi inaugurates 'Bal Shramik Vidya Yojana' in Lucknow

- **Uttar Pradesh Chief MinisterYogi Adityanath** launched **Bal Shramik Vidya Yojana** via video conferencing, under which the **children of the workers** would be given **financial assistance** so that they can start their education as well as maintain a healthy life.
- In the first phase, this scheme will be implemented in 57 districts, where the maximum number of children working as labour have been recorded. Over 2000 children will be benefited from this scheme. A **boy child** will get **Rs 1,000 per month** and **girl child** will get **Rs 1,200.**
- Children studying in **8th, 9th and 10th grades** under Bal Shramik Vidya Yojana will be given **Rs 6000 per year**. They will be also be provided additional assistance if required.

UP cabinet gives nod to set up workers welfare commission

- In **Uttar Pradesh**, a **special commission** has been set up for the **employment generationand safeguarding the interests of workers**. State Cabinet gave its nod to set up Uttar Pradesh workers welfare commission.
- Named as the **UP Kamgar Shramik Sevayojan Avam Rozgar Aayog**, the commission will have an executive board in which many ministers and representatives of different worker's organizations will be members.
- The **Chief Minister or a cabinet minister** nominated by him will be its chairman and the minister for labour its convener. Issue of safeguarding the interests of workers and labourers of the state was also discussed.

PM Modi to launch 'Atma Nirbhar Uttar Pradesh Rojgar Abhiyan' for migrant workers

- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** will launch **Atma Nirbhar Uttar Pradesh Rojgar Abhiyan** which is focused on **generating employment** for those migrant workers of **Uttar Prdesh** who recently returned from other states.
- Around one**crore 25 lakh people** will be provided employment in the state in different schemes. The program will be launched through Video-Conference in presence of the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh Yogi Adityanath. Ministers of concerned Ministries of the state will also participate in the virtual launch.
- **'ROZGAR KA NAYA ABHIYAN, HAR SHRAMIK-KAMGAR KO KAM'** - With this motto, the state government will provide employment to 1.25 crore workers of the state in different schemes of central and state government.
- A loan amount of 5900 crores will be distributed to 2.40 Lakh units under Atmanirbhar Bharat Package. 1.11 lakh new units will also get 3226 crore rupees as loan amount. Around 5 thousand artists will get tool kits through **Vishwakarma Shram Samman yojna** under one district one product scheme of state. The Atma Nirbhar Uttar Pradesh Rojgar Abhiyan will be launched in 31 districts of the state. These districts have more than 25,000 returnee migrant workers. These include 5 aspirational districts also.
- Atma Nirbhar Uttar Pradesh Rojgar Abhiyan is focused towards providing employment, promoting local entrepreneurship and creating partnership with Industrial associations to provide employment opportunities. Nearly 30 lakh migrant workers have returned recently from the other parts of state in Uttar Pradesh.

Kushinagar Airport in Uttar Pradesh to be an international airport

- Recently, the Union Cabinet, chaired by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** has given its approval for the declaration of **Kushinagar Airport** in the state of **Uttar Pradesh** as an **international airport**.
- It will be **India's29th International Airport** and **fourth** of **Uttar Pradesh** including the under construction **Jewar Airport**.
- Kushinagar itself is known to be a Buddhist cultural site and the Kushinagar Airport is located in the vicinity of several well known Buddhist cultural sites like Lumbini, Kapilvastu, Sravasti, etc.
- This move will offer better air connectivity, a wider choice of competitive costs to air passengers.
- The transformation of Kushinagar Airport into an international airport will also give **a boost to domestic and international tourism as well as economic development of the regions.**
- In the coming years, the Noida International Greenfield Airport or the Jewar International Airport in Uttar Pradesh will become India's largest airport and also, one among the biggest airports in the world in terms of runway numbers. The Jewar Airport is proposed to be developed in an area of 5000 acres and the project is likely to cost around Rs 29,560 crore. It will be the third airport in the National Capital Region after Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport and Ghaziabad's Hindon Airport.

UP to raise Rs 1,500 cr in bank loans for 340-km Purvanchal Expressway

- **UP Expressway Industrial Development Authority (UPEIDA),** of total loans worth Rs 1,500 crore,**Rs 1,000 crore and Rs 500 crore** will be sourced from **Bank of India and Central Bank of India respectively**.
- This is to expedite the work on its flagship **340-km Purvanchal Expressway project** post lockdown.
- The work on the various ongoing expressway projects, including Purvanchal Expressway, Bundelkhand Expressway and Gorakhpur Link Expressway, had come to a standstill in March following the imposition of the pan-India covid-19 lockdown.
- With the fresh loan tranche of Rs 1,500 crore, total loans sanctioned by the different banks for Purvanchal Expressway, which is estimated to cost **Rs 23,000 crore**, has touched **Rs 10,500 crore.**

- Recently, **Punjab National Bank (PNB)** had extended a credit line of **Rs 750 crore** for Gorakhpur Link Expressway, which is estimated to cost Rs 5,876 crore. The 91 km expressway will connect Gorakhpur district with Purvanchal Expressway.

UP Government to form a dedicated force for industrial security

- **Uttar Pradesh government** has decided to form a **dedicated force** for security of courts, metro rail, airports, industrial establishments, banks and other organizations in the state. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has directed officials to constitute the **Uttar Pradesh Special Security Force (UPSSF)** for this purpose.
- Highlighting the need of the dedicated force Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath stated that there is demand for special security force for district courts, metro rail, airports, industrial institutions, banks and other financial institutions, and for this the UPSSF should be constituted which can work professionally and ensure security.
- The force will be given special training and will be provided with security equipment. It can be placed at important establishments including religious places.
- In the first phase, five battalions of such force will be constituted and the chief minister has directed the officials to present a detailed plan in this regard. Earlier Allahabad high court had also directed the state government to form an exclusive Force for security on court premises in December last year.

West Bengal

World Bank lends Rs. 1,950 crore loans to West Bengal Govt for tackling COVID situation

- **World Bank** has given **Rs. 1,950 crore** loans to the **West Bengal Government** for tackling COVID situation and developmental work in the State.
- Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee stated that out of it, **Rs. 1,100 crore** will be spent for creating Industrial infrastructures and remaining **Rs. 850 crore** have been allocated for spending on various **Social-Welfare schemes.**

Students in West Bengal Have Built 'Ayurvedic Sanitisation Tunnel' for Their School

- Students of a private school in East Burdwan district of **West Bengal** have built an **"ayurvedicsanitisation tunnel"** to disinfect people entering the educational institute.
- Twelve people can be disinfected inside the tunnel at a time.
- The "ayurvedic sanitiser" contains camphor oil, menthol and thyme oil, he said, adding that the tunnel was built at the Technology Club workshop in the school by students under the supervision of teachers.
- An ayurvedic sanitisation tunnel was earlier installed at the Birla Industrial and Technological Museum in Kolkata.

Revision Points

State	Capital	Chief Minister	Governor
Andhra Pradesh	Amaravati	Y. S. Jaganmohan Reddy	BiswaBhusanHarichandan
Arunachal Pradesh	Itanagar	Pema Khandu	Brigadier BD Mishra
Assam	Dispur	SarabanandaSonowal	Jagdish Mukhi
Bihar	Patna	Nitish Kumar	Phagu Chauhan
Chhattisgarh	Raipur	Bhupesh Baghel	AnusuiyaUikey
Goa	Panaji	Pramod Sawant	S.P Malik
Gujarat	Gandhi Nagar	Vijaybhai R. Rupani	Acharya Devvrat

Haryana	Chandigarh	Manohar Lal Khattar	Satyadev Narayan Arya
Himachal Pradesh	Shimla	Jai Ram Thakur	Bandaru Dattatraya
Jharkhand	Ranchi	Hemant Soren	Draupadi Murmu
Karnataka	Bengaluru	B S Yediyurappa	VajubhaiRudabhaiVala
Kerala	Thiruvananthapuram	Pinarayi Vijayan	Arif Mohammed Khan
Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal	Shivraj Singh Chouhan	Anandiben Patel
Maharashtra	Mumbai	Uddhav Thackrey	Bhagat Singh Koshyari
Manipur	Imphal	N Biren Singh	Padmanabha Balkrishna Acharya (Add. Charge)
Meghalaya	Shillong	Conrad Sangma	RN Ravi (Additional Charge)
Mizoram	Aizawl	Pu Zoramthanga	P S Sreedharan Pillai
Nagaland	Kohima	Neiphiu Rio	RN Ravi
Odisha	Bhubaneshwar	Naveen Patnaik	Ganeshi Lal
Punjab	Chandigarh	Amarinder Singh	V P Singh Badnore
Rajasthan	Jaipur	Ashok Gehlot	Kalraj Mishra
Sikkim	Gangtok	Prem Singh Tamang(PS Golay)	Ganga Prasad
Tamil Nadu	Chennai	Edappadi K. Palaniswami	Banwarilal Purohit
Telangana	Hyderabad	K. Chandrasekhar Rao	TamilisaiSoundararajan
Tripura	Agartala	Biplab Kumar Deb	Ramesh Bais
Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow	Yogi Adityanath	Anandiben Patel
Uttarakhand	Dehradun	Trivendra Singh Rawat	Baby Rani Maurya
West Bengal	Kolkata	Mamata Banerjee	Jagdeep Dhankhar

Important National News

Centre announces 'Mudra Shishu loan' for small businesses and cottage industries

- Centre has taken several steps so that shopkeepers do not suffer due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Government has asked shopkeepers not to worry about restarting shops and handcarts as Unlock 1.0 begins.
- The Government has pledged to make an **Atma Nirbhar Bharat**. A 1500 crore interest subvention for small business and cottage industries has been announced under **Mudra Shishu loan**. Under this scheme, one lakh beneficiaries can avail interest benefit of **2 per cent** for a year.

- A Rs 5000 crore package was announced for the roadside hawkers. Under this, 50 lakh street vendors can avail loan upto Rs 10,000. Street vendors can contact any nationalised bank to avail the benefit.

PM Modi announces "My Life My Yoga" Video Blogging contest in Man Ki Baat

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** called upon one and all to participate in the "**My Life – My Yoga**"(also called "Jeevan Yoga") Video Blogging Contest, a joint effort by the **Ministry of AYUSH** and the **Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR),** during the course of his monthly Mann Ki Baat address to the nation.
- The contest focuses on the transformative impact of Yoga on the lives of individuals, and comes as one of the activities related to the observation of the **sixth International Day of Yoga (IDY)** coming up on 21st June 2020. The contest has gone live on the social media handles of the Ministry of AYUSH.
- The observation of IDY in the past years has been marked by thousands of harmonious mass demonstrations of Yoga in public places. Due to the contagious nature of COVID-19, no mass gathering would be advisable this year.
- Hence, this year the Ministry is encouraging the people to practice Yoga at their homes, with participation from the entire family.
- Through the My Life – My Yoga video blogging competition, the Ministry of AYUSH and ICCR seek to raise awareness about Yoga and to inspire people to prepare for and become active participants in the observation of IDY 2020.
- The contest will support participation via the social media platforms of Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Video contest will be open to participants from all countries.

Odisha, Sikkim, Mizoram join 'One Nation-One Ration Card' scheme

- Three more States -- **Odisha, Sikkim and Mizoram** -- have joined the **'One Nation-One Ration Card' scheme**, taking the number of States and union territories (UTs) which have joined the scheme to **20.**
- By August, Uttarakhand, Nagaland and Manipur will also be added to the national cluster.
- Under the 'One Nation-One Ration Card' initiative, eligible beneficiaries would be able to avail their entitled foodgrains under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) from any fair price shop in the country using the same ration card.
- The Food Ministry aims to implement this facility across the country by March 2021.
- Upgradation of electronic Point of Sale (ePoS) software, integration with central Integrated Management of PDS (IM-PDS) and Annavitran portals, availability of ration cards/beneficiaries data in central repository and requisite testing of national portability transactions -- required for ration card portability has been completed in these three States.
- So far, ration card portability has been enabled in 17 States and UTs -- Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Kerala, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Punjab, Telangana, Tripura and Uttar Pradesh.

Kisan Credit Cards (KCC) campaign launched for 1.5 crore dairy farmers

- Government will provide **Kisan Credit Card (KCC)** to **1.5 crore** dairy farmers belonging to Milk Unions and Milk producing Companies **within the next two months** (1st June-31st July 2020) under a special drive. The Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying in association with Department of Financial Services has already circulated relevant circulars and KCC application format to all State Milk Federation and Milk Unions for implementing the same on a mission mode.

- Under the dairy cooperative movement, approximately 1.7 crore farmers are associated with 230 Milk Unions in the country.
- In the first phase of this campaign, the target is to cover all farmers who are members of dairy cooperative societies and associated with different Milk Unions and who do not have KCC.
- Farmers who already have KCC based on their land ownership, can get their KCC credit limit enhanced, though interest subvention shall be available only to the extent of Rs 3 lakhs. Although the general limit for KCC credit without collateral remains Rs. 1.6 lakh, but the case of farmers whose milk is directly procured by Milk Unions falls under tie up arrangements between the producers and processing units without any intermediaries, and hence the credit limits without Collateral can be upto Rs.3 lakh. This will ensure more credit availability for dairy farmers associated with Milk Unions as well as assuring repayment of loans to banks.
- The special drive to provide KCC to 1.5 crore dairy farmers is part of the Prime Minister's **Atma Nirbhar Bharat package** for Farmers. Finance Minister on 15 May 2020 has announced to cover 2.5 crore new farmers under the KCC scheme. This will provide an additional liquidity of Rs.5 lakh crore in the hands of farmers, who are suffering from the recent downturn of economy.

PM Modi appoints committee headed by Rajnath Singh for MSME loan scheme implementation

- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** has appointed a committee headed by **Rajnath Singh** to resolve any problem in the implementation of the **Rs 3 lakh crore collateral-free loan scheme** for **MSMEs,** stated MSME Minister Nitin Gadkari.
- In an online interaction with the members of the Pune-based Mahratta Chambers of Commerce, Industries and Agriculture (MCCIA), Gadkari asked small businesses to email him directly in case of problems faced by them in securing credit under the scheme.
- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman earlier this month had announced the collateral-free loans scheme for MSMEs as part of the overall **Rs 20 lakh crore** Covid-19 relief package to uplift the economy.
- According to Sitharaman, 45 lakh MSME units will be able to resume their businesses and secure jobs through this support. The eligible units should have up to Rs 25 crore outstanding credit and Rs 100 crore turnover to apply for the loan scheme.

Power Minister R K Singh formally launches real-time power market

- **Power Minister R K Singh** formally launched **pan-India real-time market** in electricity, which allows consumers to buy power just **one hour before delivery**.
- **Real-time market (RTM)** enables consumers, including distribution companies (discoms) and captive users, to buy power on exchanges just an hour before delivery.
- The minister stated the real-time market is an organized market platform to enable the buyers and sellers pan-India to meet their energy requirement closer to real-time of operation.
- This has placed Indian electricity market amongst a league of few electricity markets in the world, which have real time market, he stated.
- The introduction of real-time market will bring required flexibility in the market to provide real-time balance while ensuring optimal utilization of the available surplus capacity in the system.
- Real-time market will make the power market dynamic as auctions will be conducted every 30 minutes. There will be 48 auction sessions during the day.
- The proposed real time market would provide an alternate mechanism for Discoms to access larger market at competitive price.

Govt launches SWADES scheme for jobs to returning Indians from abroad

- The government has launched a new initiative **SWADES (Skilled Workers Arrival Database for Employment Support)** to conduct a skill mapping exercise and provide employment opportunities to the returning citizens under the **Vande Bharat Mission.**
- This is a joint initiative of **the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, the Ministry of Civil Aviation and the Ministry of External Affairs** which aims to create a database of qualified citizens based on their skill sets and experience to tap into and fulfill demand of Indian and foreign companies.
- The collected information will be shared with the companies for suitable placement opportunities in the country.
- The returning citizens are required to fill up an online **SWADES Skills Card** at www.nsdcindia.org/swades. The card will facilitate a strategic framework to provide the returning citizens with suitable employment opportunities through discussions with key stakeholders including State Governments, Industry Associations and Employers.
- MSDE's implementation arm **National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)** is supporting the implementation of the project.
- The scheme has been launched as many Indian citizens are returning home and many citizens be facing uncertainty regarding their future employment opportunities as the spread of COVID-19 across the globe has had a significant economic impact with thousands of workers losing their jobs and hundreds of companies shutting down globally.

Centre amends Essential Commodities Act; Cereals, pulses, onion and potatoes removed from essential commodities list; Farmers can sell their produce outside State

- The Union Cabinet has approved a historic amendment to **Essential Commodities Act**. This is a visionary step towards transformation of **agriculture and raising farmers' income**.
- Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar stated, with the amendment to Essential Commodities Act, commodities like **cereals, pulses, oilseeds, edible oils, onion** and **potatoes** have been removed from list of essential commodities.
- He stated the decision will ensure better price for farmers' produce and also remove fears of private investors of excessive regulatory interference.
- The amendment will help drive up investment in cold storages and modernization of the food supply chain.

Nitin Gadkari announces development of new Greenfield expressway to Amritsar

- Centre announced the development of a new **Greenfield connectivity** to **Amritsar City** from **Nakodar** via Sultanpur Lodhi, Goindwal Sahib, Khadoor Sahib as part of **Delhi-Amritsar Expressway**. Announcing this, Minister for Road Transport & Highways and MSMEs Nitin Gadkari stated, the road from Amritsar to Gurdaspur will also be fully developed and made completely signal free. With this, there will be options to travel to Gurdaspur onwards from Nakodar either via Amritsar or via Kartarpur.
- This greenfield alignment will not only provide shortest and alternate express connectivity to Amritsar city but also to other religious centres of Sultanpur Lodhi, Goindwal Sahib, Khadoor Sahib as well as the recently developed Dera Baba Nanak/Kartarpur Sahib International Corridor in Punjab.
- Once the project is completed, the travel time from Amritsar to Delhi International airport will reduce by about four hours. The first phase of expressway would involve investment of about **25,000 crore rupees**

DPIIT revises public procurement order to encourage Make in India initiative

- **Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade**, DPIIT has recently revised the public procurement order to encourage Make in India initiative with an aim to enhance income and employment generation in the country.
- Minister of State for Shipping and Chemicals and Fertilizers, Mansukh Mandaviya stated that mandatory public procurement of chemicals and petrochemicals to boost manufacturing and production of goods and services will promote Make in India. He stated, this step will strengthen Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan launched by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals prescribed minimum 60 per cent for 2020-21, 70 per cent for 2021-23 and 80 per cent local content for 2023-25 respectively of local chemicals and petrochemical contents in public procurement.

Govt launches Electronics Mfg Scheme 2.0, aims to get 5 top global players

- The **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** launched the Electronics Manufacturing Scheme 2.0, which includes three sub-schemes and has a combined outlay of Rs 50,000, to promote production, not just for the domestic market, but also for export.
- The three schemes are **Production Linked Incentive Scheme (PLI)** for large-scale electronics manufacturing, **Scheme for Promotion of Manufacturing of Electronic Components and Semiconductors (SPECS),** and **Modified Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (EMC 2.0) Scheme**. The government invited applications from companies looking to invest in India under these schemes, as it plans to initially get the top five global mobile manufacturing companies, and promote five domestic companies on the national scale.
- Under the PLI Scheme, electronics manufacturers will be offered incentives of 4-6 per cent on their incremental sales of goods manufactured in India for a period of five years.
- SPECS will provide financial incentive of 25 per cent on capital expenditure of some electronics goods and components specified by the government. EMC 2.0 will provide assistance to create infrastructure, along with facilities and amenities, including ready built factory sheds, and plug-and-play facilities for attracting major global manufacturers, along with their supply chains.
- The manufacturing of mobile handsets, which has been a top priority of the government, was a focus area of the National Policy on Electronics 2019 with a target of producing 1 billion mobile handsets by 2025, valued at $190 billion, including 600 million mobile handsets for export.

Cabinet approves MoU between India and Bhutan on cooperation in environment

- The union cabinet gave its approval for signing **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** between the **India** and **Bhutan** on cooperation in the areas of the **environment**
- An official release stated MoU will enable establishment and promotion of closer and long-term cooperation between the two countries in the field of environment protection and management of natural resources on the basis of equity, reciprocity and mutual benefits.
- A Memorandum of Understanding covering air, waste, chemical management, climate change has been considered keeping in view bilateral interest of both sides.
- The MoU shall come into force on the date of signing and shall continue to remain in force for a period of ten years.

Union HRD Minister and MoS Housing & Urban Affairs jointly launch TULIP, an Internship Program with ULBs across the country, in New Delhi

- **Union Human Resource Development** Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal `Nishank' and **MoS (I/C), Housing & Urban Affairs** Shri Hardeep. S. Puri  jointly launched a first of its kind initiative   `**The Urban Learning Internship Program (TULIP)'** - A program for providing internship opportunities to fresh graduates in all Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) and Smart Cities across the country.
- The TULIP programme will provide access to internship opportunities through 4400 Urban local bodies and smart cities pan India.
- TULIP platforms will give an opportunity to youth to generate new ideas to reform Urban local bodies by modern techniques and innovative methods.
- Similar programmes like these in convergence with various ministries can help to generate internship opportunities for one crore students in the coming future.
- TULIP would help enhance the value-to-market of India's graduates and help create a potential talent pool in diverse fields like urban planning, transport engineering, environment, municipal finance etc. thus not only catalyzing creation of prospective city managers but also talented private/ non-government sector professionals.
- Thus TULIP- "The Urban Learning Internship Program" would help fulfill twin goals of providing interns with hands-on learning experience as well as infusing fresh energy and ideas in the functioning of India's ULBs and Smart Cities.
- **An MoU** has also been signed between **MoHUA and AICTE**. The MoU, inter alia, lays down roles and responsibilities of AICTE and MoHUA over a period of 5 years. Technical support for the platform shall be anchored by AICTE and the programmatic non-technical support shall be anchored by MoHUA.
- Any graduate who have completed B. Tech, B. Arch, B. Plan, BSc etc. can apply within 18 months from date of its Graduation. https://internship.aicteindia.org/module_ulb/Dashboard/TulipMain/index.p

Prakash Javadekar launches Urban Forest programme on World Environment Day

- Union Environment Minister ,**Prakash Javadekar** launched the **Urban Forest program** on the occasion of **World Environment Day**. World Environment Day is the biggest annual event in the world by the United Nations to mark the awareness about the environment amongst people. The main aim is to raise awareness to protect nature and look at various environmental issues. The theme for this year 's Environment day is **Biodiversity**.
- The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Mr. Javadekar the Environment, Forest and Climate Change minister stated, despite all constraints, the country has managed to preserve around 8 per cent of the world's biodiversity through its rich culture of worshipping and nurturing every aspect of mother nature. He stated , the country believes in the principle of Prithvi Rakshti Rakshatah , which means Mother Nature protects those who protect her.
- Mr. Javadekar emphasised on the need to promote Urban Forests, **Nagar Van** initiative through active public participation. In the initial phase, under this program, forests will be developed in 200 corporations and cities in the country. The Environment Minister highlighted the success of Wajre Urban forest in the city of Pune, Maharashtra which has been developed on a 40 acre degraded land area.
- The virtual celebration by the Environment Ministry was also attended by Union Minister of state for Environment , Babul Supriyo, Maharashtra State Forest Minister Sanjay Rathod and senior officials from the ministry and the United Nations Environment Programme.

Cabinet approves renaming of Kolkata Port Trust as Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port Trust

- The Union Cabinet approved the renaming of **Kolkata Port Trust** as **Syama Prasad Mukherjee Port Trust**.

- Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar stated that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had made the announcement about renaming the port trust on January 11.
- Syama Prasad Mukherjee was a minister in the central government and martyred in Kashmir. The decision to rename the port was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi so we have renamed the port , he stated.
- The Prime Minister had announced the renaming of Kolkata Port Trust after Syama Prasad Mukherjee at a function to mark the 150th-anniversary celebrations of the port trust.

Power Minister launches the '#iCommit' initiative on World Environment Day

- **Shri R. K. Singh**, the Minister of State (IC) for Power and New & Renewable Energy, initiated the **'#iCommit'** campaign, on the occasion of **World Environment Day.**
- The initiative is to all stakeholders and individuals to continue moving towards energy efficiency, renewable energy, and sustainability to create a robust and resilient energy system in the future.
- The '#iCommit' initiative, driven by Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), under the administration of Ministry of Power, Government of India is uniting a diverse set of players such as Governments, Corporates, Multilateral and Bilateral Organisations, Think Tanks and Individuals.
- The '#iCommit' initiative is centred around the idea of building an energy resilient future. The pre-requisite for that goal is to create a flexible and agile power system.
- A healthy power sector can help the nation in meeting the objective of energy access and security for all. With the imminent changes in the power system, brought about by innovation such as decentralised solar and electric vehicles, collaboration between all stakeholders will be the way forward and is at the core of '#iCommit' campaign.
- The initiative will also celebrate and promote key undertakings of Government of India such as National Electric Mobility Mission 2020, FAME 1 and 2, DeenDayalUpadhyaya Gram JyotiYojana, the Saubhagya Scheme, Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojna (UDAY), Atal Distribution system Improvement Yojna (AJAY), Smart Meter National Programme, Pradhanmantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam UtthanMahaabhiya (KUSUM), Solar Parks, Grid Connected Rooftop, UnnatJyoti by Affordable LED for All (UJALA), Atal JyotiYojna (AJAY) amongst others

CSIR, AIM join hands to promote culture of innovation, entrepreneurship

- **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, CSIR** has come together with **Atal Innovation Mission**, AIM to promote a **culture of innovation and entrepreneurship** in various sectors. In this regard, a Letter of Intent was signed between CSIR and Niti Aayog. These two organizations joined hands to support **world class start-ups** through CSIR incubators under Atal Innovation Mission initiatives and working together on new models of innovation including setting up of CSIR Innovation Parks.
- Both organizations will work in tandem to stimulate innovation and research in the **Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises industry** in collaboration with **ARISE initiative** of AIM. This initiative works to stimulate innovation and research in the MSME industry. CSIR is working with MSMEs to provide technical solutions to the industries. These two organizations will also collaborate in creating problem solving mind-set across schools in India through close cooperation between Atal Tinkering Labs and Jigyasa.
- Atal Tinkering Laboratories that have been working to foster curiosity, creativity and imagination in young minds and CSIR's JIGYASA a student-scientist connect programme where more than three lakhs students across the country have been exposed to science and technology. This will enhance the opportunities for students and stimulate their scientific thinking and temperament.

EESL and USTATED Announce the "Healthy and Energy Efficient Buildings" Initiative

- **Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL),** a joint venture of PSUs under **Ministry of Power**, in partnership with the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USTATED)MAITREE program, launched the "**Healthy and Energy Efficient Buildings**" initiative that will pioneer ways to make workplaces healthier and greener.
- **The Market Integration and Transformation Program for Energy Efficiency (MAITREE),** under which this initiative has been launched, is a part of the **US-India bilateral Partnership** between the Ministry of Power and **USTATED** and is aimed at accelerating the adoption of cost-effective energy efficiency as a standard practice within buildings, and specifically focuses on cooling.
- Poor air quality has been a concern in India for quite some time and has become more important in light of the COVID pandemic. As people return to their offices and public spaces, maintaining good indoor air quality is essential for occupant comfort, well-being, productivity and the overall public health. Most buildings in India are not equipped to establish and maintain healthy indoor air quality and need to be upgraded. Such retrofit measures, like increasing outside air and additional filtration in the air conditioning system, typically come at the cost of occupant comfort and increased energy use. Nor are there standardized approaches to retrofitting.
- The EESL office pilot will address this problem by developing specifications for future use in other buildings throughout the country, as well as aid in evaluating the effectiveness and cost benefits of various technologies and their short and long-term impacts on air quality, comfort, and energy use.

Highest ever allocation of Rs. 1,01,500 crore made under Mahatma Gandhi NREGS during financial year 2020-2021

- A provision of **Rs. 1,01,500 crore** has been made under **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS)** in the current financial year **2020-2021**. It is the highest ever provision of funds under the programme.
- A sum of Rs. 31,493 crore has already been released in 2020-2021, which is more than **50% of the budget** estimate of the current Financial Year.
- A total of 60.80 crore person days has been generated so far and work has been offered to 6.69 crore persons. Average number of persons to whom work offered in May 2020 has been 2.51 crore per day, which is 73% higher than the work offered in May last year, which was 1.45 crore persons per day.
- A total of 10 lakh works have been completed so far during the current Financial Year 2020-2021. A sustained focus is on taking up works related to water conservation and irrigation, plantation, horticulture and Individual Beneficiary works for livelihood promotion.

MoS Home G Kishan Reddy, 9 others named on new panel for freedom fighters

- The **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** has reconstituted a committee to look into the **welfare of freedom fighters, with** the minister of state for homeaffairs **G Kishan Reddy** as the **chairman** and **nine "eminent freedom fighters"** from across the country as its members.
- The ministry has a separate division to serve freedom fighters who are alive and their families. It disburses pension to about 30,000 freedom fighters and their families.
- The new panel may verify if one person has given affidavits to two or more applicants and will examine the demands to build memorials and museums for freedom fighters.

BS-VI compliant vehicles to display green sticker

- The Government has mandated a **one cm green sticker**, providing registration details, in all BS-VI compliant motor vehicles. The order will come into force from **October 1, 2020**.

- Vehicles complying with **BS-VI emission** norms shall have 1 cm green strip at the top in the third registration plate, as per a notification issued by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.
- The order was issued amending the **Motor Vehicles (High Security Registration Plates) order, 2018**.
- Earlier, the Government has stated that from April 1, 2019, all motor vehicles will be fitted with tamper-proof, high security registration plates (HSRP).
- This HSRP or third number plate will be fitted on the inside of the windshield of each new manufactured vehicle by the manufacturers.
- Under the HSRP, a chromium-based hologram is applied by hot stamping on the top left corner of the number plates both at the front and back besides laser-branding of a permanent identification number with a minimum of 10 digits into the reflective sheeting on the bottom left of the registration plate.
- The third number plate will also have colour coding for the fuel used in the vehicle. The colour coding is done in order to detect polluting vehicles from the non-polluting ones.
- A Road Transport and Highways Ministry official stated it has been brought-forth that the BS-VI emission standards, which have been mandated from April 1, 2020, provide for strict emission norms, and requests were to made to have distinct identification for such vehicles as is being made in other countries.
- Accordingly, a feature in form of a unique strip of **green colour of 1 cm wide** on top of the existing third registration sticker for the purpose of BS-VI vehicles of any fuel type i.e -- **for petrol or CNG**, which have a **light blue colour sticker** and a **diesel vehicle** which is of **orange colour sticker** -- will have a green strip of 1 CM on top has been mandated, he stated.

Centre allots Rs 4,000 cr to states under "Per Drop More Crop"

- The Central government has allocated **Rs 4,000 crore** as annual allotment to states for the current financial year under **"Per Drop More Crop"** component of **Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY-PDMC).**
- The Department of Agriculture Cooperation and Farmers" Welfare is implementing the "Per Drop More Crop" component of PMKSY-PDMC, which focuses on enhancing water efficiency at farm level through micro irrigation technologies such as "drip and sprinkler" irrigation.
- The **drip micro irrigation** technique not only helps in saving water but also reduces fertilizer usage, labour expenses and other input costs.
- The Micro Irrigation Fund corpus of **Rs 5,000 crore** has been created **with National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)**, an apex development financial institution in India.
- So far, micro irrigation funds have been released to Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu for Rs 616.14 crore and for Rs 478.79 crore, respectively, through NABARD.
- The area covered under these projects is 1.021 lakh hectare in Andhra Pradesh and 1.76 lakh hectare in Tamil Nadu.

Railways creates new world record by successfully running first Double-Stack Container Train in OHE electrified territory

- **Indian Railways** has created a **new world benchmark** by successfully running **first Double-Stack Container Train** in high-rise in Over Head Equipment electrified territory on **Western Railway**.
- This tremendous achievement is a first of its kind in the entire world and will also boost the ambitious mission of **Green India**. Railway Ministry stated, with this remarkable development, Railways has become the first to run Double-Stack Container train with high reach pantograph in high rise Over Head Equipment territory.
- The Operations successfully commenced on 10th June from Palanpur and Botad stations in Gujarat.

- It stated, more than 32 lakh wagons carried supplies to keep the supply chain functional during the lockdown period. Of these, more than 18 lakh wagons carried essential commodities like food grains, salt, sugar, milk, edible oil, onions, fruits and vegetables, petroleum products, coal and fertilizers throughout the country.

Govt constitutes Empowered Group of Secretaries to facilitate investment in country

- The **Union Government** has constituted an **Empowered Group of Secretaries** headed by **Cabinet Secretary** to facilitate **investment** in the country. The empowered group will assist investment in key sectors of the economy by identifying potential investors. It will also recommend sector-specific and geography specific incentive packages focusing on both domestic and foreign investors.
- Along with handholding investors it will identify Industrial clusters, land-banks, states and areas where investments can be made. Boosting **Make in India** the empowered group will also incentivise schemes for creating Indian Global Champions in sectors of mobile and electronics, medical devices, drugs, auto and textile machinery among others.
- The **seven member empowered group** has CEO of NITI Aayog along with secretaries of Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Commerce, Revenue and Economic Affairs as it's members.

Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare Shri Narendra Singh Tomar launches Sahakar Mitra

- **Sahakar Mitra**: Scheme on Internship Programme, an initiative by **National Cooperative Development Corporation** launched by Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare **Shri Narendra Singh Tomar.**
- **National Cooperative Development Corporation, NCDC** has embarked upon a series of initiatives in the cooperative sector entrepreneurship development ecosystem through capacity development, **paid internship to youth** and assured project loans on liberalized terms to young cooperators on start-up mode.
- Sahakar Mitra would also provide an opportunity to professionals from academic institutions to develop leadership and entrepreneurial roles through cooperatives as Farmers Producers Organizations (FPO).
- Under the scheme, professional graduates in disciplines such as Agriculture and allied areas,IT etc. will be eligible for internship. Professionals who are pursuing or have completed their MBA degrees in Agri-business, Cooperation, Finance, International Trade, Forestry, Rural Development, Project Management etc. will also be eligible.
- NCDC has earmarked funds for **Sahakar Mitra** paid internship program under which each intern will get financial support over a 4 months internship period. **Online application portal**for internship application available on NCDC website, was **also launched** by the Union Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare Minister.

NHAI becomes first construction sector organisation to go 'Fully Digital'

- **National Highway Authority of India (NHAI)** under Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has gone **'Fully Digital'**, with the launch of unique cloud based and Artificial Intelligence powered **Big Data Analytics platform** – **Data Lake and Project Management Software**.
- The Data Lake software will forecast the delays, likely disputes and will give advance alerts. Thus apart from expediting the decision making, it will also facilitate in taking correct and timely decisions as the system is likely to predict financial impacts of different alternatives based on the historical data. This will reduce a lot of disputes.
- The complete project documents and correspondences will be stored in Digital format in the cloud-based 'Data Lake' linked with **GIS tagging** and **Unique Project ID,** so that the project data can be easily retrieved as and when required from any location.

Shipping Ministry approves Revised cost estimates to augment Ship Repair facilities in Andaman & Nicobar Islands

- **Ministry of Shipping** has approved **the Revised Cost estimate** of an amount of **Rs. 123.95 crore** for augmenting **Ship Repair facilities** in **Andaman & Nicobar Islands.**
- Shipping activities are lifeline of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, as majority of the development activities are linked to it. To keep the shipping activities alive without any interruption, the ship repair facilities are need to be developed.
- The existing dock length will be extended by 90 meters This augmentation will boost ship building and ship repairing industry and facilitate the 'Make In India' initiative of the Government of India.
- The project 'Extension of Dry Dock-II at a marine dockyard including supply, installation and commissioning of Dry Dock Pumps and accessories in Port Blair, South Andaman" was sanctioned by Ministry of Shipping under Central Sector Scheme to the tune of Rs. 96.24 crores, with stipulated date of completion of 42 months during February 2016.
- The extension facility of the Dry dock will be made available to the Shipping industry by **August, 2021.**

Petroleum Ministry sets up panel to inquire into Assam oil well disaster incident

- The panel, which also includes former **ONGC chairman B C Bora** and **former ONGC director T K Sengupta**, will submit its report within one month.
- The Petroleum Ministry has constituted a **three-member high-level committee** to inquire into the blowout at an Oil India Ltd well in Assam and the subsequent fire that killed two fire fighters and injured at least one.
- The panel will be headed by **SCL Das**, Director General of Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH), a ministry order stated.
- The committee will also recommend short and long-term measures to prevent the recurrence of such incidents including identifying any gaps in laid down standard operating procedure.
- The panel, which also includes former ONGC chairman B C Bora and former ONGC director T K Sengupta, will submit its report within one month, the order stated.
- Natural gas mixed with condensate started flowing uncontrollably from one of the wells of Oil India Ltd (OIL) in Baghjan fields in Tinsukia district of Assam on May 27, 2020 leading to a blowout. The well caught fire on June 8, 2020, it stated.
- Except at the well plinth area, the fire around the site has been extinguished. However, the burning of gas at the well mouth will continue till the well is capped.
- The ministry stated it is fully cognisant to the gravity of the situation developing in Baghjan and is committed for the safety and well-being of people in Assam.

India-ASEAN Youth Dialogue 2020 Held Online Amid COVID-19 Pandemic

- During **the third India-ASEAN youth dialogue** that was held from June 8 to 10, **India** and the **Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)** pledged to enhance cooperation in ways to effectively and constructively **channelising youthful energy**. According to reports, the dialogue took place online and primarily revolved around the coronavirus pandemic that has gripped the world.
- During the India-ASEAN dialogue, it was noted that the youth are playing a pivotal role as well as leading the fight against the pandemic. According to reports, the dialogue noted that the current pandemic has caused several problems and increased the burden and responsibilities of governments but stated that its also provides opportunities that should not be missed by the youth of India and ASEAN member nations.

- India as well as ASEAN member nations have some of the most young populations in the world. India alone has roughly more than 450 million people who are between the ages of 15-35 meaning that it has the largest number of young people in the world. The statistic of young people is only expected to grow in the coming years.
- According to reports, the dialogue also highlighted several other youth-centric initiatives that are currently still in progress, such as special Courses for Young ASEAN Diplomats, Exchange Programmes for Young Farmers', Media Exchange Programmes and Programmes for Young Parliamentarians. Some 2,500 youth from ASEAN countries are involved in these projects.

MoS Dr Jitendra Singh inaugurates 18th Bench of CAT for UTs of J&K, Ladakh

- Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, **Dr Jitendra Singh** inaugurated the **18th Bench of Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT)** for the **Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir** and **Ladakh** through a Video Conference.
- Dr. Singh stated, the setting up of CAT Bench of Jammu to deal exclusively with service matters of government employees would go a long way in not only reducing the burden of various Courts but also provide to the persons covered by the Administrative Tribunals speedy relief in connection to their grievances and service matters.
- He stated that more than 800 Central laws, which were not applicable to Jammu and Kashmir have been made applicable since the abolition of Article 370 and 35A on 5th August last year.
- He stated, now the people of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh enjoy same rights as people from the rest of the country.
- Dr. Singh also expressed hope that pendency of about 30 thousand cases would be resolved in a time bound and judicious manner.
- The Minister stated that all three important agencies of DoPT- CAT, Central Information Commission and Central Vigilance Commission are now operational in Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

Govt launches AarogyaPath portal for healthcare supply chain

- **AarogyaPath**, a web based solution for the **healthcare supply chain** was launched to serve manufacturers, suppliers and customers to effectively deal with the **Covid-19 pandemic**. This national healthcare supply chain portal will remove supply chain bottlenecks during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The vision of this initiative is to set up an information management and forecasting database platform at national level. It will capture demand and supply scenarios for key healthcare needs items. This public platform will help healthcare users like hospitals, pathology laboratories, research institutes, medical colleges and patients.
- It will also provide seamless access to suppliers, manufacturers and importers for prevailing needs and demand related to medical equipment, diagnostic instruments, drugs, Personal Protective Equipment, respiratory assistance devices.
- **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, CSIR** stated that AarogyaPath will become the national healthcare information platform of choice in the years to come. It stated it will fill a critical gap in last-mile delivery of patient care within India through improved availability and affordability of healthcare supplies.

IBBI reconstitutes advisory panel on corporate insolvency resolution process

- The insolvency regulator **IBBI** has reconstituted the **Advisory Committee** on **Corporate Insolvency Resolution and Liquidation process**. This panel, which would be chaired by **Uday Kotak**, Executive Vice Chairman and Managing Director, Kotak Mahindra Bank, comprises of 13 members besides the Chairman.

- This Advisory Committee will advise and provide professional support— on a request from the IBBI or on its own volition—on any matter relating to the Corporate Insolvency resolution and liquidation dealt with by the Board under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code 2016, official sources stated.
- Most members will have a term of three years—up to June 11, 2023. The members of this high-powered panel include Ajay Piramal, Chairman, Piramal Group & Shriram Group; Ashish Kumar Chauhan, Managing Director & CEO, BSE Limited; Ashu Suyash, Managing Director & CEO, CRISIL; M.V. Nair, Chairman, Credit Information Bureau (India) Limited; R Shankar Raman, Wholetime Director & Chief Financial Officer, Larsen & Toubro Limited; Rashesh Shah, Chairman & CEO, Edelweiss Group and Somasekhar Sundaresan, a Legal Counsel.
- The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) had earlier constituted the Advisory Committee on Corporate Insolvency and Liquidation in August 2017. Uday Kotak was Chairman of this panel on that occasion too.

4oth GST Council Meeting Highlights 2020
- The Centre has announced a **rate cut for small taxpayers**, adding that **no late fees** would be charged in case of late filing of returns for the period between **July 2017 to January 2020** by those without tax liabilities.
- If GST rates are increased on non-essential items, it will further bring down their demand and impede the overall economic recovery.
- The **40th meeting** of the GST Council, headed by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, will be held through video conference. The 39th meeting of GST Council held in March discussed the impact of coronavirus on the economy.

India launches maiden gas exchange
- India launched its **maiden gas exchange**.
- Indian Energy Exchange, the country's largest electricity trading platform, is the parent of the gas exchange, and had been planning to set up the nation's first natural gas exchange to tap into the increasing demand for clean fuel.
- **Dharmendra Pradhan**, minister of petroleum and natural gas, launched the exchange online.
- According to the **International Energy Agency** global gas demand is expected to fall by 4%, or 150 billion cubic metres (bcm), to 3,850 bcm this year – twice the size of the drop following the 2008 global financial crisis.
- India, along with China, is expected to be a significant driver of demand for natural gas post 2021. Being the biggest emitter of greenhouse gases after the US and China, India aims to achieve emission reduction targets pledged at the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties (CoP) in Paris by promoting the use of natural gas and green fuel.
- This budget, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced plans for expansion of the National Gas Grid to 27,000 km from the present 16,200 km to help deepen gas markets in India.
- According to analysts, a gas trading hub will help people buy and sell gas directly.
- The exchange will help bring down the price of natural gas through competitive trade, boosting usage in the country that relies heavily on cheaper coal for its energy needs.

CBIC launches e-Office application in CGST, customs offices across India
- The **Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC)** launched **e-Office application** in over 500 CGST and Customs offices across India.
- The e-Office application was launched remotely. Over 50,000 officers and staff will use this application making CBIC one of the largest Government departments to automate its internal office procedures
- The e-Office is a **Mission Mode Project (MMP)** under the National e-Governance of India.

- The e-Office application is developed by the **NIC** and is supported by the **Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG).**
- E-Office aims to improve governance by automating the internal processes of handling files and taking decisions within Government.
- The e-Office application's main module, eFile, enables on-line file related work, starting from receiving and marking dak, operating a file, preparing a draft letter, its approval/signature and dispatch of the signed letter.
- The launch of e-Office is one more measure taken by the CBIC in leveraging technology for providing a **'Faceless, Contactless and Paperless'** indirect Tax administration

India becomes founding member of Global Partnership for Artificial Intelligence

- India joined international and multi-stakeholder initiative **Global Partnership for Artificial Intelligence (GPAI)** on **artificial intelligence** as its founder member.
- Delighted to announce that India has joined the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence or GPAI as a founding member. This multi-stakeholder international partnership will promote responsible and human centric development and use of AI, IT minister Ravi Shankar Prasad Stated.
- This is also a first initiative of its type for evolving better understanding of the challenges and opportunities around AI using the experience and diversity of participating countries. In order to achieve this goal, the initiative will look to bridge the gap between theory and practice on AI by supporting cutting-edge research and applied activities on AI-related priorities, an official statement Stated.
- GPAI will bring together experts from the industry, civil society, governments, and academia to collaborate to promote responsible evolution of AI and will also evolve methodologies to show how it can be leveraged to better respond to the present global crisis around Covid-19.
- By joining GPAI as a founding member, India will actively participate in the global development of Artificial Intelligence, leveraging upon its experience around use of digital technologies for inclusive growth, the statement Stated.
- This body is supported by Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Paris.

PM Modi to launch 'Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan' to boost livelihood opportunities in rural India

- The **government of India** has decided to launch a massive rural public works scheme **'Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan'to empower** and **provide livelihood opportunities** to the **returnee migrant workers** and **rural citizens.**
- PM Modi will launch this Abhiyaan on June 20 through video-conference in the presence of the Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister of Bihar.
- The Abhiyaan will be launched from Village – Telihar, Block- Beldaur of Khagaria District of Bihar. Further, the Chief Ministers of other five States and Union Ministers of concerned Ministries will also participate in the virtual launch.
- The villages across 116 districts in the six States will join this programme through the Common Service Centres and Krishi Vigyan Kendras, maintaining the norms of social distancing in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The Abhiyaan will be a coordinated effort between 12 different Ministries/Departments, namely, Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, Road Transport & Highways, Mines, Drinking Water & Sanitation, Environment, Railways, Petroleum & Natural Gas, New & Renewable Energy, Border Roads, Telecom and Agriculture.

India will be global manufacturing hub for electric vehicles in five years

- Union Road Transport Minister **Nitin Gadkari** stated that India will be a manufacturing hub for electric vehicles within the **next five years**, adding that several countries do not want to deal with China after the COVID-19 crisis which can be an opportunity for India. During a webinar titled 'India's Electric Vehicle Roadmap Post COVID-19'.
- The minister asked Indian automotive companies to boost their electric vehicle technology and also to focus on finding **alternatives tolithium-ion battery** tech to help make India the next global manufacturing hub for electric vehicles.

PM Modi launches auction of coal mines for commercial mining

- **PM Modi** stated India has taken the big decision to fully open the **coal and mining sector** for competition, capital, participation, and technology.
- PM Modi stated a major step has been taken to **make India self reliant in the Energy sector**. He stated the government is not only launching an auction for commercial coal mining, but also taking the coal sector out of decades of lockdown. He stated allowing the private sector in commercial coal mining is unlocking resources of a nation with the world's fourth largest reserves. He added that the sector was excluded from competition and transparency was a big problem.
- Prime Minister stated the reforms in the coal sector are a great way to make Eastern and Central India, and the tribal belt the pillars of development. He stated there are 16 aspirational districts in the country which have large reserves of coal but have not benefited the local people as much as they should have. He stated reforms and investment in this sector will play a huge role in making lives easy for the poor and tribal people.
- PM Modi stated the **commercial coal block auction** is a win-win for industry users. He stated new resources will open up and states will get more revenue and employment.

Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan launches India's First Mobile I-LAB

- Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare **Dr Harsh Vardhan** launched **India's first mobile I-Lab(Infectious disease diagnostic lab)** for last-mile access to Covid-19 testing. It will be deployed in remote, interior and inaccessible parts of the country and have the capability to perform 25 Covid-19 RT-PCR tests per day, 300 ELISA tests per day and additional tests for TB and HIV.
- The Infectious Disease Diagnostic Lab (I-LAB) is supported by the **Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science and Technology,** under the COVID-Command strategy.

Climate Change Tracker: India's first ever climate change assessment

- For the first time, India has released its own **national report** on the **state of the climate crisis**. Prepared under the aegis of the ministry of earth sciences (MoES), the report, Assessment Of Climate Change Over. The Indian Region, takes a close look at where we stand regarding long-term changes in climate patterns, and their attendant risks.
- The big revelation is that India's average temperature has increased **by 0.7 degrees Celsiusbetween 1901-2018**, and that this is purely due to the emission of greenhouse gases (GHG). The report further states that in a best-case scenario of immediate mitigation of emissions, India's temperature will still rise **by 2.7 degrees Celsius** by 2099. The worst-case scenario sees a rise of 4.4 degrees Celsius by the end of the century.
- Given the recent cyclones, it is instructive to learn that the sea level near Mumbai is rising at the rate of 3cm per decade. Off the Bengal coast, it's 5cm per decade. Surface temperatures in the Indian Ocean (including the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea) have risen by 1 degree Celsius between 1951-2015, higher than the global average.

- Climate change-induced heatwaves often slip under the radar. The report points out that April-June heatwaves will become four times more frequent by 2099 (compared to 1976-2005), and their duration might also double.

MNRE forms project development cell to attract investment in green energy

- The **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)** has set up a **Project Development Cell (PDC)** to attract more investments into the sector that will help meet its **175 GW** target for green energy.
- Industry experts stated the new body might have been created in the wake of tensions with China, which supplies the bulk of the solar energy equipment used in Indian projects. The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) has announced that it had set-up a Project Development Cell for appealing investments in India by developing projects.
- The cell's main purpose is to create projects that have all prior approvals for investors to adopt them. The approvals include detailed reports and readily available land for allocation for these projects. The PDC will also identify and deal with any issues that could hinder the progress of any potential investments in the future.
- It is intended at creating projects with all sanctions, land available for allocation and with the complete detailed project reports for adoption and investment by investors.
- It would also recognize issues that need to be resolved in order to attract and conclude the investments and put forth these before the Empowered Group.
- The Central government has approved the setting up of an **Empowered Group of Secretaries** and PDCs in ministries and departments of the government for attracting investments in India by development of investible projects in coordination between the Central and state governments, it stated.
- MNRE has established the Cell under its joint secretary, **Amitesh Kumar Sinha**. Along with him, other members include **Ruchin Gupta**, director, MNRE, officers of the Grid Solar Power Division and representatives of Invest India.
- It added that a portal is also being developed to receive proposals from the renewable energy sector, with provisions to check the status of action taken on such proposals.

Shri Pralhad Joshi launches R&D Portal for AatmaNirbhar Bharat in Mining Advancement

- **Shri Pralhad Joshi**, Union Minister for Coal, Mines and Parliamentary Affairs launched **SATYABHAMA (Science and Technology Yojana for Aatmanirbhar Bharat in Mining Advancement)** Portal for **Science and Technology Programme Scheme** of Ministry of Mines. The portal has been designed, developed and implemented by National Informatics Centre (NIC), Mines Informatics Division.
- At the launch, Shri Pralhad Joshi, Union Minister for Coal, Mines and Parliamentary Affairs emphasized the role of Digital Technologies in promoting research and development in the mining and mineral sector in the country. Shri Joshi appealed to the scientists and researchers in the Mining and Mineral Sector to undertake qualitative and innovative research and development work for AatmaNirbhar Bharat.
- In contrast to present system where research proposals are submitted physically by the Scientists / Researchers, SATYABHAMA Portal allows online submission of project proposals along with monitoring of the projects and utilization of funds / grants. The researchers can also submit progress reports and Final Technical Reports of the projects in the electronic format in the portal. A User Manual is also available on the Portal where the stepwise procedures for submission of project proposals have been highlighted. The Portal is integrated with **NGO Darpan Portal** of NITI Aayog.

PM Modi launches Rs 50,000 cr Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyan for migrant workers

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a massive rural public works scheme, the **Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyan,** to create jobs for millions of migrant workers who returned home during the coronavirus pandemic.
- PM Modi launched the scheme worth **Rs 50,000 crore** through video conference in presence of Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar and deputy chief minister Sushil Kumar Modi.
- Chief ministers of other five states and Union ministers of concerned ministries participated in the virtual launch from Telihar village in Khagaria district of Bihar.
- The campaign of **125 days** across **116 districts** in **six states** aims to work in mission mode to help migrant workers.
- The programme will cover 116 districts across **Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Jharkhand and Odisha.** All these districts have received more than 25,000 migrant workers during the lockdown.
- It will involve intensified and focused implementation of **25 different types of works** to provide jobs and create infrastructure in the rural regions of the country with a resource envelope of Rs 50,000 crore.
- The scheme will be a coordinated effort between 12 different ministries or departments—rural development, panchayati raj, road transport and highways, mines, drinking water and sanitation, environment, railways, petroleum and natural gas, new and renewable energy, border roads, telecom and agriculture.
- Laying of fibre optics cable, railway works, rurban mission jobs, sanitation works, waste management, poultry, farm ponds and training through **Krishi Vigyan Kendras** will be given to the migrant workers under the programme.
- The campaign may be extended to other states or districts which witnesses migrant returnees above 25,000.

Niti Aayog forms panel to develop job platform for migrant labours

- **Niti Aayog** has formed a panel including top officials of tech companies like **Google**, **Microsoft** and **Tech Mahindra** to develop a job platform for migrant labours, according to sources involved in the project.
- The move comes at a time when a huge number of migrant workers have lost their jobs during the lockdown period.
- The goal is to develop a platform that can help blue-collar workers find job opportunities in their own language and location, an industry source.
- The platform will connect job seekers, employers, government agencies, skill centres and external partners using new-age technologies like artificial intelligence and machine learning, the source stated.
- Niti Aayog under the leadership of its CEO, **Amitabh Kant** has formed a high-powered committee to drive public and private partnership in order to engage and develop technologies that can solve this looming crisis and provide better job opportunities to the migrant workers, the source stated.
- The panel has some prominent names from the industry including Reliance Industries President Kiran Thomas, Microsoft India President Anant Maheshwari, Tech Mahindra MD and CEO CP Gurnani, Google India country manager and vice president Sanjay Gupta, Bharti Airtel CEO Gopal Vittal, among others.
- As per estimates, there are over 40 crore workers in the unorganized sector accounting for around 30 per cent of India's GDP and nearly 60 per cent of these migrant workers are either semi-skilled or unskilled who struggle everyday to find the right job opportunity.
- The platform will cover the digital divide by providing these workers with an opportunity to find jobs, acquire requisite skillsets, find training centres that will provide them with the opportunity to train in their local language. This will also help the job providers with addressing their specific category of labour and worker requirements, location-based searches and adequate reference checks, the source stated.

- The project would come up with a multilingual application that can be accessed via feature phones and help identify location-based jobs, skill development gaps.

Decarbonising Transport: International Project to Develop Pathway to Low-CO2 Mobility for India

- **NITI Aayog** in collaboration with **International Transport Forum (ITF)** will launch the "Decarbonising Transport in India" project, with the intention to develop a pathway towards a low-carbon transport system for India.
- India has been a member of ITF, an intergovernmental organisation for transport policy, since 2008.
- ITF Secretary-General **Young Tae Kim** and NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant will open the public online launch event. Senior officials of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Ministry of Road, Transport and Highways, and ITF will also be present.
- The online event will inform transport and climate stakeholders in India about planned project activities. It will also offer the opportunity to provide inputs regarding India's transport challenges and how they relate to CO2 reduction ambitions. The discussion will help to focus the project further on India's specific needs and circumstances.
- The "**Decarbonising Transport in India**" project will design a tailor-made transport emissions assessment framework for India. It will provide the government with a detailed understanding of current and future transport activity and the related CO2 emissions as a basis for their decision-making.
- The India project is carried out in the wider context of the International Transport Forum's Decarbonising Transport initiative. It is part of the Decarbonising Transport in Emerging Economies (DTEE) family of projects, which supports transport decarbonisation across different world regions.
- India, Argentina, Azerbaijan, and Morocco are current participants. The DTEE is a collaboration between the ITF and the Wuppertal Institute, supported by the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety.

Centre sanctions Rs 190 cr for augmentation of healthcare facilities in North Eastern States

- **Union Minister of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) Dr Jitendra Singh** has reviewed the COVID status and healthcare facility in **Aspirational districts** with special focus on North East.
- The Minister also disclosed that in the wake of COVID pandemic, The Ministry of DoNER has decided to sanction **190 crore rupees** for augmentation of **healthcare facilities** in the **eight North Eastern States**, particularly for developing infrastructure for management of infectious diseases.
- Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh stated, the concept of Aspirational District was based on 49 key indicators, of which the status of healthcare was an important component. The Minister stated that an important experience from the COVID pandemic is that in future, pre-emptive preparedness for epidemic and infection was imperative for optimum healthcare.
- Considering this, the Minister stated, the Ministry of DoNER has given the North Eastern States the option to send proposals for health related projects to be funded up to over 500 crore rupees from North East Special Infrastructure Development Scheme.
- Union Minister stated, accordingly, proposals have been received from the States of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur, Sikkim, Mizoram and Nagaland, while the proposal from the eighth State of Tripura is awaited.
- Union Minister Jitendra Singh also complemented the Aspirational Districts of Goalpara and Dhubri in Assam for having achieved Ayushman Bharat coverage of nearly 100 and 85 per cent.

NCERT launches Online Yoga Quiz Competition to promote integration of Yoga in school curriculum

- **The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD)** through the **National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)** has undertaken multi-dimensional initiatives to **promote integration of Yoga** in school curriculum.
- NCERT has developed textual materials on Yoga for Healthy Living for Upper Primary to Secondary Stages and also has been organising **Yoga Olympiad** since 2016. In COVID-19 situation children are being guided by their teachers and parents at home to do yogic practices along with physical exercises based on Alternative Academic Calendar developed for different stages of school education.
- To enable students to learn at home and be safe, Union Human Resource Development Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' through social media launched an Online Yoga Quiz Competition organised by NCERT.
- The Minister stated that the competition aims at developing deep understanding and motivating children to apply the understanding of these practices in one's life and living.
- He added that the Competition will also help children to develop healthy habits and lifestyle and thereby promote a sound emotional and mental wellbeing.
- Shri Pokhriyal informed that the Yoga Quiz Competition will be on different dimensions of yoga: Yama and Niymaa Shatkarma/Kriya, Asanas, Pranayama, Meditation, Bandha and Mudra based on the syllabi developed by NCERT.
- He further informed that the competition is open for all students of classes 6 to 12 across the country.

Procurement of MFP by govt touches all time high, giving boost to tribal economy

- The ongoing **procurement of Minor Forest Produces** under the **Minimum Support Price** for MFP Scheme in **16 states** has hit a record-breaking high with the procurement touching **79.42 crore rupees**.
- With this, the total procurement for the year, both government and private trade, has crossed more than **2000 crore rupees**.
- This has proved to be a much needed panacea during the times of the Covid-19 pandemic which has disrupted the lives and livelihoods of Tribals. On 26th May, the Tribal Affairs Ministry also recommended the addition of **23 new items under the MSP** for MFP list.
- These items include agricultural and horticultural produce collected by tribal gatherers. With the injection of over 2000 crore rupees in the tribal economy, the MSP for MFP Scheme can lead in the transformation of the tribal ecosystem and empowering the tribal people.
- Among the States, **Chhattisgarh** has taken the lead by procuring 20,270 Metric tonnes of Minor forest produces worth 52.80 crore rupees.
- Chhattisgarh has emerged as a Champion State for its commendable efforts. With the State government putting all its might behind the implementation of the MSP for MFP Scheme, the systems and processes for procurement is well in place across all districts.

KVIC starts reviving ancient glory of Pokhran potteries

- Seeking to restore the lost glory of the once-most famous pottery of **Pokhran**, a small town in **Jaisalmer district** of Rajasthan where India conducted its 1st nuclear test, the **Khadi and Village Industries Commission** (KVIC) distributed 80 electric pottery wheels to 80 potter families in Pokhran which has a rich heritage in **terracotta products**.
- Pokhran has over 300 potters' families that are engaged with pottery for several decades, but potters started looking for other avenues due to heavy drudgery in the work and no market support.

- Apart from the electric wheels, the KVIC also distributed 8 blunger machines in a group of 10 potters, used for mixing the clay which can produce 800 kg clay in just 8 hours. Manually it takes 5 days to prepare 800 kg mud for pottery making. KVIC has created 350 direct employment in the village. All 80 potters who were given 15 days training by KVIC came up with some exquisite pottery.
- The products ranged from Kulhar to decorative pieces like flower vase, sculptures and interesting traditional utensils like spherical bottles with narrow mouth, Lotas with long spouts, and other spherical utensils used for cooking as well as decorative pieces.
- The main objective of **Kumhar Sashaktikaran Yojana** is to bring back the potters' community to the mainstream. By providing potters with modern equipment and training, we are trying to reconnect them with the society and revive their art," Saxena stated.
- The KVIC Chairman has also instructed the State Director of KVIC in Rajasthan to facilitate marketing and sale of the pottery products at Barmer and Jaisalmer railway stations to provide marketing support to potters.
- Under the scheme, the KVIC also provides equipment like blunger and pug mills for mixing clay for making pottery products. The machines have eliminated drudgery from the process of pottery making and resulted in higher income of potters by 7 to 8 times.

Atal Innovation Mission partners with Coal India Ltd to boost its Innovation & Entrepreneurship initiatives

- **Coal India Limited (CIL)** has agreed to partner with **Atal Innovation Mission (AIM),NITI Aayog** to support proactively the flagship mission's innovation and **entrepreneurship initiatives** across the country. A Statement of Intent (SoI) of a strategic partnership between AIM and Coal India Limited was signed and exchanged in a **virtual e-summit** .
- AIM has various innovation programs and entrepreneurial ecosystem building initiatives such as Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL) at a school level, Atal Incubation Centres (AIC) at institutional levels, Atal Community Innovation Centres (ACIC) for Tier-2, Tier3 cities and rural India, Atal New India Challenges (ANIC) at industry level and Applied Research and Innovation (ARISE) for stimulating innovations in the MSME industry.
- The collaboration between CIL and AIM intends to conduct various activities / programs to support greater awareness and promotion of the innovation ecosystem through the above mentioned AIM programmes and newer initiatives.
- A Virtual SoI was signed by Mission Director Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog Shri R Ramanan and Director (Technical), Coal India Limited (CIL) Shri Binay Dayal in presence of Chairman and Managing Director Coal India Shri Pramod Agrawal.
- Meanwhile, according to the SoI signed, the partnership has been categorised program wise where under Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs) CIL has agreed for adoption of select ATLs Schools, help in conducting teacher training sessions and providing mentoring support to ATL students via Mentors of Change.
- Similarly, under Atal Community Innovation Centres (ACICs), CIL has agreed for adoption and support of ACICs close to their areas of operation, supporting the youth in their journey of societal innovation, hosting community innovation challenges and other innovation based events to spread the impact of the innovation ecosystems being built in the under-served regions of the country.

Harsimrat Kaur Badal launches Food Processing Edition of Exclusive Investment Forum

- **Minister of Food Processing Industries Harsimrat Kaur Badal** stated that new opportunities are opening up in the Food processing sector.

- She was launching the **Food Processing Edition of the Exclusive Investment Forum**. Invest India has designed this forum of unique sectoral series to conduct detailed conversations between global industry leaders and key decision makers from the highest levels of the Central and State Governments.
- The Minister stated that due to the COVID pandemic, the sector has seen unique challenges and has been playing a very important role in ensuring that the lockdown remained successful.
- She stated that her Ministry will support all states to pick up on the '**go vocal for local' thought.**

IIM Ahmedabad launches Rs 100-crore endowment fund

- **Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Ahmedabad** has launched an **endowment fund** with an initial corpus of **Rs 100 crore**, the **first business school** in the country to have such a corpus.
- The institute is targeting **Rs 1,000 crore** as part of this fund over the next five years.
- In a digital event held on June 23, IIM-A announced 10 initial alumni contributors. These include InfoEdge founder and executive vice chairman Sanjeev Bikhchandani, Makemytrip founder Deep Kalra, ICRA non-executive chairman Arun Duggal and Sandeep Singhal, co-founders of WestBridge Capital and Sequoia Capital India, and Kavita Iyer, trustee of Singhal Iyer Family Foundation.
- Funds from alumni are typically used for expansion activities including new buildings, scholarships as well as research and development facilities.
- The endowment fund will have an independent governance structure. Further, there will be a 100 percent tax exemption for the funding.
- IIM Ahmedabad director Errol D'Souza stated the fund was a gift to the institute to enable and generate new forms of knowledge and serve society.
- In November 2019, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi launched an endowment fund through which it aims to raise about $1 billion by 2025. The fund had already received Rs 250 crore, of which a sizable amount is stated to have been donated by Flipkart founders Binny Bansal and Sachin Bansal.
- Globally, institutes like Harvard University, Oxford University and Stanford University use alumni networks extensively for fund-raising. At Harvard, for instance, the endowment is made up of more than 13,000 funds.
- **Smriti Irani launches FICCI-FLO initiative 'Empowering the Greater 50%**
- **Ms Smriti Irani,** Minister of Women and Child Development and Minister of Textiles, Govt of India launched a special campaign **'Empowering the Greater 50%',** a FICCI and FLO initiative spearheaded by Dr Sangita Reddy, President, FICCI.
- Prime Minister Mr Narendra Modi has announced a stimulus package of **Rs 20 lakh crore** which will also empower women and provide financial assistance to the women associated with self-help groups, **FICCI-FLO** can look at this as an opportunity to collaborate.
- With this backdrop, FICCI and FLO has launched the initiative **'Empowering the Greater 50%'** which targets to impact the lives of 1,00,000 women in India over the next three years. As a first step, this initiative aims to build a network of visionaries and influencers who could pledge their time and resources to support this campaign.
- The program is designed to enhance entrepreneurial and decision-making skills through engagements such as mentorship programs, access to finance, business accelerators, training women to get into boards, special guidance to marginalized women on a business framework and financial models.
- Recently, **Jahnabi Phookan** appointed as the **National President** of **FICCI Ladies Organization** (FLO)

India pledges USD 10 million to UNRWA over next two years

- **India** has announced contributing **10 million US dollar** to the **United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)** over the coming two years.
- Addressing an Extraordinary Virtual Ministerial Pledging Conference for UNRWA, Minister of State for External Affairs V Muraleedharan stated that capacity enhancement through training and building durable institutions is a major plank of our developmental assistance to Palestine.
- Asserting that UNRWA needs continued support, Mr Muraleedharan stated when certain countries withdrew funding, India had stepped up its annual pledge from 1.25 million US dollar to 5 million US dollar in 2018. He stated, for this year, India has already disbursed two million dollar and will soon be remitting the balance three million dollar.
- He stated, India provides 250 annual scholarships to Palestinian youth and officials, apart from regular customised training programmes, and our current project grant is around 72 million dollar.

Rs. 2,000 crore allocated by PM CARES Fund for supply of 50,000 ventilators to govt run COVID hospitals

- The **PM-CARES Fund Trust** has allocated **Rs. 2,000 crore** for supply of **50,000 'Made-in-India' ventilators** to government run COVID hospitals in all States and Union Territories.
- In addition, **Rs. 1,000 crore** have been allocated for the welfare of migrant labourers.
- Out of the 50,000 ventilators, 30,000 ventilators are being manufactured by Bharat Electronics Limited.
- 2,923 ventilators have been manufactured so far and out of which, 1,340 ventilators have already been delivered to the States and Union Territories.
- These ventilators have been supplied to Maharashtra, Delhi, Gujarat, Bihar, Karnataka and Rajasthan.
- By the end of this month, additional 14,000 ventilators will be delivered to all the States and Union Territories.
- In addition, Rs. 1,000 crore have already been released to States and Union Territories for welfare of the migrant labourers. This assistance will be used for arranging accommodation, food, medical treatment and transportation of the migrants.
- Larger portion of the fund was allocated to Maharashtra followed by Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.
- Rs. 181 crore were released to Maharashtra, Rs. 103 crore to Uttar Pradesh and Rs. 83 crores to Tamil Nadu.
- Grants were also realised to Gujarat, Delhi, West Bengal, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Karnataka.

HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank launches 2nd phase of YUKTI

- **Union Minister of Human Resource Development, Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank**, launched the second phase of **YUKTI (Young India combating COVID with Knowledge, Technology and Innovation)** to help systematically assimilate technologies having commercial potential and information related to incubated startups in country's higher education institutions.
- Mr. Pokhriyal stated that **YUKTI 2.0** is a logical extension of earlier version of YUKTI, as an initiative of the HRD Ministry to identify ideas relevant in COVID pandemic.
- He also informed that all the outcomes of earlier version of 'YUKTI' will be released soon.
- The minister appreciated the initiative and stated that Prime Minister Modi has given the mission of making Bharat Atmanirbhar and, YUKTI 2.0 initiative is a very important step in that direction.
- The HRD Minister had earlier launched the YUKTI web portal on 11 April, 2020.The Ministry of HRD prepared the portal in view of Coronavirus which intends to cover different dimensions of COVID-19 challenges.

Govt approves Rs 15K-cr animal husbandry infra fund to generate employment

- The government announced a **Rs 15,000 crore infrastructure development fund** with an interest subsidy scheme to promote investment by private players and MSMEs in dairy, meat processing and animal feed plants, a move which is expected to create 3.5 million jobs.
- The fund is part of the **Rs 20 trillion** stimulus package announced in May to help people affected by the lockdown to prevent the spread of Covid-19.
- An interest subvention of **3-4 per cent** will be provided to farmer producer organisations, MSMEs and private players for setting up of dairy, meat processing and animal feed plants.
- The government had earlier approved the **Dairy Infrastructure Development Fund (DIDF)** worth **Rs 10,000 crore** for incentivizing investment by the cooperative sector for development of dairy infrastructure.
- Besides, the Centre would also set up a Credit Guarantee Fund of **Rs 750 crore** to be managed by **National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)** which would provide credit guarantee to the projects which are covered under the MSME defined ceilings. The guarantee coverage would be upto 25 per cent of the credit facility of the borrower

Gadkari launches scheme to provide Rs 20,000 cr guarantee cover to MSMEs

- Union Minister **Nitin Gadkari** launched the **Credit Guarantee Scheme for Sub-ordinate Debt** to provide **Rs 20,000 crore** of guarantee cover to two lakh **micro, small and medium enterprises**.
- The funding scheme to help the distressed MSME sector entails a sub-debt facility to the promoters of those operational MSMEs that are distressed or non-performing assets (NPAs). It is also called the **"Distressed Assets Fund ” Sub-ordinate Debt for MSMEs"**.
- Promoters of the MSMEs will be given credit equal to 15 percent of their stake (equity plus debt) or Rs 75 lakh, whichever is lower.
- Ninety per cent guarantee coverage for this sub-debt will be given under the scheme, whereas the remaining 10 per cent would come from the promoters concerned.
- There will be a **moratorium of seven years** on payment of principal amount, whereas **maximum tenure for repayment will be 10 years.**
- Promoters of MSMEs meeting the eligibility criteria may approach any scheduled commercial banks to avail benefit under the scheme. The scheme will be operationalised through Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for MSEs

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh inaugurates Devika and Puneja Bridges in Udhampur & Doda Districts

- Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, **Dr Jitendra Singh** inaugurated **two important Bridges Devika and Puneja** in Udhampur and Doda districts respectively in **Jammu and Kashmir** through virtual platform.
- The **10-meter-long Devika Bridge** at a cost of 75 lakhs was constructed in about one-year time span by Border Roads Organisation.
- **50-meter-long Puneja Bridge** constructed by BRO at a cost of Rs 4 Crore at Bhaderwah in Doda District. Basoli-Bani-Bhaderwah road is a vital alternate link to the Doda, Kishtwar, Bhaderwah and Kashmir valley from Pathankot (Punjab) region without passing Jammu and Udhampur.

Govt to provide 2% interest subsidy to 'Shishu' borrowers under Mudra Yojna

- The government decided to provide **2 per cent interest subvention** to borrowers under the **'Shishu'** category of the flagship **Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY),** for a period of **12 months** to eligible borrowers.

- Under the **Shishu category**, collateral free loans of up to **Rs.50,000** are given to beneficiaries.
- The PMMY was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on **April 8, 2015** for providing loans up to 10 lakh to non-corporate, non-farm small/micro enterprises.
- These loans are classified as MUDRA loans under PMMY. These loans are given by commercial banks, RRBs, small finance banks, MFIs and NBFCs.

MSDE Ministry, IBM unveil Free Digital Learning Platform to reach job seekers

- **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)** in partnership with **IBM** has unveiled Free **Digital Learning Platform 'Skills Build Reignite'** to reach more job seekers and provide new resources to business owners in India.
- Directorate General of Training, DGT, under the aegis of MSDE has also announced a 10-week duration Skills Build Innovation Camp for students, providing hands on project experience, enhanced learning and increased employability.
- Union Minister of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Dr. Mahendra Nath Pandey has congratulated DGT and IBM India for their collaborative efforts. He stated, it marks a significant milestone in supporting Centre's efforts in accelerating Indian economy's revival from the adverse effects of COVID-19 with the launch of SkillsBuild Reignite and Innovation Camp.
- He stated, IBM's expertise in providing multifaceted digital skill training in the area of Cloud Computing and Artificial Intelligence will strengthen the efforts in the recovery of local workforces, communities and economies by supporting job seekers, entrepreneurs and small businesses. IBM has committed to provide multifaceted digital skill training in the area of Cloud Computing and Artificial Intelligence to students and trainers in National Skill Training Institutes (NSTIs) and ITIs.
- Even in this pandemic period, DGT is lining up with the industry partners for enabling blended, e-learning with a combination of multimedia and similar digital resources for the students, trainees, trainers and the administrators, by providing anytime, anywhere online digital content through its BharatSkills learning platform.

Tourism Ministry conducts webinar on 'Vedic Food and Spices of India'

- **Tourism Ministry** conducted a webinar on '**Vedic Food and Spices of India**' under **Dekho Apna Desh** webinar series.
- The webinar focused on the importance of Vedic food and spices of India which remain unexplained to the world and never bridged to modern world cuisines. This session attempted to decode myths about some foods and presented the secret of spices and the technique of preparations in order to inspire the traveller to come, explore and experience.
- Dekho Apna Desh Webinar Series is an effort to showcase India's rich diversity under **Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat**. The panelist spoke about the importance of cookware. The benefits of cooking in the Earthenware was highlighted as food prepared in these vessels retains its natural flavour.
- The heat is also evenly spread and maintained. Copper pot has very good medicinal properties and no bacteria would survive. Iron pans are rich in minerals and food cooked is tasty.

Cabinet opens space assets for private sector

- **Cabinet meeting** held under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Narendra Modi ratified the decision of boosting **private sector participation** in the **space sector** in the country.

- Union Atomic Energy and Space Minister, Dr. Jitendra Singh informed that that government will constitute **Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACE)** for effective socio-economic usage of space technology.
- Dr. Singh added that the Public Sector Enterprise, New Space India Limited (NSIL) will endeavour to reorient space activities from a supply driven model to a demand driven model, thereby ensuring optimum utilization of our space assets.

CBDT extends last date for filing income tax return for 2019-20 till 30th November

- **Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT)** has extended the time limit for filing of original as well as revised income-tax returns for 2018-19 till 31st July.
- It has also extended the due date for filing income tax return for 2019-20 till **30th November** of this year. The decision has been taken considering the difficulties faced by applicants due to the COVID pandemic.
- In order to provide relief to small and middle class taxpayers, CBDT has also extended the due date for payment of self assessment tax upto the limit of **1 lakh rupees**, till 30th November.
- The due-date for making various investments and payments for claiming deduction under section 80C of the Income Tax Act has also been extended till 31st of July for the financial year 2019-20. CBDT has also extended the date for linking Aadhaar with PAN **till 31 March** next year.

Health minister Harsh Vardhan launches mobile app 'eBloodServices' to order blood

- **Union health minister Harsh Vardhan** launched the **'eBloodServices'** App in partnership with the **Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS)**, for easy access to blood in this critical time of coronavirus pandemic.
- The app is developed by the **ERaktkosh team** and will bring 'transparency' in the blood donation program.
- Through this app, the availability of blood will be visible right in your phone. Once an order has been placed then the blood bank will keep the request active for 12 hours. The app has the facility of placing an order for up to four units of blood in one go.

Niti Aayog launches behaviour change campaign 'navigating the new normal'

- **NITI Aayoglaunched the behaviour change campaign'Navigating the New Normal'** and its website to help people follow norms to contain the spread of Covid-19.
- Focusing on Covid-safe behaviour, especially wearing masks, during the 'Unlock' phase of the Covid-19 pandemic, the campaign has been developed under the guidance of Empowered Group 6, chaired by NITI Aayog **CEO Amitabh Kant.**
- The campaign has two parts. The first is a web portal containing resources informed by behavioural science and the use of nudge and social norms theory, related to Covid-safe behavioural norms during the ongoing Unlock phase and the second is a media campaign focused on the wearing of masks.
- Kant stated an effort has been made to provide people with prompts and reminders along with simple, easy-to-practice ideas of designing their environment in such a manner that practising such behaviour becomes easy.
- The campaign and website were launched in partnership with **Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF),** Centre for Social and Behavioural Change (CSBC), Ashoka University, and the Ministries of Health and WCD.
- As many as 92,000 NGOs and civil society organisations(CSOs) working with NITI Aayog too participated in the virtual launch.

NS Tomar launches web portal of Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan

- **Minister for Rural Development Narendra Singh Tomar** launched the web portal of the **Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan** through video conferencing from New Delhi. The Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan is the massive employment generation-cum-rural infrastructure creation programme of the Government of India which was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi . Its objective is to provide employment to **returnee migrant workers** at their native places for next four months, because of the situation arising out of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Mr Tomar expressed happiness at the launch of the portal which will provide information to the public about the various district-wise and scheme-wise components of the Abhiyaan.
- It will also help to monitor the progress of completion of the works being undertaken with a fund outlay of **50 thousand crore rupees** in 116 districts of 6 states, where there are more than 25000 returnee migrant workers per district.
- He stated, **Ministry of Rural Development** is the **nodal Ministry** for Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan and it is working in close coordination with 12 other Ministries for the 25 categories of works which are to be completed in the identified districts in 125 days. Mr Tomar stated that these ongoing works which were progressing at a normal pace as per schedule, have now been fast-tracked to transform the challenge presented by the pandemic into an opportunity to create infrastructure in rural areas in a short duration.
- The launch of the web portal was followed by a workshop for the **Central Nodal Officers** of the 116 identified districts.

'Surakshit Dada-Dadi, Nana-Nani Abhiyan' launched to ensure well-being of Senior Citizens amid COVID-19 pandemic

- **Surakshit Dada-Dadi, Nana-Nani Abhiyan** is a collaborative effort between **NITI Aayog**, **Piramal Foundation**, and **25 Aspirational Districts** to ensure the well-being of **2.9 million Senior Citizens** during the COVID-19 pandemic. NITI Aayog has launched this campaign following the appeal by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to take care of senior citizens.
- Piramal foundation with the help of social welfare department and district administration is implementing this campaign in Surendranagar district. More than 150 volunteers are engaged in this campaign. They are contacting about 25000 senior citizens of the district through phone calls by taking the contact details from the district administration.
- They inquired about the health of old persons and gave them information on Coronavirus. They also helped them to fulfill their essential requirements like medicines, ration or work related to ration cards.

Centre to set up taskforce for 'Golden Hour' accident claims, insurance pool proposed

- The **Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH)** will set up **a ten-member task force** to work out the modalities of funding **motor accident victims'** treatment during the crucial '**Golden Hour'**.
- The decision was taken at a meeting chaired by officials from MoRTH, with officials from the **National Health Authority (NHA)** and **general insurance companies** in attendance.
- The NHA will be the **nodal agency** for co-ordinating payments made to the hospitals that treat such patients.
- Sources stated that the immediate response mechanism for road accidents on national highways (which accounts for the maximum number of deaths every year) will be decided by the task force. Nodal officers for dealing with such incidents could also be appointed.
- For insured vehicles, a committee that will be in charge of collecting funds will be set up. The funds would be handed over the NHA for disbursement," stated a top insurance official with direct knowledge of the meeting.

- The proposed task force will be assigned the responsibility of working out the modalities of claim settlement in such cases. Members of the insurance regulatory body, road ministry, insurance companies as well as NHA will be part of the task force.
- The golden hour is the first hour after an accident occurs. If proper treatment is given during the first 60 minutes, victims have a higher chance of survival.
- In hit-and-run cases, the victims lie stranded on the roads for hours. Typically, motor third-party insurance pays for death or injury caused by a vehicle owner. But the claims settlement process is lengthy and dispute last for more than five years after the incident.
- Union minister for road transport and highways minister had in January 2020 asked insurance companies to assist the government in rolling out a cashless scheme for treatment of such victims. However, insurance companies had sought a structured programme where they could contribute a part of the treatment cost based on pre-agreed terms.

President promulgates Banking Regulation (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020

- **President Ram Nath Kovind** has **promulgated** the **Banking Regulation (Amendment) Ordinance**, 2020.
- The Finance Ministry stated that, The Ordinance amends the **Banking Regulation Act, 1949** as applicable to Cooperative Banks. The Ordinance seeks to protect the interests of depositors and strengthen cooperative banks by improving governance and oversight by extending powers already available with RBI in respect of other banks to Co-operative Banks as well for sound banking regulation, and by ensuring professionalism and enabling their access to capital.
- It further added, the amendments do not affect existing powers of the State Registrars of Co-operative Societies under state co-operative laws. The amendments do not apply to Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) or co-operative societies whose primary object and principal business is long-term finance for agricultural development, and which do not use the word "bank" or "banker" or "banking" and do not act as drawees of cheques.
- The Ordinance also amends **Section 45** of the **Banking Regulation Act**, to enable making of a scheme of reconstruction or amalgamation of a banking company for protecting the interest of the public, depositors and the banking system and for securing its proper management, even without making an order of moratorium, so as to avoid disruption of the financial system.

BRO rebuilds bridge on Munsyari Milam Road near Indo -China Border in Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand

In Uttarakhand , a crucial bridge on the Munsyari Milam Road near the Indo -China Border in Pithoragarh has been **rebuilt by the Border Road Organisation(BRO)** in a record time of **five days**.

The **100 feet long bridge** with a capacity of carrying weight of around 30 tonnes, is the only route for movement of Army and ITBP personnel to the higher Himalayan posts along the china border.

The old bridge collapsed because of overloaded trailer carrying an excavator tried to cross it despite several warnings from the BRO.

This bridge is very important for supplying ration to the army and the ITBP men near the Indo-China border in Uttarakhand.

Govt Approves Additional Rs 1,691 Crore for Highway Works in J&K, Uttarakhand for 2020-21

- The government has approved an **additional Rs1,691 crore for highway works** by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) **in Jammu & Kashmir and Uttarakhand** for 2020-21.

- Of this, **Rs 1,351.10 crore** has been sanctioned to BRO for road works in **Jammu & Kashmir.**
- A total of **Rs 340 crore** ceiling has been approved for **Uttarakhand** for national highways.
- In addition, it has also given nod for additional sanction of Rs 71 crore for highway works by the state's Public Works Department in Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Sikkim and Tamil Nadu,
- Besides, it has also enhanced the total ceiling to **Rs 1,955 crore** for highways work for Nagaland under **Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP)** from the existing Rs 1,081 crore.

Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda launches TRIFED Digital Platforms through video conference

- **Tribal Affairs Ministry** has taken several immediate initiatives to re-energise the lagging economic activity for sustaining the livelihood development of tribals to ease the burden of the tribal artisans arising out of COVID pandemic.
- **The TRIFED Digital Platforms**, Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda stated that the team of "**TRIFED Warriors**" will take Tribal Commerce based on forest products, handlooms and handicrafts to a new high for transforming tribal lives and livelihoods.
- He stated that with more and more people going online to meet their various needs, an important strategic push has been to adopt an all-encompassing digitisation drive to map and link its village based tribal producers to the national and international markets. This was the key focus area of a webinar organised by TRIFED.
- It was attended by over 200 participants. The main highlight was the launch of the TRIBES India products on the **Government e-Marketplace** and **TRIFED's new website**.
- Mr Munda opined that TRIFED plays a major role in connecting the tribals to the mainstream and congratulated the team for their initiatives being launched.
- He urged them to focus on extracting and utilising the wealth of information and knowledge that the tribal communities have, especially with regard to the jungle, and how that can be used to not just benefit their community but can also be of greater help to the country and people in these troubled times.

Union Minister Shripad Naik Inaugurates Defence Conclave 2020 Gujarat

- Union Minister of State for Defence **Shripad Naik** inaugurated **two-day Defence Conclave 2020 Gujarat** via video conferencing and stated that strong defence capabilities would help the nation safeguarding the prosperity **"generated in the last few decades"**.
- The minister stated that the huge opportunity and clear vision of the Centre for the defence sector "have attracted the attention of not only a few large players but also a large number of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs).
- Naik stated that the slowing down/saturation of markets in other sectors has also been responsible for directing their interest towards the unexplored defence sector which promises sustained business opportunities.
- Naik stated that the state has emerged as an excellent infrastructure facility and can offer both forward and backward supply chain linkages to the defence and aerospace manufacturing sector.
- The growth drivers for Gujarat include its vast coastline of 1,600 kilometres with well-connected ports, the MSME engineering companies providing entire supply chain for the defence sector, premier educational institutes in management, engineering, design, research and development, infrastructure planning and world-class shipbuilding and repairing facility, he stated.

India inks pact with Bhutan for 600 MW Kholongchhu Hydroelectric Project

- **India** signed a concession agreement with **Bhutan** for the **600 MW Kholongchhu Hydroelectric Project** in the virtual presence of external affairs minister S Jaishankar.
- The 600 MW run-of-the-river project is located on the lower course of the Kholongchhu River in Trashiyangtse district in Eastern Bhutan.
- The project envisages an underground powerhouse of four 150 MW turbines with water impounded by a concrete gravity dam of 95 meters height.
- It will be implemented by Kholongchhu Hydro Energy Limited, a Joint Venture launched between Druk Green Power Corporation (DGPC) of Bhutan and Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam Limited (SJVNL) of India.
- The concession agreement will lead to commencement of construction and other works of this first Joint Venture Hydroelectric Project between India and Bhutan.
- The project is expected to be completed in the second half of **2025.**
- The **720 MWMangdechhu hydroelectric project** was jointly inaugurated earlier in August, 2019 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Bhutan counterpart Lotay Tshering.

India plans incentives to double auto exports in next five years
- **India** is drawing up an **incentive scheme** for the autos sector **aimed at doubling exportsof vehicles and components** in the **next five years.**
- The incentives would be based on the sales value of vehicles or components and eligible companies would need to meet certain conditions, including a minimum revenue and profit threshold and presence in at least 10 countries.
- The move is part of India's effort to create 'champion' sectors to attract investment, generate jobs and boost manufacturing.
- India wants to promote exports and has identified some sectors, including autos and textiles, for which incentive plans are being designed.
- The initial scheme has been designed to incentivise large companies and in turn benefit smaller players in the supply chain, making the auto sector more competitive overall.

Govt launches PM FME scheme to help micro food processing enterprises
- The Government launched aRs **10,000 crore scheme** for micro enterprises which offers 50% subsidy for storage and transportation to prevent distress sale by farmers.
- The scheme, called **Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Enterprises (PM FME)** launched by **Food processing minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal,** aims to bring in new technology, apart from affordable credit to help small entrepreneurs penetrate new markets.
- The scheme will be implemented for five years until 2024-25. It will generate investment of Rs 35,000 core, generate 900,000 jobs and help 800,000 units.
- **Operation Greens Scheme**, which has been extended from tomato, onion and potato (TOP) crops to other notified horticulture crops for providing subsidy for their transportation and storage from surplus production area to major consumption centres, will prevent post-harvest losses and distress sale by farmers when prices fall.
- Under the PM FME scheme, micro enterprises will get **35% subsidy on project cost,** with a ceiling of **Rs 10 lakh.** The beneficiaries will have to contribute at least 10% of the project cost while the balance will come from loans. Nearly 200,000 micro enterprises will get credit-linked subsidy support.
- Under the scheme, meant for the unorganised sector, the expenditure will be shared by the central and state governments in the ratio of 60:40.

- The ministry will provide the 50% subsidy for "transportation of eligible crops from surplus production clusters to consumption centres or hiring of appropriate storage facilities for eligible crops for a maximum period of three months".
- The maximum subsidy amount per applicant will be Rs 1 crore during a six-month period.

Defence Minister launches web portal for issuing NOCs for projects in Indian waters

- **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh** launched **a web portal** for issuing **no objection certificates (NOCs)** to entities that are undertaking power projects and activities related to research, survey, exploration and exploitation in the Indian territorial waters and exclusive economic zones.
- The online system will establish an effective, speedy and transparent mechanism to process these proposals.
- Singh, along with Minister of State for Defence Shripad Naik, launched the web portal in the presence of Army Chief General M M Naravane, Navy Chief Admiral Karambir Singh, and Air Chief Marshal R K S Bhadauria.
- The newly developed web portal will facilitate the applicants in submitting their proposals online for seeking Security Clearance from the Defence Ministry for undertaking Power Projects and RSEE activities.
- The web portal has been developed with the assistance of **National e-Governance Division (NeGD), Bhaskaracharya Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics (BISAG)** and **National Informatics Centre (NIC).**

Culture Ministry to celebrate "Sankalp Parva" to plant trees from 28th June to 12 July 2020

- **The Ministry of Culture** has decided to celebrate **Sankalp Parvafrom 28th June to 12 July 2020.**
- This initiative is in line with the Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi's call for planting at least five trees either in Office campus or wherever it is possible, to ensure clean and healthy environment of the country.
- The Ministry of Culture has asked all its Subordinate Offices, Academies, Attached Institutions, Affiliated Institutions to plant the five trees as identified by PM Modi, in its campus or at the surroundings wherever it is possible.These trees are (i) "Bargad" (ii) "Awla" (iii) "Pepal" (iv) "Ashok" (v) "Bel".

NFL launches five Mobile Soil Testing Labs for testing the soil samples at farmers' doorstep

- **National Fertilizers Limited- NFL** has launched five Mobile Soil Testing Labs for testing the soil samples at the doorstep of farmers free of cost.
- It will give further boost to the Soil Testing facility in the country for promoting appropriate use of fertilizers.
- Chairman and Managing Director of NFL V N Datt flagged off one such Mobile Lab from the premises of NFL Corporate Office in Noida.
- These Mobile Labs, loaded with latest soil testing equipment will be used for macro and micro nutrient analysis of soil.
- In addition to this, these Mobile Labs are also equipped with Audio-Video system to educate farmers on various agricultural topics.
- Other than the Mobile Soil Testing Labs, the company is also serving the farming community through six Static Soil Testing Labs located in different parts of country.
- All these Labs tested around 25 thousand soil samples free of cost in the year 2019-20.

India bans 59 Chinese mobile apps on security threat

- India has banned **59 Chinese mobile apps**, including the popular **SHAREit, TikTok, UC Browser**, and SHEIN, citing them to be a security threat. The government invoked its powers under **Section 69A of the Information Technology**

Act and relevant provisions under IT Rules 2009 to block these apps, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) stated.

- The move did not come as a surprise as it comes in the backdrop of stand-off along the Line of Actual control in Ladakh with Chinese troops. Other popular apps on the ban list include Club Factory, Helo, and CamScanner. The ministry stated it had received complaints about the misuse of some mobile apps available on the Android and iOS platforms "for stealing and surreptitiously transmitting user data" in an unauthorised manner to servers located outside India.

- The Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre and the Home Ministry, who had earlier sent an exhaustive recommendation on the apps to be blocked, were consulted on this issue, the MeitY statement stated.

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Revision Points

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Portfolio	Union Minister	Constituency
Ministry of personnel, public grievances and pensions	Narendra Modi	Varanasi
Ministry of Defence	Rajnath Singh	Lucknow
Ministry of Home Affairs	Amit Shah	Gandhinagar
Ministry of Road Transport and Highways & Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium enterprises	Nitin Gadkari	Nagpur
Ministry of Chemical and Fertilizers	DV Sadananda Gowda	Bangalore North
Ministry of Finance & Ministry of Corporate Affairs	Nirmala Sitharaman	Rajya Sabha (Karnataka)
Ministry of Consumer affairs, food and public distribution	Ram Vilas Paswan	Rajya Sabha (Bihar)
Ministry of agriculture and farmers welfare, Ministry of Rural Development & Ministry of Panchayati Raj	Narendra Singh Tomar	Morena
Ministry of Law and Justice, Ministry of communications & Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology	Ravi Shankar Prasad	Patna Sahib
Ministry of Food Processing Industries	Harsimrat Kaur Badal	Bathinda
Ministry of Social justice and empowerment	Thaawar Chand Gehlot	Rajya Sabha (Madhya Pradesh)
Ministry of External Affairs	Dr Subrahmanyam Jaishankar	Rajya Sabha (Gujarat)
Ministry of Human Resource Development	Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank'	Haridwar
Ministry of Tribal Affairs	Arjun Munda	Khunti

Ministry of Women and child Development & Ministry of Textiles	Smriti Zubin Irani	Amethi
Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Ministry of Science and Technology & Ministry of Earth Sciences	Dr Harsh Vardhan	Chandni Chowk
Ministry of environment, forest and climate change & Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprise	Prakash Javadekar	Rajya Sabha (Maharshtra)
Ministry of Railways & Ministry of Commerce and Industry	Piyush Goyal	Rajya Sabha (Maharshtra)
Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas & Ministry of Steel	Dharmendra Pradhan	Rajya Sabha (Madhya Pradesh)
Ministry of Minority Affairs	Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi	Rajya Sabha (Jharkhand)
Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, Ministry of coal & Ministry of Mines		Dharwad
Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship	Dr Mahendra Nath Pandey	Chandauli
Ministry of Animal Husbandry, dairying and fisheries	Giriraj Singh	Begusarai

Important International News

WHO Launches 'COVID-19 Technology Access Pool' For Equitable Access To Life-saving Tech

- **WHO** launched the '**COVID-19 Technology Access Pool'** May 30. This comes after at least 37 countries jointly appealed to the World Health Organisation for common ownership of vaccines, medicines and other diagnostic tools to combat the global health crisis. While the total number of COVID-19 cases worldwide has now surpassed 5.9 million, these countries want collective ownership of COVID-19 treatment since patent laws can act as a barrier to the sharing of crucial supplies amid the outbreak.
- While the call has been lauded by **Doctors Without Borders**, a drug industry alliance has posed doubt about the capability of the pool to broaden access to COVID-19 treatment, as per reports. Meanwhile, as the COVID-19 infection continues to spread, more than 100 vaccines are in various developmental stages but none has been approved for mass production yet.
- The **37 nations** had originally proposed resource pooling in March with an aim to provide a single stop for all the scientific data regarding the pandemic and its treatment as the disease has now killed at least 364,357 people worldwide.
- WHO has also issued a '**Solidarity Call to Action'** urging other stakeholders of the UN health agency to join the cause.

UNSC extends South Sudan arms embargo until May 2021

- The **United Nations Security Council (UNSC)** has adopted a resolution extending until **May next year** an arms **embargo** on **South Sudan** and a travel ban and financial sanctions for targeted individuals.
- The United States-drafted document received 12 votes in favour, with Russia, China and South Africa abstaining.
- The resolution welcomed "encouraging developments in South Sudan's peace process", including the beginning of the formation of a transitional government. But it also expressed "deep concern at continued fighting in South Sudan" and condemns violations of the peace deal and cessation of hostilities agreement.
- The resolution extended the arms embargo and the targeted sanctions until **May 31, 2021**, but authorised a mid-term review of the measures by **December 15, 2020.**
- The UK-based rights group called on the UNSC and UN member nations to enforce it.

60 million could be pushed into extreme poverty in 2020 : World Bank President

- The **World Bank** urged countries to go for comprehensive policies to boost long-term growth along with short term measures to address health emergencies and secure core public services in the wake of the coronavirus crisis, amid indications that **60 million people** could be pushed into **extreme poverty** in 2020.
- The scope and speed with which the Covid-19 pandemic and economic shutdowns have devastated the poor around the world are unprecedented in modern times, World Bank Group President David Malpass stated.
- Current estimates show that 60 million people could be pushed into extreme poverty in 2020. These estimates are likely to rise further, with the reopening of advanced economies the primary determinant, he told reporters during a conference call as the World Bank released analytical chapters from its flagship Global Economic Prospects report.

Bangladesh launches plasma network for COVID 19 treatment

- The Government of **Bangladesh** has launched an **online network** to facilitate **plasma exchange** between recovered patients of COVID-19 and those undergoing treatment for Corona infection in the country.
- Named '**Shohojodha**', the initiative has been launched by the ICT division of the government of Bangladesh in collaboration with Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), a2i innovation lab and eGeneration to facilitate collection and distribution of plasma from patients who have recovered from Coronavirus.
- The plasma therapy for the Coronavirus patients in Bangladesh is under trial process awaiting final approval from the government.

American DFC to invest $350 million in India firms

- The **US International Development Finance Corporation (DFC)** is looking to invest **$350 million** in India to **support multiple projects** in the country's financial services sector, health infrastructure, renewable energy and food security space.
- DFC, known as America's development bank, has approved loans worth **$142 million** for ReNew Power and $50 million for Sitara Solar Energy to build and operate solar power plants in Rajasthan, $50 million for Northern Arc to scale up lending to businesses that expand access to water, sanitation, and food or advance women's economic empowerment, besides committing to invest in several other projects.
- These are part of DFC's $1 billion commitment approved by its board to firms enaged in developmental works across in Africa, Latin America and other emerging markets. The investments mark one of the largest tranches approved during a board meeting, DFC stated.
- The projects have a particular focus on development impact, with nearly 60 % of investments in low- and lower middle-income countries, DFC stated in a statement from Washington, adding that the investments are aimed at

supporting financial services for women, small businesses, and other underserved groups at a time when capital is in desperate need.

ADB Convenes High-Level Advisory Panel to Support COVID-19 Recovery in Southeast Asia

- **Asian Development Bank (ADB) President Masatsugu Asakawa** has launched a **high-level panel** of leading experts in economics, finance, and health to help ministers, central bank governors, and other senior officials identify options for **Southeast Asian economies** to tap into to quickly bounce back after the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

- The panel, moderated by ADB Vice-President Ahmed **M. Saeed**, discussed lessons learned as countries took immediate measures to address the pandemic's devastating health, social, economic, and financial impacts, and their medium- to long-term priorities. They also covered topics such as the need for structural reforms, innovation in domestic resource mobilization, and how to make recovery sustainable amid global headwinds.

- The event drew senior officials from three of Southeast Asia's largest economies including Indonesian Finance Minister and ADB Governor Sri Mulyani Indrawati, Philippine Finance Secretary and ADB Governor Carlos G Dominguez, and Bank of Thailand Governor Veerathai Santiprabhob.

- They exchanged views with eight international experts in economics, finance, health, social protection, data and sustainable development including former Governor of the Reserve Bank of India **Raghuram Rajan**.

- On April 13, ADB announced a 20 billion dollars package to support developing member countries' COVID-19 response. ADB has since approved 7.2 billion dollars in rapid response loans and technical assistance, including nine interventions under the COVID-19 pandemic response option (CPRO) totalling 5.52 billion dollars for India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Georgia, Indonesia, the Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, Nepal and the Philippines.

- The high-level dialogue is supported by a **5 million dollar technical assistance** grant which ADB approved on April 24. The grant will help countries receiving CPRO funding monitor their Covid-19 response and guide them in preparing recovery strategies and action plans.

India, with 12 nations, leads initiative at UN to counter misinformation on COVID-19

- **India**, along with **12 other countries**, has led an initiative aimed at spreading fact-based content to counter **misinformation** on the coronavirus, with over 130 nations endorsing the global call to fight the **"infodemic"** relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- On the initiative by Australia, Chile, France, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Latvia, Lebanon, Mauritius, Mexico, Norway, Senegal and South Africa, a total of 132 member states endorsed a cross-regional statement on "infodemic" or manipulated information.

- UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has Stated that apart from fighting the deadly COVID-19 pandemic, the world is also seeing a "dangerous outbreak" of misinformation about harmful health advice, hate speech and wild conspiracy theories and antidote to this pandemic of misinformation is fact-based news and analysis.

- India's Permanent Mission to the UN Stated that it supported the UN Communications Response initiative **'#VERIFIED'** and **"calls for global action to fight infodemic in times of COVID-19.**"

- Among other negative consequences, COVID-19 has created conditions that enable the spread of disinformation, fake news and doctored videos to foment violence and divide communities." "It is critical that states counter misinformation as a toxic driver of secondary impacts of the pandemic that can heighten the risk of conflict, violence, human rights violations and mass atrocities," the cross-regional statement Stated.

- Verified', led by the UN Department for Global Communications (DGC), will provide information around three themes: science to save lives; solidarity to promote local and global cooperation; and solutions to advocate for support to impacted populations. It will also promote recovery packages that tackle the climate crisis and address the root causes of poverty, inequality and hunger.

India elected as non-permanent member of UN Security Council for a two-year term

- **India** was elected as a **non-permanent member** of the **UN Security Council** for a **two-year term** after winning 184 votes in the 193-member General Assembly. Along with India, **Ireland, Mexico** and **Norway** also won the **Security Council elections**. India was a candidate for a non-permanent seat from the Asia-Pacific category for the **2021-22 term**. Its victory was certain as it was the sole candidate vying for the lone seat from the grouping. New Delhi's candidature was unanimously endorsed by the 55-member Asia-Pacific grouping in June last year.
- India's two year term will begin on January 1, 2021. This is the eighth time that India will sit at the UN high-table, which comprises five permanent members and 10 non-permanent members.
- Earlier this month, External Affairs Minister Dr. S Jaishankar had stated that India's approach at the UN Security Council will be guided by the tenets of Samman, Samvad, Sahyog, Shanti and Samriddhi. He had stated that India's overall objective during the fresh tenure in the UN Security Council will be the achievement of N.O.R.M.S. which stands for New Orientation for a Reformed Multilateral System.

India pledges to build sanitation facility at Nepal's Pashupatinath Temple

- India has **pledged** to construct a **Rs 2.33 crore** sanitation facility at the **iconic Pashupatinath Temple complex** to improve the infrastructure in the holy shrine for the pilgrims, according to an official statement.
- The project would be constructed under the **Nepal-Bharat Maitri: Development Partnership** as a high impact community development scheme by India.
- A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Indian Embassy, Nepal's Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration and the Kathmandu Metropolitan City for the construction of the sanitation facility at the Pashupatinath Temple, which is also listed under the UNESCO World Heritage site.
- Under the initiative, India has pledged to extend financial assistance amounting to **NRs 37.23 million** (INR 2.33 crore) for the sanitation facility that would be implemented by the Kathmandu Metropolitan City in accordance with the norms laid out by Government of Nepal in 15 months, according to an statement issued by the Indian Embassy.
- Pashupatinath Temple is the largest temple complex in Nepal and stretches on both sides of the Bagmati River and sees thousands of worshippers from Nepal and India every day.
- India's assistance for the infrastructure development at the Pashupatinath Temple complex comes amid a raging border row between the two countries. Nepal's lower house voted unanimously on a bill to amend the Constitution to incorporate Lipulekh, Kalapani and Limpiyadhura in India's Uttarakhand to a new political map, a move described by New Delhi as "untenable.

India will be United Nations Security Council President for August 2021

- India, which has been elected as a **non-permanent member of the Security Council**, will serve as **the president of the powerful 15-nation UN body** for the month of **August, 2021**.
- The presidency of the Council is held by each of the members in turn for one month, following the English alphabetical order of the member states' names.

- According to the information released by the office of the UN spokesperson, India will assume the rotating presidency of the Council for the month of August next year. India will preside over the Council again for a month in 2022.
- India, Norway, Ireland, Mexico and Kenya were elected as the non-permanent members of the UNSC for a two-year term beginning January 1, 2021.
- Tunisia will begin 2021 as the President of the Council in January, followed by a month each for the rest of the year by the UK, the US, Vietnam, China, Estonia, France, India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico and Niger.
- In 2021, the newly-elected members India, Ireland, Kenya, Norway and Mexico will sit at the UN high-table along with the five permanent members -- China, France, Russia, the UK and the US -- as well as non-permanent members Estonia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia and Vietnam.
- The two-year terms of Belgium, Dominican Republic, Germany, Indonesia and South Africa are ending this year.

France commits 200 million Euros for India's Covid response

- **France** and **India** signed an agreement with **Paris** committing **200 million euros** to support **Delhi's Covid response.**
- The credit financing agreement was signed by Dr C.S. Mohapatra, Additional Secretary - DEA, and Bruno Bosle, Director - AFD (French Development Agency) in India in the virtual presence of Emmanuel Lenain, Ambassador of France to India.
- Through this loan, France will work with India to increase the state and central governments' capacities to support the country's most vulnerable people in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis.
- The programme seeks to protect essential frontline workers of the pandemic, including those in healthcare, sanitation, and security, by providing them with health insurance. Social assistance programmes will also be put in place for migrant workers and low-income urban households that may be unable to seek compensation under PMGKY. The **World Bank** is the lead funder of this programme, which is supported by AFD and other multilateral and bilateral development banks.
- Agence Française de Développement (AFD – French Development Agency) Group is a public financial institution that finances, supports and accelerates transitions towards a more just and sustainable world.

One billion children experience violence every year as countries fail to protect them: UN report

- Half of the world's children — **one billion every year** — are affected by physical, sexual or psychological violence, suffering injuries and death because countries have failed to follow established strategies to protect them, the first report of its kind from the UN has stated, with experts noting that the coronavirus-related lockdowns have left far too many youngsters stuck with their abusers.
- While nearly all countries (88%) have laws in place to protect minors, **less than half (47%)** say they strongly enforce them, stated the **Global Status Reporton Preventing Violence Against Children** 2020 launched.
- Because countries have failed to follow established strategies to protect children, about one billion are affected each year by physical, sexual or psychological violence, it stated.
- The report — launched by the **World Health Organisation**, the **UNICEF**, the **UNESCO**, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Violence against Children and the End Violence Partnership — chartered progress in 155 countries against the "INSPIRE" framework, a set of seven strategies for preventing and responding to violence against children.

- The report signalled a clear need in all countries to scale up efforts to implement them. It included the first ever global homicide estimates specifically for children under 18 years of age — previous estimates were based on data that included 18 to 19-year olds.
- According to the findings, in 2017, around 40,000 children were victims of homicide.

World Bank approves $1.05 billion to Bangladesh for jobs, economic recovery

- The **World Bank** has approved **dollar 1.05 billion** for three projects in **Bangladesh** to create quality jobs and accelerate economic recovery in the wake of the corona pandemic.
- The World Bank quoted the Country Director for Bhutan and Bangladesh Mercy Tembon that these projects will help the economy in bouncing back by creating more and better jobs and promoting direct private investment in specialized economic zones.
- The first project worth a **dollar 500 million** called Private Investment and Digital Entrepreneurship (PRIDE) project will strengthen social and environmental standards in selected economic zones and software technology parks in Bangladesh. It will create over 1.5 lakh jobs of which a percentage will be reserved for women. The project will also establish Dhaka's first digital entrepreneurship hub in the Janata Software Technology Park. It will help Bangladesh to attract 2 billion dollar of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).
- The dollar 295 million **Enhancing Digital Government and Economy (EDGE) Project** will establish an integrated, cloud-computing digital platform for all government agencies and improve cyber-security.
- The dollar 250 million Second Programmatic Jobs Development Policy Credit will create fiscal space to support the government's response to the COVID-19 crisis.
- The World Bank stated that this is the second of the programme based series of three projects for Bangladesh intended to modernize the trade and investment regime, build a stronger system of expanded safety nets and labor protections and help vulnerable populations access better jobs, especially during crises.
- Bangladesh currently has one of the largest IDA programs totaling over 13 billion dollar. The World Bank has committed more than 31 billion dollar in grants, interest-free, and concessional credits to Bangladesh since its independence in 1971.

China To Join UN Arms Trade Treaty To Enhance 'peace And Stability'

- **China** has decided to join a **global pact** on regulations of arms sales showing its willingness to address the poorly regulated international arms trade after the United States pulled out last year. National People's Congress, China's top legislative body, voted to join the **global treaty** to regulate **conventional arms** sales at a time when the country has been cornered over its handling of pandemic and curbing of Hong Kong's autonomy.
- During a legislative session on June 20, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress agreed to join the treaty. **The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)** entered into force on December 24, 2014, which regulates the international trade in conventional arms - from small arms to battle tanks, combat aircraft and warships.
- China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian told reporters that Beijing is committed to efforts to **"enhance peace and stability"** across the globe and that joining the treaty was "another important measure for China to support multilateralism". Zhao stated that China has always attached great importance to the problems caused by the illegal transfer and abuse of conventional arms.

Terror financing watchdog FATF decides to continue Pakistan in Grey List

- In a setback for Pakistan, the global terror financing watchdog **Financial Action Task Force (FATF)** has decided to keep Pakistan in the **Grey List'** for terror financing. The decision has been taken as Pakistan has failed to check the flow of money to terror groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM).
- The decision was taken at the Financial Action Task Force's third and final plenary held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The plenary was held under the Chinese Presidency of **Xiangmin Liu**. Now, Pakistan will continue to remain in the Grey List till FATF's next meeting to be held in October. Now, it will be difficult for Pakistan to get financial aid from the IMF, World Bank, ADB and the European Union, thus further enhancing problems for the nation which is in a precarious financial situation.
- If Pakistan fails to comply with the FATF directive by October, there is every possibility that the global body may put the country in the **'Black List'** along with **North Korea** and **Iran**. A strong Indian delegation with experts on money laundering and terror financing participated in the half-day FATF plenary.
- The FATF currently has 39 members including two regional organizations -- the European Commission and Gulf Cooperation Council.

World's first yoga university outside India launched in Los Angeles

- The **World's first yoga university** outside India has been launched **in Los Angeles**, offering programmes that combine scientific principles and modern research approaches to the ancient Indian practice.
- The **Vivekananda Yoga University (VaYU)** was jointly launched by Minister **of State for External AffairsV Muraleedharan** and Chairperson of the Standing Committee on External Affairs **P P Chaudhary** during a **virtual event** held at the Consulate General of India in **New York.**
- Eminent Indian yoga guru **Dr H R Nagendra**, Chancellor of **Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana (SVYASA)**, is the first Chairman of VaYU.
- It will facilitate collaborative research, credit transfers and joint programmes with multiple premier universities across the world. The university will offer an online master's programme in yoga. The applications for fall 2020 semester are open with the first day of classes starting on August 24 in a virtual mode.
- The launch comes within three months of receiving official recognition from the Bureau for Private Post-secondary Education, California to offer yoga-based higher education programmes in November 2019.

India's NTPC wins PMC job for 500-MW solar project in Mali

- Indian power producer **NTPC Ltd** has won a **project management consultancy (PMC)** contract for the development of **a 500-MW** solar park in the **Republic of Mali**.
- The award was made at an event held on June 24, NTPC stated, without giving more details about the project.
- The Indian enterprise earlier this year won a similar contract involving a **285-MW solar project** in Togo. The company stated that it intends to anchor 10,000 MW of solar parks in **International Solar Alliance (ISA) member** countries over the next two years.
- At present, NTPC has 62,110 MW of installed capacity and has an objective to become a **130 GW** company by **2032**.

USAID Announces a Contribution Of $356.2 Million From The U.S. Government For Sudan's Democratic Transition

- The **United States** is providing **$356.2 million** to support the democratic transition in **the Republic of Sudan** following a peaceful revolution in 2019.

- The **Acting Administrator** of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), **John Barsa**, announced this commitment at **the Sudan Partnership Conference**, a virtual event co-hosted by the **European Union, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Transitional Government of Sudan, and the United Nations.**
- The U.S. commitment includes $20 million, subject to Congressional notification, for the Sudan Family-Support Program, a safety net administered by the **World Food Programme** to help a large part of the Sudanese population through a difficult period of economic reform needed to end unsustainable state subsidies on wheat and oil. It also includes funds to help Sudan respond to the pandemic of COVID-19.
- The U.S. Government has long been a leading donor to support the welfare of the people of Sudan.
- The funds will strengthen local and national institutions; address drivers of conflict; expand civic engagement, particularly among youth, women, religious minorities, and other marginalized communities; and assist with the planning and eventual conduct of credible, inclusive, and peaceful elections.

<p style="color:red; text-align:center">Revision Points</p>

Country	Capital	Currency	Head
Bangladesh	Dhaka	Taka	Abdul Hamid
Zimbabwe	Harare	US Dollar	Emmerson Mnangagwa
Kyrgyzstan	Bishkek	Som	Sooronbay Jeenbekov
Belgium	Brussels	Euro	Sophie Wilmes
Switzerland	Bern	Franc	Simonetta Sommaruga
Burundi	Gitega	Franc	Evariste Ndayishimiye
Kuwait	Kuwait City	Dinar	Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah
UK	London	Pound Sterling	Boris Johnson
Papua New Guinea	Port Moresby	Kina	James marape
Romania	Bucharest	Leu	Ludovic Orban
USA	Washington D.C	Dollar	Donald Trump
Nepal	Kathmandu	Rupee	Bidhya Devi Bhandari
Iran	Tehran	Rial	Hassan Rouhani
France	Paris	Euro	Edouard Philippe
Ireland	Dublin	Euro	Micheal Martin
Pakistan	Islamabad	Rupee	Arif Alvi
China	Beijing	Renminbi	Xi Jinping
Japan	Tokyo	Yen	Shinzo Abe
Australia	Canberra	Dollar	Scott Morrison
Russia	Moscow	Ruble	Vladimir Putin
Mexico	Mexico City	Peso	Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador
Norway	Oslo	Krone	Erna Solberg
Denmark	Copenhagen	Krone	Mette Frederiksen

Malawi	Lilongwe	Kwacha	Lazarus Chakwera
Bhutan	Thimphu	Ngultrum	Lotay Tshering

<h1 style="color:red; text-align:center">Important Appointments</h1>

<h2 style="color:green; text-align:center">National Appointments</h2>

Name of the Person	Designation	Predecessor
Harsha Bangari (CGM, CFO of EXIM Bank)	Deputy Managing Director, EXIM Bank	NA
Pradip Kumar Tripathi	Secretary, Ministry of Steel	Binoy Kumar
Subramanian Sundar	MD & CEO, Lakshmi Vilas Bank	Extended till the appointment of new CEO or till Nov 30
Uday Kotak	President, CII	Vikram Kirloskar
TV Narendran (CEO of Tata Steel)	President designate, CII	
Sanjiv Bajaj	Vice President, CII	
Patrick Pichette	Chairman, Twitter	Omid Kordestani
Krishnendu Majumdar	Chairperson, BAFTA	Pippa Harris
Virendra Nath Datt	Chairman & MD, National Fertilizers Limited	Manoj Mishra
Manushi Chillar	Brand Ambassador, Adidas India	Other Brand Ambassadors - Ranveer Singh, Rohit Sharma, Hima Das
Rajeev Topno	Senior Advisor to Executive Director World Bank	
Rohit Sharma	Brand Ambassador, IIFL Finance	Rohit Sharma Ki Seedhi Baat was launcged under #SeedhiBaat with Rohit Sharma
AM Naik	Non-Executive Chairman, Larsen & Toubro	
Anil Valluri	Senior Director, Google Cloud	President of India and SAARC operations of Net App
Javed Iqbal Wani	Judge, common high court of the UT of Jammu and Kashmir& Ladakh.	
BK Manjunath	Non-Executive, Independent Director, Lakshmi Vilas Bank	
Sonu Sood	Brand Ambassador, Gargo International	
Varun Tej Konidela	Brand Ambassador,	

	Nagarjuna Cement	
Anshuman Sharma	Govt nominee director, IDBI Bank	
Biswajit Dasgupta	Chief of Staff, Eastern Naval Command, Visakhapatnam	
Kaizad Bharucha	Executive Director, HDFC Bank	
Imtaiyazur Rahman	CEO, UTI Mutual Fund	Leo Puri
KK Venugopal	Attorney General of India	
Pankaj Tripathi	Brand Ambassador of Bihar	
Devendra Kumar Singh	Director of SIDBI	Ram Mohan Mishra
Shantanu Preetam	Chief Technology Officer, PayU	
DK Jain	BCCI's ethics officer and Ombudsman	
Prakash Chandra	Non-Executive Chairman, RBL Bank	
Dr Nirakar Pradhan	Chief, Professional Risk Managers' International Association (PRMIA)	
Urjit Patel	Chaiman, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy	
Pralay Mondal	President, Catholic Syrian Bank	(Headed Retail business, Axis Bank)
Sourav Ganguly, Sunil Chhetri	Brand Ambassador, JSW Cement	
Vikram Pawah	President, BMW India	
Niki Poonacha	International Tennis Federation men's player panel	Akgul Amanmuradova – Member in ITF women's panel
Natarajan Chandrasekaran	Part-time Non-official director, Reserve Bank of India	
Gaurav Maheshwari	Chief Financial Officer, Standard Chartered Bank	Subhradeep Mohanty
Sethuraman "Panch" Panchanathan	15th director of the National Science Foundation	France Cordova
T Rabi Sankar	Chairman, IFTAS	
N Rajendran	Chief Executive Officer, IFTAS	
Sanjay Kumar	Chief Secretary of Maharashtra	Ajoy Mehta
Priyanka Chopra &	Ambassadors of 45thToronto	

Anurag Kashyap	International Film Festival 2020	
Vini Mahajan	1st woman Chief Secretary, Punjab	
Anandiben Patel (UP Governot)	Governor of Madhya Pradesh (Additional Charge)	She is the former CM of Gujarat

Name of the Person	Designation	Predeccesor/Others
Sibi George (India's ambassador in Switzerland)	India's Ambassador to Kuwait	
Gaitri I.Kumar (Ambassador of India to Belgium)	High Commissioner of India to UK	Ruchi Ghanshyam
Sushil Kumar Singhal	High Commissioner of India to Papua New Guinea	
Rahul Shrivastava	Next Ambassador of India to Romania	Joint Secretary – Ministry of External Affairs
M Netra (13 year old – Madurai)	Goodwill ambassador of United Nations Association for Development and Peace	Feeding the poor during COVID – 19 lockdown by her father
Shambhu S Kumaran	Next Ambassador of India to the Philippines	He is the Ambassador of India to the Kingdom of Morocco
Alan Gemmell	British Deputy High Commissioner for Western	
Monika Kapil Mohta	Next Ambassador of India to Switzerland	
Santosh Jha	Next Ambassador of India to the Kingdom of Belgium	Ambassador of India to the Republic of Uzbekistan
Nick Hockley	Interim Chief Executive, Cricket Australia	Kevin Roberts
Volkan Bozkir (Turkish diplomant)	President , 75th UN General Assembly	
Kubatbek Boronov	Prime Minister, Kyryzstan	Mukhammedkalyi Abylgaziyev
Vijay Khanduja	Next Ambassador to Zimbabwe	Director in the Ministry of External Affairs
Rishi Sunak	Chief executive of the UK's Financial Conduct Authority	Chief of London Stock Exchange
Clare Connor	President, Marylebone Cricket Club	Former England woman all-rounder
Deven J Parekh	Director, US International	

	Development Finance Corporation	
Micheal Martin	Prime Minister, Ireland	Leo Varadkar
Lazarus Chakwera	President, Malawi	Peter Mutharika

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Resignation/Retirement

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Name of the Person	Designation
Kevin Roberts	Chief Executive, Cricket Australia

4 candidates from Karnataka, 1 from Arunachal Pradesh elected unopposed to Rajya Sabha

- All **four candidates** from Karnataka were elected unanimously to the Rajya Sabha. The newly elected MPs include former Prime Minister and Janata Dal (Secular) Chief **H. D. Deve Gowda**, veteran Congress leader **Mallikarjun Kharge** and Bharatiya Janata Party nominees **Ashok Gasti** and **Iranna Kadadi**.

- Both Gowda and Kharge had faced defeat in the Lok Sabha Elections held in 2019. Iranna Kadadi and Ashok Gasti of BJP are former ABVP workers who have been associated with the BJP for over three decades.

- The elections were announced to find replacements for Rajeev Gowda and B K Hariprasad from Congress, Prabhakar Kore from BJP and D. Kupendra Reddy from JD(S) whose term is scheduled to end on 25th of June.

- In Arunachal Pradesh, BJP candidate **Nabam Rebia** has been elected unopposed to the lone Rajya Sabha seat. He was declared elected to the Upper House by Returning Officer Kago Habung after his nomination paper was found valid.

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Important Awards and Honours

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Winner	Prize	Awarded By/Theme/Purpose
Stefan Manegold (Shares the award with Philippe Bonnet, Juliana Freire, Ioana Manolescu, Dennis Shasha, Stratos Idreos)	2020 SIGMOD Contributions Award	Data management community
Socio-Economic and Educational Development Society (Delhi)	World No Tobacco Day Award 2020	World Health Organization (its efforts to ban pan masala, gutkha, e-cigarettes and hookah in Bihar and Jharkhand)
Kritika Pandey	Regional Award for in Commonwealth Short Story	The Great Indian Tee and Snakes
Kiran Mazumdar Shaw (Cofounder, Chairperson & MD of Biocon Limited)	EY World Entrepreneur Of The Year for 2020	Joins with Uday Kotak & Narayana Murthy. (She is the 2nd woman after Olivia Lum of Hyflux Ltd)
Javed Akhtar	Richard Dawkins Award	For critical thinking, holding religious dogma up to scrutiny,

		advancing human progress and humanist values
Renjith Kumar (Kerala)	NASA Distinguished Public Service Medal	Association with NASA for more than 30 years (CEO - Analytical Mechanics Associates)
Shobha Sekhar	Medal of the Order (Australia)	Service to the community and the country
NA	Ramon Magsaysay awards	CANCELLED
Rattan Lal	World Food Prize	soil-centric approach to increasing food production
Deccan Development Society	Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation Award	
Zest Money	Technology Pioneer	World Economic Forum
Amartya Sen	Peace Prize of the German Book Trade	Presented by the German Publishers and Booksellers Association, Börsenverein
Gulabbai Sangamnerkar	Vithabai Narayangaokar lifetime achievement award	Maharashtra government
C Rangarajan (Former RBI governor)	Lifetime achievement award	Note: e -Sigma will be launched tocapture data using mobile devices.
Beyonce	BRT Humanitarian Award	Michelle Obama

UST Global recognized as 'IT Service Provider of the Year 2020' by Everest Group

- **UST Global**announced that it has been named to the **list of the Everest Group's PEAK Matrix®Top 20 IT Service Providers of the Year 2020**. The awards, now in their fifth year, recognize IT service providers who have demonstrated consistent leadership in the PEAK Matrix® reports issued by Everest Group, a consulting and research firm focused on strategic IT, business services, and sourcing.

- The honor recognizes UST Global's position as a fast-growing digital technologies company providing advanced computing and digital innovation solutions to large enterprises across the globe. The PEAK Matrix® is a framework for identifying the relative market success and capabilities of service providers. This is the first time UST Global has been named to this list, the only new entrant highlighted in this year's Top 20 ranking.

- For over 20 years, UST Global has been a leader in digital transformation. The company achieves tangible business outcomes for Fortune 500 and Global 2000 clients across industries through exceptional collaboration and robust innovation. The company's differentiated solutions, flexible business models, and expansive ecosystem make UST Global a partner of choice for businesses around the globe.

India's first solar ferry sails into global contest

- **Aditya'**, representing **Asia in the Gustave Trouvé Awards event**, is from Kerala.
- **India's first solar-powered ferry, Aditya**, which became an icon on the Vaikom-Thavanakadavu route in Kerala, is among 12 such ferries that have been shortlisted for the **Gustave Trouvé Award**. It is the sole entrant from Asia.
- There are three award categories: one for electric boats up to 8m in length, electric boats more than 8 m long and electric ferry boats (passenger boats), the category in which Aditya is in the fray.
- Gussies Electric Boat Awards were instituted in memory of Gustave Trouvé, a French electrical engineer and pioneer in electric cars and boats. Trouvé was a prolific inventor with over 75 patents. Back in 1881, he developed a 5-m-long prototype electric boat.

China's unmanned submersible sets new record! Dives to world's deepest ocean point

- **China's unmanned submersible** has dived to a depth of **10,907 metres** at **the world's deepest ocean point**, setting a new record for the country during which samples from the deep sea and high-definition images of the geological environment were collected, according to a media report.
- **"Haidou-1"** set the record by submerging under the **Pacific Ocean** surface of the **Mariana Trench**, the deepest area in the world. Members of the expedition team from the Shenyang Institute of Automation with the Chinese Academy of Sciences stated that the vehicle dived over 10,000 meters four times at the Challenger Deep in the Mariana Trench during the trip, state-run Xinhua news agency reported.
- During the deep-sea diving operation, researchers tested high-precision depth detection, machine hand operation, acoustic detection and positioning, and high-definition video transmission.
- The submersible collected samples from the deep sea and captured high-definition images of the geological environment, the report stated. China in recent years has stepped up efforts to develop deep sea technology to explore mining of rich natural resources from the sea bed. In 2011, China entered into a deal with the International Seabed Authority for a polymetallic sulfide exploration area of 10,000 square kms in the Indian Ocean for 15 years.

J&K administration wins 3 awards for development of Panchayats

- The **Jammu and Kashmir administration** was conferred with **three prestigious Deen Dayal Upadhyay Sashaktikaran Puraskar (DDUPSP)** awards for its outstanding contribution to the socio-economic development of the gram panchayats.
- The awards conferred by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj were given to three different panchayats of the **Rajouri** and **Pulwama** districts stated.
- **Rathal** and **Badakana in Rajouri** and **Meej in Pulwama** district were adjudged the **best performing panchayats** in recognition of their work in improving the delivery of services to the public like sanitation, natural resource management, maintaining record, construction of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna (Gramin) houses, data management, implementation of agriculture-related schemes and electricity coverage, he stated.
- Jammu and Kashmir administration was earlier awarded three different national awards by the Union Ministry under Nanaji Deshmukhh Rashtriya Gaurav Gram Sabha Puraskar (NDRGGSP), Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) Award, Child-friendly Gram Panchayat Award appreciating the good work done at different levels in the union territory, the spokesperson stated.
- Hailing the efforts of the department, in general, and sarpanchs of these panchayats, in particular, the secretary, department of rural development and panchayati raj, Sheetal Nanda stated, these panchayats have adopted best practices in all the parameters, including providing piped water to the residents, maintaining records, giving scholarships to eligible students, providing employment to poor and marginalised residents.

Golden Globe awards postponed to February 2021 due to COVID-19 pandemic

- The annual **Golden Globe Awards** ceremony for film and television has been postponed to **February next year**, organizers stated.
- The Golden Globes ceremony, which kicks off Hollywood's awards season, will now take place on **28th of February** in Beverly hills, California instead of its usual slot on the first Sunday in January.
- The decision follows the postponement by two months of the Oscars to 25th of April because of Coronavirus pandemic. The ceremony, hosted by Tina Fey and Amy Poehler, will take place on the originally scheduled date of the Oscars, which has been pushed back two months. The Hollywood Foreign Press Association, the group behind the awards, will provide details about eligibility, voting period and nominations timing in the weeks ahead.

Joe Biden wins Democratic Presidential primary in New York

- **Joe Biden** has won the **Democratic presidential primary** in **New York**.
- New York is a reliably Democratic-voting state. The general election is in November.
- Democrat leader Joe Biden has taken a comfortable lead of **14 percentage** points over **US president Donald Trump** ahead of the national elections in the country.

Himachal bags e-Panchayat Puraskar 2020

- **Himachal Pradesh** state **panchayati raj department** secured **first prize** under **e-Panchayat Puraskar-2020**, given by the Union ministry of panchayati raj.
- All the 3,226 panchayats of the state have been provided with internet facility and people can access various services online. The various services such as family register, registration of birth, death and marriages are registered online in the panchayats.
- Union ministry of panchayati raj has been making efforts to bring in transparency, efficiency and accountability in the functioning of gram panchayats through the use of information and communication technology.

Six District Hospitals of J&K UT win Kayakalap award

- **Six District Hospitals** of **Union Territory** of **Jammu and Kashmir** have bagged **Kayakalap award** claiming notable positions in the best hospitals category 2019-20.
- Four of these District Hospitals are from Jammu division including **DH Reasi** which has clinched the top spot winning a cash award of **Rs. 50 lakh** while **Government Hospital Gandhi Nagar**, District Hospital Udhampur and District Hospital Poonch have got commendation awards with a cash prize of **Rs. 3 lakh** each.
- The Kayakalp Award was instituted as part of the **'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan'** on 15 May, 2015 as a national initiative to recognize and felicitate public health facilities that demonstrate high levels of cleanliness, hygiene and infection control measure on promoting cleanliness in public spaces.
- In the Community Health Centres category, three CHCs of Jammu Division qualified including CHC Ramnagar was declared second while CHC Katra (Reasi) and CHC Bhaderwah (Doda) claimed the Commendation awards.
- In Primary Health Centers and Urban Primary Health Centres categories, 9 PHCs and 1 UPHC have won the award.

United Nations honours KK Shailaja for efforts to fight pandemic

- The **United Nations** gave recognition to the achievement of the **Kerala state** in fighting Covid-19 on its Public Service Day, celebrated on June 23.
- Health Minister **KK Shailaja** was the lone speaker from the country to speak about the strategies adopted by the state.

- At the webinar streamed on **UN Web TV**, she shared her views along with the Secretary- General of the United Nations António Guterres; President of the General Assembly Tijjani Muhammad-Bande; Minister of Interior and Safety, Republic of Korea Chin Young; Director General, World Health Organization Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus; President of Ethiopia Sahle-Work Zewde and senior officers of the UN.
- The event was organised to honour leaders who have done commendable work in the fight against Covid-19.

National TB Elimination Program 2019: Nagaland, Tripura awarded for best performing small states

- **Nagaland** and **Tripura** have been awarded for being the **best performing small states** under the **National TB elimination programme** in the year 2019. This was declared during the release of the annual **TB Report 2020** by Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan.
- **Nagaland** was among the few states awarded for their performance under National TB elimination programme 2019. Along with **Tripura State**, Nagaland was awarded in the category of smaller states with less than 50 lakh population.
- In the categories of larger states with more than 50 lakh populations, **Gujarat,Andhra Pradesh** and **Himachal Pradesh** were awarded as best performing States. While, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, and Daman & Diu were chosen as the best performers in the category of Union Territory.

Beyonce receives BET Humanitarian Award from Michelle Obama

- **Beyonce** received the prestigious **BET Humanitarian Award.**
- Former first lady Michelle Obama, who worked on her Let's Move! campaign with Beyoncé during her time in the White House, gave a pretaped speech during the virtual BET Awards honoring the music star for all of her charitable efforts.
- Beyoncé was honored for her philanthropic work through the BeyGOOD initiative, which has included helping her hometown of Houston following the devastation of Hurricane Harvey in 2017 and currently during the coronavirus pandemic.

The BET Awards, which honor Black excellence in entertainment and sport

- **Album of the Year** "Please Excuse Me For Being Antisocial," Roddy Ricch
- **Best Female R&B/Pop Artist** Lizzo
- **Best Male R&B/Pop Artist** Chris Brown
- **Best Group** Migos
- **Best Collaboration** Chris Brown Ft. Drake, "No Guidance"
- **Best Male Hip Hop Artist** DaBaby
- **Best Female Hip Hop Artist** Megan Thee Stallion
- **Video of the Year** DJ Khaled ft. Nipsey Hussle & John Legend, "Higher"
- **Video Director of the Year** Teyana "Spike Tee" Taylor
- **Best New Artist** Roddy Ricch
- **Dr. Bobby Jones Best Gospel/Inspirational** Kirk Franklin, "Just for Me"
- **Best Movie** "Queen & Slim"
- **Best Actress** Issa Rae
- **Best Actor** Michael B. Jordan
- **Young Stars Award** Marsai Martin
- **Sportswoman of the Year** Simone Biles

- **Sportsman of the Year** LeBron James
- **BET HER Award** Beyoncé ft. Blue Ivy, WizKid & Saint Jhn, "Brown Skin Girl"
- **Viewer's Choice Award** Megan Thee Stallion ft. Nicki Minaj, "Hot Girl Summer"
- **Best International Act** Burna Boy (Nigeria)
- **Viewer's Choice: Best New International Act** SHA SHA (Zimbabwe)

Important MOU's

Ircon inks pact with NIIFL, Ayana Power to explore opportunities in solar energy

- **Ircon International Ltd** stated it has inked pact with **NIIFL** and **Ayana Renewable Power** for exploring opportunities in **solar energy sector**.
- NIIFL and Ircon will evaluate strategic partnerships across infrastructure projects and have agreed in-principle to identify, bid and execute solar energy projects through joint ventures/consortium arrangements, as per the agreement.
- IRCON, a Miniratna Schedule -A Public Sector Enterprises has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with National Investment and Infrastructure Fund Limited (NIIFL) and Ayana Renewable Power Private Limited (AYANA), a NIIF platform company to explore and collaborate on opportunities in the solar energy sector, the company stated.
- The partnership will further consider suitable opportunities for solar energy production for Indian Railways as they intend to increase the share of renewables in their overall energy mix.
- This collaboration will enable execution of renewable energy projects at scale by utilising the complementary strengths of all partners, it stated.
- Ayana is an independent power producer with 800 MW of renewable energy projects under development.

GAIL (India) and Energy Efficiency Services sign MoU for development of Trigeneration projects in India

- **GAIL (India)** and **Energy Efficiency Services** have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in New Delhi for cooperation in development of Trigeneration projects in India.
- The MoU aims at building a closer strategic partnership between the two companies by jointly exploring business opportunities in Trigeneration business segment in India.
- Under this MOU, GAIL & EESL shall jointly undertake studies and if found viable, **50:50 joint venture** between **GAIL & EESL** will be incorporated for undertaking Trigeneration projects.
- Trigeneration or Combined Cooling, Heat and Power (CCHP) typically involves natural gasfired generators to produce electricity. The waste heat from flue gas is recovered to produce hot water / steam which in turn used for heating purposes and also in absorption chillers for cooling.

Tech Mahindra inks UN Global Compact on aligning recovery efforts with climate science

- **Tech Mahindra Ltd.** a leading provider of digital transformation, consulting and business reengineering services has signed a joint declaration with **UN Global Compact** urging governments to align their COVID-19 recovery efforts with the **latest climate science**.
- Tech Mahindra reaffirms the science-based commitment of achieving **net-zero carbon emissions** while calling on governments to "Prioritize a faster and fairer transition from a grey to a green economy".
- By moving towards a zero-carbon resilient economy, Tech Mahindra aims to reduce carbon footprint, emissions and will conserve energy using new-age technologies like internet of things, artificial intelligence and blockchain.

- Furthermore, an internal Carbon Price of $10/ton CO2 has also been implemented by the company to boost green investments and have also adopted a low emission technology path to increase the use of renewable energy from 1.7% in 2016 to 18% in 2020. Moreover, Tech Mahindra has also taken targets to increase the renewable source of energy to 50% by 2025.
- **Tech Mahindra** has joined 155 global companies in calling for policies that will build resilience against future shocks by supporting efforts to hold global temperature rise to within 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, in line with reaching net-zero emissions well before 2050.

ISRO signs MoU with ARIES To tackle space debris

- The **Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO)** recently signed an MoU with the **Nainital-based Aryabhatta Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES)** for cooperation in the field of astrophysics and Space Situational Awareness (SSA). The MoU will be useful "in safeguarding the Indian space assets from critical threats from space debris , ISRO stated.
- ARIES has experts with years of research on observational astronomy, astrophysics, and atmospheric sciences. Former ISRO chairman Kiran Kumar, who has been vocal about the effects of space debris with a large number of private players entering the sector, stated that as smaller satellites are getting into space, the number of non-functional objects too are increasing.
- These objects that are not in control of any space agency can come in the way of other satellites, forcing space agencies to alter launch schedules and height of orbits to avoid collision. every orbiting satellite keeps an eye on these objects and if they are likely to come in the vicinity of our operational satellite, we have to do some manoeuvres to ensure that there is no collision, Kiran stated. ISRO also uses information from the public domain on orbiting objects and has set up observation stations.
- It is looking at making use of its capabilities to contribute to the global community, he stated. ISRO stated the MoU will pave way for future collaborations between ISRO and ARIES in establishing optical telescope observational facilities for space object tracking, R&D studies in space weather, astrophysics and near Earth objects.

India and Denmark sign MOU for developing cooperation between two countries in the power sector

- The Memorandum of Understanding on **Indo-Denmark Energy Cooperation** between the Ministry of Power, Government of the Republic of India and the Ministry for Energy, Utilities and Climate, Government of the Kingdom of Denmark to **develop a strong, deep and long-term co-operation between two countries in the power sector on the basis of equality, reciprocity and mutual benefit.**
- The MoU was signed by **Mr. Sanjiv Nandan Sahai**, Secretary (Power) from the Indian side and **Mr. Freddy Svane,** Ambassador of Denmark to India from the Danish side.
- The MoU provides for collaboration in areas like offshore wind, long term energy planning, forecasting, flexibility in the grid, consolidation of grid codes to integrate and operate efficiently variable generation options, flexibility in the power purchase agreements, incentivize power plant flexibility, variability in renewable energy production etc. The Indian electricity market would benefit from cooperation with Denmark in these areas.

TCS iON partners with NSDC to accelerate skill development

- **TCS iON,** a strategic unit of Tata Consultancy Services, has partnered with **the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)** to provide its training partners access to digital skilling tools using TCS' iON Digital Glass Room.

- The partnership aims to strengthen NSDC's online content aggregation platform - **eSkill India** - through which it enables e-learning amongst skill seekers and will contribute towards strengthening the Skill India mission.
- The TCS iON Digital Glass Room is a web-based digital education platform that empowers educators to engage with students in real-time by uploading and sharing their own lessons.

Empays Payment Systems, Mastercard partner to enable contact-free ATM cash withdrawals

- **Empays Payment Systems India Pvt Ltd**, has announced a partnership with **Mastercard** in a bid to launch **'Cardless ATM powered by Mastercard'** in India.
- **'Cardless ATM powered by Mastercard®'** will enable users to digitally locate the nearest enabled ATM and initiate a withdrawal by simply scanning a QR code on the mobile phone, using their banking app. It will be allowing users to withdraw cash safely, especially during current times of COVID-19.
- Users will be able to withdraw cash safely by completely eliminating the need to use a physical card or touch an ATM PIN pad, while providing the security of an EMV transaction, making it safe, quick and easy for people to access cash.
- Earlier, **AGS Transact Technologies Limited (AGSTTL)** has developed 'touchless' (based on QR code) solution for cash withdrawals at ATMs.

NFL inks MoU with ITI Nangal for training of youth in 12 trades for employment

- With a view to give thrust to the Skill India initiative, **National Fertilizers Limited**, NFL, a Central Public Sector Enterprise Under Department Of Fertilizers, has started tying up with **Industrial Training Institutes** located near to its plants to train youth in various trades and to enhance the chances of their employability in heavy and process industry.
- The Nangal plant of the company in Punjab has signed an MoU with ITI, Nangal to train youth in 12 trades. The students will be skilled under Dual System of Training Scheme under which they will learn theoretical skills in the institute and on-the-job training in NFL Nangal plant.
- ITI, Nangal is one of the oldest institute in Punjab. With the signing of this MoU with ITI, NFL becomes first CPSE to take this initiative in the state of Punjab. The company plans to explore more such options in future to give impetus to Skill India by training more youth from institutes.

IFFCO signs MoU with ICAR for joint research, testing, validation of products

- Fertiliser major **IFFCO** stated it has signed an agreement with government's farm research institute **ICAR** for joint research, testing and validation of different products.
- **Indian Farmers Fertilizer Cooperative Ltd (IFFCO)** signed a MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) with **The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)** for collaborative research, testing and validation of different products through ICAR institutes and Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs), the cooperative stated.
- Department of Agricultural Research Secretary and ICAR DG T Mohapatra and IFFCO MD U S Awasthi were present during the signing of agreement.
- Mohapatra stated if the consumption of fertilizer can be reduced by even 15 per cent with the collaborative research and extension, it would be a significant contribution to agriculture and farming community.
- Awasthi stated the objective of the collaboration is to serve farmers in reducing consumption of chemical fertilizers by effective use of technology.
- We are working to root out the chemicals from the soil. ICAR will give support and encouragement in these ventures, he added.

- Yogendra Kumar, marketing director, IFFCO, stated the MoU will help in testing, validation and dissemination of innovative products to the field level.

Tata Power signs MoU with MG Motor for EV chargers

- **Tata Power** has signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** with **MG Motor** to deploy **50KW DCSuperfast chargers** at select MG dealerships.
- These superfast 50KW DC chargers will be accessible by both MG ZS EV customers as well as other EV owners whose automobiles are compatible with the CCS/CHAdeMO charging standards.
- Further, the Tata Power- MG Motor partnership will also explore the possibility of second life management of EV batteries, which involves battery management techniques when they no longer meet EV performance standards.
- With this association, MG Motor aims to focus on the key target cities where they intend to foray as a part of their EV expansion plans.
- MG Motor India has 10 SuperFast 50 kW charging stations across its dealerships in five cities - New Delhi- NCR, Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Bengaluru and Hyderabad – and is expanding them to more cities. Tata Power, on the other hand, has established an elaborate EV Charging ecosystem with 180 charging points in 19 different cities under the EZ Charge brand, along with digital platform to facilitate customers.

Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry signs MoU to engage SIDBI as implementation agency for PM SVANidhi

- **Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry** and **Small Industries Development Bank of India**, SIDBI signed an MoU to engage SIDBI as the implementation agency for **PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi).** The Ministry had launched the PM SVANidhi for providing affordable Working Capital loan to street vendors to resume their livelihoods that have been adversely affected due to Covid-19 lockdown.
- This scheme targets to benefit over 50 lakh Street Vendors. Under the Scheme, the vendors can avail a working capital loan of up to ten thousand rupees, which is repayable in monthly instalments in the tenure of one year.
- As per the MoU terms, SIDBI will implement the PM SVANidhi Scheme under the guidance of Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. It will also manage the credit guarantee to the lending institutions through Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises. It will develop and maintain a customized and integrated IT Platform providing end-to-end solutions, including documentation of all the processes and workflows for an end-to-end solution, through a Portal and a Mobile App. The disbursement of loan under PM SVANidhi is planned to commence in July this year.

NI-MSME inks pact with Nitte to train MSMEs

- **Hyderabad-based National Institute for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (NI-MSME)** has signed a **memorandum of understanding** with the Mangaluru-based **Nitte (deemed-to-be university)** for the empowerment of the MSME sector.
- The MoU provides an institutional mechanism for NI-MSME and Nitte Education Group for collaborative efforts to conduct **executive education programmes**, research, training and consultancy for the MSME sector.
- The MoU was signed by Glory Swarupa, Director General of NI-MSME, and Satheesh Kumar Bhandary, Vice-Chancellor of Nitte, it added.

IIT Delhi And UN World Food Programme To Increase Efficiency Of Government's Food Security Net

- The **Indian Institute of Technology Delhi**, or IIT Delhi, has collaborated with the **United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)**, India, to develop solutions for increasing the **efficiency and effectiveness of food security**

programmesof the Government of India. The aim of this tie-up is to create "sustainable models" that can be used across the country and beyond.

- The tie-up will combine advanced analytics and operations research to develop solutions that support "long-term strategic planning of procurement, storage, and movement of food grains" by agencies like the Food Corporation of India (FCI). It will also create "**cost-effective supply chain networks**" for distribution under the public distribution system (PDS), or ration shops.
- This will be especially relevant for states such as Uttarakhand, where maintaining a consistent availability and supply of food grains year-round is a challenge due to factors such as difficult terrain, limited availability of transporters, restricted windows for transportation and disintegrated storage spaces.

<div align="center">**Revision Points**</div>

Organizations	Purpose
Ircon International Ltd, NIIFL & Ayana Power	Opportunities in Solar energy
GAIL India & Energy Efficiency Services	Development of Trigeneration projects
Tech Mahindra & UN Global	Aligning recovery efforts with climate science
ISRO & ARIES	Tackling of space debris
India & Denmark	Cooperation in Power sector
TCS iON & NSDC	Accelerating Skill development
Empays Payment Systems & Master Card	Enabling contact-free ATM cash withdrawals
NFL & ITI Nangal	Training of youths in 12 trades for employment
IFFCO & ICAR	Reserach, testing, validation of products
Tata Power & MG Motor	EV hargers
Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry & SIDBI	Implementing of PM SVANidhi
NI-MSME & Nitte	To train MSMEs
IIT Delhi & UN Food Programme	Increasing efficiency of govt's food security network

<div align="center">**Important Summit & Conference**</div>

Prime Minister Addresses the virtual Global Vaccine Summit 2020

- **Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi** was addressing the virtual **Global Vaccine Summit** hosted by **UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson** in which over 50 countries - business leaders, UN agencies, civil society, government ministers, Heads of State and country leaders participated.
- **India** has pledged **15 Million US Dollars** to **Gavi,** the international vaccine alliance.
- India has a vast population and limited health facilities and that it understands the importance of immunization.
- One of the first programmes launched by his government was **Mission Indradhanush**, which aims to ensure full vaccination of the country's children and pregnant women, including those in the remote parts of the vast nation.
- India has added six new vaccines to its National Immunization Programme.
- India had digitized its entire vaccine supply line and developed an electronic vaccine intelligence network to monitor the integrity of its cold chain.

WEF Davos summit to focus on 'The Great Reset' in 2021; will be open to all online

- **World Economic Forum (WEF)** will adopt a **new twin-summit** format for its next annual Davos meeting in **January 2021**, by bringing together leaders from across the globe for in-person as well as virtual dialogues with a theme of **'The Great Reset'**. The gathering of the world's rich and powerful, held every year in the Swiss ski resort town, will also open its doors virtually for everyone across the world online and through a network of more than 400 hubs globally.

- The **50th WEF Annual Meeting**, which was held from January 21-24, 2020, was one of the last high-profile gatherings this year before the coronavirus pandemic brought almost the entire world to a halt.

- Geneva-based WEF stated its 51st Annual Meeting will again bring together global leaders from government, business and civil society, and stakeholders from around the world, but this time in a unique configuration of both in-person and virtual dialogues

- The Great Reset' will be the theme of this unique twin summit in January 2021, it added.

- The WEF, which describes itself as an international organisation for public-private partnership, stated 'The Great Reset' is a commitment to jointly and urgently build the foundations of economic and social systems for a more fair, sustainable and resilient future.

- The twin summit in January 2021 will be both in-person and virtual, connecting key global governmental and business leaders in Davos with a global multi-stakeholder network in 400 cities around the world for a forward-oriented dialogue driven by the younger generation. These would include cities in India, among other countries.

- The announcement of "the great reset" summit was made by the Prince Charles of Wales and WEF founder and Executive Chairman Klaus Schwab during a virtual meeting.

FM Nirmala Sitharaman to chair 40th GST council meeting through video conferencing

- Finance Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** will chair the **40th GST council meeting** through video conferencing. This meeting of the GST council will be for the first time after the nationwide lockdown and the council is expected to discuss the revenue shortfall and the compensation to states.

- Ms Sitharaman had stated that the Centre will look into the legality of GST Council borrowing from the market to meet the compensation requirements.

- The Council is likely to decide on ways to garner funds to compensate states for the revenue loss due to GST implementation.

24th Meeting of the FSDC Sub-Committee over Video Conference

- A meeting of the **Sub-Committee** of the **Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC)** was held through video conference. **Shri Shaktikanta Das**, Governor, Reserve Bank of India, **chaired the meeting.**

- Members of the sub committee include secretaries of finance, information technology, corporate affairs, economic affairs, financial services, the chief economic advisor, heads of regulatory bodies SEBI, IRDA and IBBI and also RBI deputy governors.

- The Sub-Committee reviewed the major developments in global and domestic economy and financial markets that impinge upon financial stability. Amongst other things, the Sub-Committee also discussed about the proposal of setting up of an Inter Regulatory Technical Group on Fintech (IRTG-Fintech) and the National Strategy on Financial Education (NSFE) 2020-2025.

- It also deliberated upon the status and developments under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), 2016 and the working of credit rating agencies.

- The Sub Committee unanimously resolved that (a) every participating regulator and ministry will continue to remain alert and watchful of the emerging challenges; (b) interact more frequently, both formally and informally, as also collectively; and (c) do whatever is necessary to revive the economy and preserve financial stability.

India Ideas Summit to discuss geopolitics in post-COVID world virtually

- The **US Chamber of Commerce** stated that **India Ideas Summit 2020** will be held virtually on July 21-22 with focus on **geopolitics** in the post-COVID world, shifting supply chains, digitization and technology trends, the future of healthcare and equitable growth.
- The Chamber stated that the United States and India are grappling with rising COVID-19 case counts in cities across both countries and with reopening underway, governments are also closely tracking what the new developments will mean for both individuals and the business community.
- Renewed restrictions may also challenge economic recovery efforts, as India seeks to jump-start growth - much needed after pandemic-related shutdowns brought factory activity and economic growth to a crawl, it added.
- US Secretary of State Michael R Pompeo had last year addressed the India Ideas Summit in Washington at the US Chamber of Commerce on June 12.
- Organised by US India Business Council (USIBC), the India Ideas Summit is a platform to convene scholars, practitioners, diplomats, and think tanks for high-level dialogue on key issues related to India. The India Ideas Summit will be marking its **45th annual meeting** next month.

Indian officials attend virtual EAG plenary meet in June

- **Indian officials**, including representatives from enforcement agencies, attended the virtual **32nd special Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (EAG)** plenary meeting, under the aegis of the **Financial Action Task Force.**
- The EAG is a regional body comprising nine countries: India, Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Belarus. It is an associate member of the FATF.
- **Pakistan**, which continues to remain on the **"grey list" of FATF**, had earlier been given the deadline till the June plenary to ensure compliance with the 27-point action plan against terror funding networks and money laundering syndicates, or face "black listing".
- The virtual meet, chaired by the EAG Chairman **Mr. Yury Chikhanchin** (Russian Federation) and the EAG Deputy Chairman Mr. Farhod Bilolov (Republic of Tajikistan).

The 36th ASEAN Summit being hosted by Vietnam

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has indicated that the **36th ASEAN Summit** will be the first ever to take place via **teleconference, with Vietnamto host the remote gathering**, set to focus on handling regional public health issues and funding to cope with COVID-19.
- Vietnam, as the ASEAN Chair, is to emphasize unity in the region to respond to current challenges, and it is expected that ASEAN leaders will discuss cooperation on public health, and draft a plan for post COVID-19 rehabilitation.
- Other topics to be considered include human and food security and women's rights, so as to support economic growth. These issues are expected to result in agreements, along with the signing of documents on the development of labor potential.

S Jaishankar to join Russia-India-China trilateral virtual conference

- External Affairs Minister **S Jaishankar** will join his **Chinese and Russian counterparts** at a virtual conference of the **Russia-India-China trilateral**, against the backdrop of New Delhi's frayed ties with Beijing over the **Galwan Valley** clashes.
- India was initially reluctant to join the Russia-India-China trilateral foreign ministers' meeting but agreed to participate in it following a request from Moscow, the host of the conference.
- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh left for Russia on a three-day visit to attend a military parade in Moscow on June 24 to commemorate the 75th anniversary of victory of the Russian people in the second world war.
- The meeting of the RIC foreign ministers is also expected to delve into key connectivity projects in the region including the implementation of the 7,200 km-long International NorthSouth Transport Corridor (INSTC) linking India, Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asia with Europe.

Mansukh Mandaviya inaugurates India's one of India's largest & first Virtual Healthcare & Hygiene EXPO 2020

- Union State Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers **Mansukh Mandaviya** inaugurated one of India's largest and **first Virtual Healthcare and Hygiene EXPO 2020.**
- Health, Hygiene and Sanitation, Medical textiles and Devices, AYUSH and Wellness sectors have assumed greater significance in the nation's fight against the COVID 19 pandemic.
- Schemes such as providing toilets for every household, Ayushman Bharat , to cover 10 crore families for healthcare, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan and Suvidha Sanitary Napkin under which a sanitary napkin is provided for just 1 rupees each.
- The unique exhibition which aims to give a boost to such health and hygiene endeavours has been organised by **FICCI.**
- The recent policy announcement of government giving incentives for setting up of Bulk Drug Parks and Medical Device Parks in the country which will act as a cog in the wheel of Atmanirbharat Abhiyan.

Union Minister Shri Prakash Javadekar inaugurates Virtual India Pavilion at Cannes Film Market 2020

- Indian Participation at **Cannes Film Festival – 2020** with the e-inauguration of the **Virtual India Pavilion** by Hon'ble Ministry of Information & Broadcasting **Shri Prakash Javadekar**. The Festival will be held from 22 - 26 June, 2020.
- Addressing the film fraternity and film lovers across the Globe, the Hon'ble Minister stated "virtual inaugurations are the new normal and these virtual spaces are the new places for real partnerships". He added that films are India's soft power and the film facilitation office would be made a single window for all Center and State government permissions. The Minister invited the international film fraternity to come shoot in India and sell in the world market. The Minister expressed hope that the two films sent to Cannes from India would be appreciated world over.
- The Indian Pavilion at Cannes has always been a hub of activity. Indian film makers and delegates interact with the international community, who while experiencing the colour, flavor and aroma of Indian cinema, also explore the opportunities of working with Indian film makers and to shoot within Incredible India that has almost unparalleled variety of locations and people.
- This year too, adopting the new normal, and to keep the ethos of the Indian participation the prestigious film festival alive, the Indian Pavilion is expected to be buzzing with activities around co-production and film shooting in India, exports of Indian films and content, post production activities in India and fruitful business networking among delegates. The Pavilion will facilitate B2B meetings and linkages between film makers and other media and entertainment industries stake holders.

Piyush Goyal Led the Governing Council Meeting of National Productivity Council

- The **49th Governing Council Meeting of National Productivity Council (NPC),** an autonomous body **under Department for Promotion of Industry & Internal Trade (DPIIT),Ministry of Commerce & Industry**, Government of India was held through video conferencing.
- It was chaired by **Shri Piyush Goyal**, Commerce & Industry Minister and President of NPC Governing Council.
- The Meeting was attended by about 180 participants, comprising of Government Officers, Leaders of Industry Associations, Industry captains, Trade Union leaders, financial institutions, Productivity Councils of States, Subject experts, Academicians, and other eminent personalities.
- Some of the suggestions made in the meeting were- sector formulation of specific action plans by NPC especially in agriculture and logistics sectors, identification of Champion sectors which has the potential to drive the economy, adoption of technology to increase the productivity and delivering cost-effective solutions for marginalised sector, interlinking of academia and industry for creation of a highly skilled labor force, financing of specific products to support MSMEs and increase their productivity, national audit on security impact etc .

Revision Points

Conference/Summits	Chaired By/Theme/Addressed By
Vaccine Summit 2020	PM Narendra Modi
WEF Davos Summit	The Great Reset in 2021
40th GST council Meeting	Nirmala Sitharaman
24th Meeting of FSDC Sub-Committee	Shaktikanta Das
India Ideas Summit	Organized by US India Business Council
EAG planery Meet	Mr. Yury Chikhanchin
36th ASEAN Summit	Host by Vietnam
Russia-India-China trilateral virtual conference	S Jaishankar
Virtual Healthcare and Hygiene EXPO 2020	Mansukh Mandaviya
Cannes Film Festival – 2020	Prakash Javadekar
49th Governing Council Meeting of National Productivity	Piyush Goyal

Important Defence News

Indian Air Force develops 'Airborne Rescue Pod for Isolated Transportation'

- The **Indian Air Force** has designed, developed and inducted an **Airborne Rescue Pod for Isolated Transportation (ARPIT)** that will be utilised for the evacuation of critical patients with infectious diseases including COVID-19 from high altitude areas, isolated and remote places.
- The requirement of an air evacuation system with a facility to prevent spread of infectious aerosol from a coronavirus patient during air travel was felt by IAF when COVID-19 was declared as a pandemic.
- The first prototype was developed at 3 BRD AF and has undergone various modifications.

- The system has been developed as a lightweight isolation system made from aviation certified material. It has a transparent and durable cast Perspex for enhanced patient visibility which is larger, higher, and wider than the existing models.
- The isolation system caters to a suitable number of air exchanges, integration of medical monitoring instruments, and ventilation to an incubated patient.
- The **ARPIT** utilises **High-Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) H-13** class filters and supports invasive ventilation using Transport Ventilator.
- Design requirements have been evolved and are based on the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers (NABH), and Centre for Disease Control (CDC), USA.
- **GRSE delivers fifth ship in Fast Patrol Vessels" series to Indian Coast Guard**
- Premier warship builder **Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Ltd (GRSE)** delivered **ICGS Kanaklata Barua,** the **fifth and final ship** in the series of Fast Patrol Vessels (FPV) for the Indian Coast Guard.
- This is the **105th vessel** delivered by the Defence PSU shipyard based on the banks of river Hooghly.
- GRSE had earlier made deliveries of **FPVs ICGS Priyadarshini, ICGS Annie Besant and ICGS Amrit Kaur** in this series to the Indian Coast Guard.
- The fourth ship Yard 2116in the series of FPVs is earmarked for export delivery to the Seychelles Coast Guard and is likely to be delivered shortly after completing the related formalities.
- The warship builder will make another ship for the ICG as a replacement to the one diverted to the Seychelles Coast Guard and related formalities of signing contract with the amendments to the existing one are underway and will be completed shortly.
- The fast patrol vessels, which have been entirely designed by GRSEs Central Design Office, can achieve speeds exceeding 34 knots with an endurance of more than 1,500 nautical miles.

Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle Complex inaugurated at Visakhapatnam

- The **Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle (DSRV)** Complex was inaugurated at **Visakhapatnam** by Vice Admiral Atul Kumar Jain, PVSM, AVSM, VSM Flag Officer Commanding in Chief ENC. The DSRV Complex is designed to accommodate the newly inducted Submarine Rescue System with state of the art facilities to store the DSRV assets in a Rescue-Ready state.
- The DSRV system consists of a **Submarine Rescue Vessel**, a Remote Operations Vehicle, Side Scan Sonar and associated equipment. It also has Diver Decompression Chambers and hyperbaric medical equipment to decompress submariners after being rescued from a sunken submarine. The DSRV system can be rapidly mobilised by air or road to facilitate submarine rescue operations even at distant locations.
- The Indian Navy has inducted two such systems which will provide rescue cover to submarines on the West and East coast of India respectively. Currently, there are about 40 nations that operate submarines in the world out of which only a few have any form of submarine rescue capability. The third generation IN submarine rescue capability can, therefore, be called upon to assist during submarine contingencies of other navies in the IOR.

IAF inducts indigenously developed pod ARPIT to evacuate critical patients from remote areas

- The **Indian Air Force** inducted an indigenously designed and manufactured pod called ARPIT, which will be used for evacuation of critical patients suffering from infectious diseases like COVID-19 from isolated and remote areas.

- The IAF has designed, developed and inducted an Airborne Rescue Pod for Isolated Transportation (ARPIT), stated the IAF.
- It stated when the COVID-19 outbreak was declared a pandemic, it felt the need for an evacuation system that prevents the spread of infectious aerosol from the patient to another person.
- This indigenously designed system has been developed at a cost of **Rs 60,000**, which is very less when compared to imported systems which cost up to Rs 60 lakh a piece, the IAF stated.
- The isolation system has a suitable number of air exchanges, integration of medical monitoring instruments, and ventilation for an intubated patient, the IAF stated.
- In addition, the pod generates high constant negative pressure in the isolation chamber for prevention of infection risk to air crew, ground crew and health care workers involved in air transportation, the IAF noted.
- This pod will be utilised for the evacuation of critical patients with infectious diseases including COVID-19 from high altitude area, isolated and remote places, it added.

Indian Armed Forces to participate in Victory Day Parade in Moscow

- A **Tri-Service contingent** of the comprising 75 all ranks, led by a colonel rank officer will participate in the Military **Parade at Red Square, Moscow** on 24 June 2020, to commemorate the **75th Anniversary of Victory of the Soviet People** in the great Patriotic War of 1941-1945.
- The British Indian Armed Forces during World War-II were one of the largest Allied Forces contingents which took part in the North and East African Campaign, Western Desert Campaign and the European Theatre against the Axis powers. The Indian Military not only fought on all fronts, but also ensured logistic support along the Southern, Trans-Iranian Lend-Lease route, along which weapons, ammunitions, equipment support and food went to the Soviet Union, Iran and Iraq.
- The valour of the Indian soldiers was recognised with the award of over four thousand decorations, which also included award of 18 Victoria and George Cross. In addition the then Soviet Union appreciated the valour of the Indian Armed forces and by the decree of 23 May 1944, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR signed by Mikhail Kalinin and Alexander Gorkin awarded the prestigious Orders of the Red Star to Subedar Narayan Rao Nikkam and Havildar Gajendra Singh Chand of Royal Indian Army Service Corps.
- The marching contingent taking part in the Victory Day Parade is led by a major rank officer of the gallant **SIKH LIGHT INFANTRY** Regiment. The Regiment had fought with valour in the World War-II and has proud distinction of earning four Battle Honours and two Military Cross amongst other gallantry awards.

NRDC Licenses NavRakshak PPE Suit Manufacturing Know-how to Five MSMEs Developed by Indian Navy

- **National Research Development Corporation (NRDC)** has licensed the manufacturing know-how of a PPE Suit being named as **NavRakshak** to five MSME clients: M/s Greenfield Vintrade Pvt Ltd (Kolkata), M/s Vaishnavi Global Pvt Ltd (Mumbai), M/s Bharat Silks (Bangalore), M/s Sure Safety (India) Ltd (Vadodara) and M/s Swaps Couture (Mumbai) to meet the ongoing country wide demand of quality PPE kits.
- These five manufacturers put together are planning to mass produce more than 10 million PPEs per year.
- The manufacturing know-how of NavRakshak PPE has been developed at the Innovation Cell of the Institute of Naval Medicine, INHS Asvini Hospital (Mumbai) of the Indian Navy from where the name 'NavRakshak' is derived.
- The PPE has been tested and certified at the INMAS, DRDO which is one of the nine NABL accredited labs authorised by Ministry of Textile currently in India for PPE prototype sample testing as per the prevailing ISO

stry of Health & Family Welfare/Ministry of Textile guidelines and has been found to meet the synthetic blood penetration resistance criteria for both the fabric, suit, and seam.

- **NavRakshak** has been designed by a **Naval doctor** incorporating personal experience in using the PPE for the comfort and protection of the doctors.
- A **patent application** has been filed for the NavRakshak PPE by the inventors through **NRDC.** This technology can resolve many issues at one go. It makes manufacturing easy without requiring big capital investment. It does not require coating and taping related equipment. Therefore, foreign import and costly machines are not required. It gives protection as well as comfort to the user. Above all, it gives self-sustainability to the country.

Indian Navy inducts indigenously developed Torpedo Decoy System Maareech

- **The Anti-Submarine Warfare** capability of the **Indian Navy** received a major boost with the induction of the **Advanced Torpedo Decoy System Maareech** capable of being fired from all frontline warships.
- Design and Development of this anti-torpedo decoy system has been undertaken indigenously by DRDO labs-(NSTL and NPOL). The Bharat Electronics Limited, a Defence PSU, would undertake the production of this decoy system.

Important Science and Technology

DRDO develops Ultra Swachh for disinfection of PPEs, electronic items, fabrics

- **Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO)** has developed a disinfection unit named **Ultra Swachh** to disinfect a wide range of materials, including Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs), electronics items, fabrics and others.
- Institute of Nuclear Medicine and Allied Sciences, the Delhi-based laboratory of DRDO has developed this product with industry partner Gel Craft Health care Private Ltd.
- The system uses an advanced oxidative process comprising of multiple barrier disruption approach using Ozonated Space Technology for disinfection.
- Ultra Swachh is double-layered, with specialized Ozone sealant technology assuring trapping of Ozone for the necessary disinfection cycle. It also has catalytic converter to ensure environment friendly exhaust. The system is in compliance with International Standards of Industrial, Occupational, Personal and Environmental Safety.
- Ultra Swachh comes in two variants namely Ozonated Space and Trinetra Technology. Trinetra technology is the combination of Ozonated space and radical dispenser. Treatment is optimized with automation for quick disinfection cycle.

South Africa, Nasa collaborate to support human missions to Moon, Mars and beyond

- **South Africa** has partnered with **Nasa** to host a deep-space ground station, which will support **human spaceflight missions to the Moon, Mars and beyond.**
- With this collaboration, South Africa became the **fourth country** after the US, Spain and Australia to host a deep space ground station.
- The partnership between the South African National Space Agency (SANSA) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa) to host the space station followed an earlier agreement between the two organisations for the establishment of the station at **Matjiesfontein** town in the **Western Cape Province.**

- The station will support human spaceflight missions to the Moon, Mars and beyond. It will be integrated into an existing network of three sites in the United States of America, Spain and Australia.
- The station will benefit South Africa in, amongst others, the development of scarce skills and the growth of the science, engineering, technology and innovation sector. It will also provide opportunities to feed the knowledge economy and increase the national research output in space science and technology.

DRDO develops device to keep PPE wearers comfortable, without sweating

- The **Defence Research Development Organisation (DRDO)** has developed a device **SUMERU-PACS** that helps wearers of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to feel comfortable **without sweating.**
- DRDO developed a personal air circulation system which can be used inside the PPE as a small backpack of approximately 500 grams weight which works well at an ambient temperature of 39 degrees Celsius and keeps wearer comfortable and cool without sweating.
- The system is suitable for indoors especially for doctors and other medical staff wearing PPE cover all six hours in the hospitals.
- The device draws the outside air with the help of a filter and the moist air goes out from the front face opening thereby, cooling neck and head area.

IIT-Ropar's machine to sterilise products using UV rays

- **IIT- Ropar** has designed a machine in which products can be **sterilised using UV rays**. The institute has also started consulting a **Chandigarh-based manufacturing company Esspee Industries** for its production.
- The UV-C Sterlisation Unit was conceptualised and designed by Senior Scientific Officer Naresh Rakha, Dr Khushboo Rakha and Executive Engineer TS Anand.
- The Machine is used to sterilise grocery items using UV rays.
- The UV lights of the unit, which is equipped to kill germs including fungus, viruses and bacteria, should only be used on products and should not come close to a person's skin.

IIT- Hyderabad researchers develops low cost and Artificial Intelligence-based test kit for COVID-19

- Researchers at the **Indian Institute of Technology-Hyderabad** have developed a **low cost** and **Artificial Intelligence-based test kit** for COVID-19. These kits can give results in about 20 minutes.
- The test kits have already been tried at the ESIC hospital and the results are encouraging. He stated the test kits are Reverse Transition Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR)-free and get rid of many processes.
- The cost of COVID testing with these IIT-H BioChips will be around **600 rupees** and can be almost halved in case of mass production of the chips.
- These kits can be transported to rural areas as they are very light and helpful to increase the testing for COVID-19 in the country.

Scientists develop indigenous nasopharyngeal swabs

- **CSIR-National Chemical Laboratory (CSIR-NCL), Pune**, has developed an indigenous **NP swab** for collecting samples from the throat cavity of COVID-19 patients.
- The need for making available domestic technology for NP swabs was flagged by CSIR to NCL in mid-April.
- **Nasopharyngeal swab** is a medical device with stringent specifications of quality, polymer grade, dimensions and sterilization. An NP swab consists of a cylindrical plastic stick with a brush-like tip of synthetic bristles/flocks. The

flocking process helps align the fine bristles in a parallel orientation on the stick head, much like a tooth brush, except that this has round uniform geometry and the NP swab bristles are of micron diameter.

ARCI develops Rare earth based magnetocaloric material for cancer treatment

- Scientists at the **International Advanced Research Centre for Powder Metallurgy and New Materials (ARCI)**, an autonomous R&D Centre of Department of Science and Technology (DST) has developed a rare-earth-based **magnetocaloric material** that can be effectively used for **cancer treatment.**
- The magnetocaloric materials (certain materials in which application and removal of a magnetic field causes the materials to become warmer or cooler) developed by ARCI are being tested at Sree **Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences & Technology (SCTIMST).** A paper on the research work has been published in the Journal of Alloys and Compounds.
- This method, when used in conjunction with radiation therapy, would reduce the side effects, damage caused to the human body and also reduce the treatment time of cancer tumours.

Four satellites launched by China in two days

- As per the recent reports of the Space.com, **China** also launched **two flights** at the same time during NASA's Demo-2 mission blast off toward the International Space Station on May 30.
- At first, Beijing launched two new technology-demonstrating satellites at 4:13 am (Beijing time). The satellites made a successful lift-off into space aboard a **Long March-11 rocket**, according to Chinese state media.
- One of the satellites was **Gaofen-9** according to Xinhua. The civilian remote sensing satellite has the capability to take photographs with a resolution of roughly 3.3 feet (1 meter).
- It will be used in land surveys, urban planning, road network design and crop yield estimates, as well as disaster relief, Xinhua stated.
- The other satellite is **HEAD-4**, which is designed to support the Internet of Things (IoT) and allows connected devices to receive and send information from orbit.

23-yer-old Maharashtra boy makes world's first 'Internet-controlled' robot to help Covid-19 patients

- A 23-year-old engineer from Maharashtra's Thane has developed a first-of-its kind **'Internet-controlled'** robot specifically to address the needs of hospitals treating COVID-19 patients.
- The gizmo, aptly called **'Coro-bot'** independently dispenses food, water, beverages, medicines – and even some good advice – to Coronavirus patients without the needs for nurses, ward staff or other care-givers.
- Designed and created by **Pratik Tirodkar,** founder of a start-up PNT Solutions, Dombivali, recently, the first Coro-bot is currently deployed successfully at the Holy Cross Hospital in Kalyan.
- 'Coro-bot' eliminates the need of physical presence or contact of nurses or ward boys with the patient.
- It can deliver food, water, medicines and interact with the patients through a camera. Through a speaker, it can also advise patients on various precautions like sanitizing their hands before picking up anything from the robotic tray.
- The company has created a special App to operate Coro-bot from any location in the world using Internet of Things (IoT) technology – a first anywhere in the world that this technique is being deployed in the medical field.
- The Coro-bot comes with 3 trays with a carrying capacity of 10-15 kg each, plus a 30-kg storage at the bottom, enabling it to serve the supplies to over a dozen patients at a time in the COVID-19 ward.

- The Coro-bot also has LED lights illumination to make it convenient for night usage as well, timers for indicating lunch-dinner, emergency button, besides a small PC like screen on the top for basic computer work or entertainment

DIAT develops disinfectant spray to combat Covid-19

- The **Defence Institute of Advanced Technology in Pune** has developed a **nano-technology** based **disinfectant spray** to combat Covid-19. The formulation, which has been named **Ananya,** is effective in disinfecting all types of surfaces.
- The material can be used on masks, PPEs, hospital linens, and other likely contaminated surfaces like medical instruments, elevator buttons, door knobs, corridors and rooms.
- The material has been developed by synthesising silver nanoparticles and a commercially available drug, Ampicillin. Properties of this material have been tested by two methods **– Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Spectroscopy and Infrared Spectroscopy.**
- This is a water based spray and will be effective for more than 24 hours. This formulation adheres very effectively to fabric, plastic and metallic objects, and its toxicity to humans is negligible. The shelf life of the spray is said to be more than six months. Commercial production of this spray is in progress. It will be available in various sizes.

Health-tech startup, Arvi launches contactless thermal scanning kiosks

- **Arvi**, a health-tech startup has launched **contactless thermal scanning kiosks** amid the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Arvi kiosks use AI technology with deep learning to combine facial recognition and thermal screening to detect persons with high temperatures as well as those violating requirements to wear masks.
- The newly launched unmanned, contactless thermal scanning kiosks have features such as temperature check, face mask detection, auto hand-sanitization, and attendance/access management. Arvi's kiosks also screen blood oxygen, pulse, and respiration rate in addition to temperature.
- Founded by the **team of IIT Bombay engineers**, these kiosks can be used at the entry points of malls, corporate offices, banks, airports, schools, hospitals, etc.

Kerala Startup launches mask disposal smart bin & UV light-based disinfection device

- **VST Mobility Solutions**, a Startup headquartered at **Cochin**, has launched an automated **mask disposal machine** as part of efforts to develop products helping to combat the Covid-19. The disposal device, named **BIN-19**, developed Chitra UV based face mask disposal bin technology from the **Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology (SCTIMST),** Trivandrum an institute of national importance under Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India, was formally launched by Ernakulam District Collector S. Suhas by installing a unit at his office, the administrative headquarters of the district.
- The IoT-based **BIN-19** (Internet of Things) is used for collecting and disinfecting Used Face-Mask. The device has been subjected to a series of successful microbiological tests by Sree Chitra Lab. Sree Chitra is one of the testing agency for UV based devices in the country as per the guidelines of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).
- Explaining the functioning of BIN-19, Mr. Alvin George, CEO of VST Mobility Solutions, stated that the used masks dropped inside a container of the bin will be first disinfected by a process. The disinfected masks will be transferred to another container inside the Bin. The person dropping the mask can sanitize her hands with the help of the automatic sanitizer dispenser attached to the Bin-19. There is no need to touch or operate any switches in

the Bin to do all these. All functions are automated in the hands-free equipment for the safety of users and health workers.

- The device is mainly used for disposing of the contaminated or used face-mask and for reusing the UVC stable metallic products. This device is proven under a microbiological test conducted by Sree Chitra Lab.

DRDO develops 'GermiKlean' to sanitise uniforms of security forces

- **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** has developed a sanitizing chamber named '**GermiKlean**' to sanitise **uniforms of security forces**
- The sanitizing chamber has been set up at Parliament Street Police Station.
- DRDO's move came after Delhi Police gave their requirement for sanitizing their uniforms, canes, cane shields, helmets, etc.
- DRDO designed and developed a dry heat treatment chamber named "GermiKlean". This chamber is designed to sanitise 25 pairs of uniforms within 15 minutes, stated DRDO officials.

Central Railways launches robotic 'Captain Arjun' for screening of passengers for COVID-19 and surveillance in Pune

- **The Central Railways** has launched a robot named **'Captain Arjun'** for the screening of passengers for COVID-19 infection and surveillance on railway premises in **Pune.**
- Robotic Captain "ARJUN" is an innovative step by the Central Railway, Pune division to enhance the security and safety of passengers.
- Captain Arjun will help the Railway Protection Force (RPF) in Pune in keeping a close watch on anti-social elements.
- The robot will protect passengers and staff from any possible COVID-19 infection and enhanced their security when they board or de-board trains.
- Captain Arjun is equipped with a **motion sensor, one PTZ camera (pan, tilt, zoom camera) and one dome camera.** The cameras use AI algorithms to track suspicious and antisocial activity, have an in-built siren, motion-activated spotlight H-264 processor and in-built internal storage for recording in case there is a network failure.
- Captain Arjun does **thermal screening** and records the temperature in a digital display panel with a response time of 0.5 seconds and if the temperature is higher than the reference range, it sounds an abnormal automatic alarm.
- The robot adopts a **two-way communication mode, voice and video**, and also speaks in the local language. It has speakers to spread awareness messages on Covid-19.
- Captain Arjun also has a **sensor-based sanitiser and mask dispenser** and can move. The robot has a floor sanitisation facility with battery backup. It has rugged wheels that support all kinds of surfaces.

Scientists discover 'mirror image' of the Earth and the Sun 3,000 light-years away

- **Scientists** have recently discovered a **new exoplanet-star** pair which resembles our **Earth-Sun system**.
- **The star Kepler-160** and the **planet KOI-456**. Are quite similar to the Sun and the Earth, more than any other planets previously discovered which makes the planet more conducive to life, according to a team of scientists led by the Max Planck Institute for Solar System Research (MPS) in Gottingen, Germany.
- We conclude that **Kepler-160** has at least **three planets**, one of which is the non-transiting planet Kepler-160 d. We also find the super-Earth-sized transiting planet candidate KOI-456.04 in the habitable zone of this system, which could be the fourth planet, the report stated.

- KOI-456.04 is orbiting the Kepler-160 at a distance similar to that of the earth from the sun. It takes approximately 378 days to complete one orbit, according to the report. The planet is approximately 3,000 light-years away from Earth.
- The new discovery is different from previously discovered exoplanets. One of the key reasons for the same is its Sun-like host star, as per reports.
- Most of the exoplanets previously discovered are hosted by red dwarf stars emitting infrared radiation rather than as visible light. Kepler 160's composition shows that it is more similar to the sun reducing the chances of infrared radiation making it more potentially habitable. More clarity can be provided by NASA's upcoming James Webb Space Telescope as well as the ESA's PLATO space telescope which is likely to be launched in 2026 as per reports.

India's gets its first infectious disease diagnostic lab

- **India's first infectious disease diagnostic lab** is now ready. This rapid response mobile labrotary is part of government **Aatmnirbhar Bharat**. This labrotary was built in a record time of eight days from the date of receipt of Automotive Chassis, from **Bharat Benz**.
- It is built with the support of Department of Bio-Technology. The lab is a **BSL-2 facility** with on site Elisa, real-time reverse tranion polymerase chain reaction (rRT-PCR) test and Bio chemistry analysers.
- Elisa is a technology designed for quantifying and detecting soluble substances such as proteins, antibodies, peptides, and hormones.
- This lab can test Elisa about 200 per day and RTPCR about 50 per day.

Central Railway sets up Body Screening Facility 'FebriEye' In Mumbai's CSMT, LTT Stations

- **Central Railway** has set up a **body screening facility** called **FebriEye.** This is yet another effort towards passenger safety after **automated ticket checking and managing access (ATMA)** machine and Always be Responsible and robotic **Captain Arjun.**
- Indian Railways has partially resumed passenger train services on important routes in the country and it is taking several measures to prevent the spread of COVID19 infection. In order to effectively scan passengers for COVID-19 symptoms and to ensure contactless entry, body-screening facility "**FebriEye thermal cameras**" have been set up at **Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus** and **Lokmanya Tilak Terminus in Mumbai, Maharashtra**.
- FebriEye is an Artificial Intelligence-based thermal screening system for real-time and automated, non-intrusive monitoring to ensure that a person entering does not have a high fever.
- When passengers pass before the cameras, anyone with temperature above the set range will be shown in a different colour pattern than the rest on the computer screen connected to the cameras.
- Central Railway stated that FebriEye thermal cameras can cover large areas which means it can detect the temperature of multiple people entering at once at a premise and record temperature automatically while passengers keep on moving.
- The FebriEye human body screening facility by Central Railway is a step forward to modern security measures introduced by Railways.

Minister Kishan Reddy launches GermiBAN in Hyderabad

- Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, **G Kishan Reddy** launched **GermiBAN** at AIC ALEAP We-Hub **Hyderabad**.

- The device launched has UV C and other B, C, D components, the patenting technology that kills surface and air microbes at 99.9 per cent, useful for isolation wards, quarantine centres, hospitals for killing viruses like corona.
- The Incubation Centre has come up with various innovative solutions made by the startups to fight Covid-19 like GermiBAN.

India sets up first mobile Covid-testing lab

- **India** has set up its **first mobile testing laboratory** in a bid to meet the growing demand to conduct **coronavirus disease (Covid-19) tests.**
- The mobile laboratory belongs to the **biosafety level 2 (BSL-II) category**, which was created **within eight days** by a team from **Andhra Pradesh MedTech Zone Limited**.
- BSLs are ranked from one to four and are categorised on the basis of the organisms that the researchers are dealing with.
- BSL-I is considered to be the least hazardous, while BSL-IV poses the maximum safety risk. Each level builds on the previous category, adding more layers of constraints and barriers.
- SARS-CoV-2, which causes Covid-19, belongs to the BSL-II category.
- The facility aims to put India on the global map of high-end medical equipment production and make healthcare products affordable and accessible not only in the country, but also the world at large.
- It also has set a target for reducing the cost of manufacturing up to 40% and also minimising the import dependency for the country, which is currently pegged at around 75%.

Indian Railways installs automated ticket checking machine at Nagpur station

- Central Railway zone has installed a newly innovated **ATMA – Automated Ticket Checking & Managing Access machine** at the **Nagpur railway station**.
- The ATMA machine has been introduced at the station under the NINFRIS policy to prevent transmission of COVID-19.
- Some of the key benefits of this system are automated boarding protocol by ticket checking, human body temperature checking, face mask checking and access to the station.
- ATMA is reduced staff deployment of commercial, RPF as well as medical departments with automation and adequate safety.
- The innovative machine screens the human body temperature of the passengers, whether they are wearing masks, ID proof as well as the PNR of the ticket, ensuring social distancing of both passengers.
- Recently, Indian Railways also introduced a **new automated face mask and hand sanitizer dispenser** machine at **Patna Junction** to facilitate those who forgot to carry their sanitizer or mask.

IIT Hyderabad researcher develops AI-based low-cost testing kit

- A team of researcher at **Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad** has developed an affordable **AI-based COVID-19 test kit**, which may help administration to conduct rapid testing for quick result.
- The testing kit has many features including low cost, easily transportable, and quick results. It takes as many as 20 minutes for giving results for both for symptomatic and asymptomatic patients. In addition, the kit doesn't does not require **RT-PCR (Reverse Transcription Polymerase Chain Reaction)**.
- The test kit has already been field-tested at ESIC Medical College and Hospital in Hyderabad to check its efficiency.

- Each test costs around Rs. 600 device now. However, mass production of the testing kit will help reduce the cost to around Rs. 350 per test.
- The testing kit has been developed by a team led by **Prof. Shiv Govind Singh**, Department of Electrical Engineering, IIT Hyderabad.

NASA Scientists Discover Remarkable Cosmic Baby—a 240-year-old Neutron Star

- US Astronomers have discovered a very rare remarkable **neutron star** which is known as **Swift J1818.0−1607** and is estimated to be about **240 years old**. A new study published in the Astrophysical Journal confirms that the terrestrial body is a veritable newborn by cosmic standards. The study added that **NASA's Neil Gehrels Swift Observatory** spotted the young object on March 12, when it released a massive burst of X-rays. The European Space Agency's XMM-Newton observatory and NASA's NuSTAR telescope did a follow up study which is led by Caltech and managed by the agency's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, which revealed the cosmic baby's physical characteristics.
- As per NASA's website, A neutron star is an incredibly dense nugget of stellar material left over after a massive star goes supernova and explodes. In fact, they're some of the densest objects in the universe (second only to black holes): A teaspoon of neutron star material would weigh 4 billion tons on Earth. The atoms inside a neutron star are smashed together so tightly, they behave in ways not found anywhere else. Swift J1818.0−1607 packs twice the mass of our Sun into a volume more than one trillion times smaller.
- It added, With a magnetic field up to 1,000 times stronger than a typical neutron star — and about 100 million times stronger than the most powerful magnets made by humans — Swift J1818.0−1607 belongs to a special class of objects called magnetars, which are the most magnetic objects in the universe. And it appears to be the youngest magnetar ever discovered. If its age is confirmed, that means light from the stellar explosion that formed it would have reached Earth around the time that George Washington became the first president of the United States.

Bose-Einstein Quantum "Fifth State Of Matter" Seen For 1st Time In Space

- Scientists have observed the **fifth state of matter in space** for the **first time**, offering unprecedented insight that could help solve some of the **quantum universe's most intractable conundrums**, research.
- **Bose-Einstein condensates (BECs)** -- the existence of which was predicted by Albert Einstein and Indian mathematician Satyendra Nath Bose almost a century ago -- are formed when atoms of certain elements are cooled to **near absolute zero** (0 Kelvin, minus 273.15 Celsius).
- At this point, the atoms become a single entity with quantum properties, wherein each particle also functions as a wave of matter.
- BECs straddle the line between the macroscopic world governed by forces such as gravity and the microscopic plane, ruled by quantum mechanics.
- Scientists believe BECs contain vital clues to mysterious phenomena such as dark energy -- the unknown energy thought to be behind the Universe's accelerating expansion.
- But BECs are extremely fragile. The slightest interaction with the external world is enough to warm them past their condensation threshold.
- This makes them nearly impossible for scientists to study on Earth, where gravity interferes with the magnetic fields required to hold them in place for observation.

- A team of NASA scientists unveiled the first results from BEC experiments aboard the International Space Station, where particles can be manipulated free from Earthly constraints.
- The research published in the journal Nature documents several startling differences in the properties of BECs created on Earth and those aboard the ISS.
- For one thing, BECs in terrestrial labs typically last a handful of milliseconds before dissipating.
- Microgravity also allowed the atoms to be manipulated by weaker magnetic fields, speeding their cooling and allowing clearer imaging.

IIT Mandi team develops infusion technology for herbs in mid-Himalayan region to help farmers

- Researchers at **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Mandi** have developed a **herbal infusiontechnology** as a sustainable means of income for local marginal farmers in the mid-Himalayan region.
- The team at the institute's Botanical Garden and Medicinal Plant Lab analysed various herbs growing in the mid-Himalayan region in and around the villages surrounding IIT Mandi, Kamand region for developing value-added products in the form of herbal infusions known for their health benefits (mainly rich in anti-oxidants).
- The technology is ready for licensing for potential industries who are keen to work with **EWOK (a rural incubator at IIT Mandi)** in the interest of uplifting the Kamand Valley farmers.
- The goal is to create 100 Kamand Valley Infusion formulations and establish an farmer-academia-industry-NGO network for buy-back and sustainable market linkages. Vacuum drying process is optimised for each herb for maintaining quality.
- The lab is training local farmers in collaboration with EWOK with regards to farming of herbals, processing, packaging and marketing of the infusions. It is anticipated that this FPC will support about 200 farmers in within the next few years.

IIT-Madras, GE tie as much as construct 3D-printed combustor

- **IIT Madras** and **General Electric India Technology Centre (GEITC)** are collectively growing a **3D printed combustor** geared toward lowering weight and bettering gasoline effectivity in small plane and helicopter engines.
- Both organisations are designing the combustor – the burner in a gasoline turbine engine, with almost one-tenth of the components as in comparison with conventional engines.
- The Rs 7.24 crore **Uchhatar Avishkar Yojana (UAY) mission** is being carried out by the aerospace division on the Institute and is being funded by the federal government of India (75%) and GEITC (25%).
- The primary objective of this project is to reduce the length of the combustor, which will reduce its weight. It also reduces the fuel consumption of the engine.
- The engine may be utilized in energy technology. In bigger plane, it may very well be used as a part of an auxiliary energy unit (APU), in addition to for distributed/decentralised energy technology as in backup gensets, or in distant areas, or together with hybrid photo voltaic/wind good grid options.

Annular solar eclipse with majestic Ring of Fire, witnessed in several parts of India

- The country witnessed a rare celestial event, an **annular solar eclipse** on 21st**june**. The annular **'ring of fire'** solar eclipse, wherein the Sun appears like a ring of fire, is visible in different parts of the country.
- The solar eclipse took place on the summer solstice, which is the **longest day in the Northern Hemisphere**.
- The rare celestial event occurs, when the Moon comes between the Sun and the Earth and the shadow falls on the surface of the Earth.

- The Sun is entirely covered by the Moon for a brief period. Those places that are engulfed by the dark, dense umbral shadow of the Moon experience the total solar eclipse.

ISRO receives patent for protective garment for human spaceflight

- The **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** has received a patent for its **Liquid Cooling and Heating Garment (LCHG)** made of biocompatible fabrics and components to provide a **comfortable temperature** and **removal of sweat for astronauts**, for use in space for protection from hot and cold environments.
- LCHGs are used in space, military applications, fire fighting and also for personal cooling and heating purposes for protection from hot and cold environments of industrial areas or in extreme temperature and humidity conditions that may exist in work environments.
- These garments have a system for circulating temperature controlling fluid into and out of the garments, for instance, through tubes inside the garment.
- Isro's invention is designed to permit long term use of the garment without any impact on the wearer in terms of skin irritation or infection and is low in cost of manufacture, according to the **patent specification filed by the organisation with thePatent Office in February 2016.**
- The garment is provided with an outer layer made of polymeric fabric net and an inner layer of polymeric fabric tricoting, which comes in contact with the skin of the wearer.
- Both the layers are separated by several tubes configured to circulate a heat transfer fluid across the body through at least one inlet and at least one outlet connected to a valve for controlling the supply of the heat transfer fluid to and from the reservoir.

China launches final satellite in GPS-like Beidou system

- **China** launched the final satellite in its **Beidou** constellation that emulates the US Global Positioning System, marking a further step in the country's advance as a major space power.
- The launch of the satellite onboard a Long March-3 rocket was broadcast live from the satellite launch base of Xichang, deep in the mountains of southwestern China, shortly before 10 a.m. About half an hour later, the satellite was deployed in orbit and extended its solar panels to provide its energy.
- The third iteration of the **Beidou Navigation Satellite System** promises to provide global coverage for timing and navigation, offering an alternative to Russia's GLONASS and the European Galileo systems, as well as America's GPS.
- China's space program has developed rapidly over the past two decades as the government devotes major resources toward developing independent high-tech capabilities — and even dominating in fields such as 5G data processing.
- The first version of Beidou, meaning "Big Dipper," was decommissioned in 2012. Future plans call for a smarter, more accessible and more integrated system with Beidou at its core, to come online by 2035.
- In 2003, China became just the third country to independently launch a crewed space mission and has since constructed an experimental space station and sent a pair of rovers to the surface of the moon.

IIT-Bombay develops chip Dhruva to be used in smartphones and navigation devices to find locations

- **IIT-Bombay** has developed a homegrown **receiver chip -Dhruva**– that can be used in smartphones and navigation devices to find locations and routes within the country.
- Dhruva will receive signals from **India's NAVIC group of navigation satellites** as well as the US **Global Positioning System-based satellites** to determine these accurately under all weather conditions.

- The radio frequency receiver chip was designed in 18 months by students and researchers at IIT Bombay. It can receive in multiple frequency bands and handle weak signals.
- It can be converted into digital bits and processed by any standard digital signal processor (DSP) to determine one's location precisely.
- The Dhruva project was funded by the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY),** with **SAMEER (Society for Applied Microwave Electronics Engineering and Research)** as the nodal agency. The research team also interfaced with the Space Applications Centre of the Indian Space Research Organisation.
- Dhruva will help receive and clean up the signals received from NAVIC, which are 36,000 km above from the earth's surface.
- NAVIC (Navigation with Indian Constellation) is India's geo-positioning system designed by ISRO to provide accurate positioning within the country. NAVIC satellites were sent to orbit a few years ago, but no commercial 'receiver' chip was available to receive signals from the satellites.

Young Giant Planet Offers Clues to Formation of Exotic Worlds

- For most of human history our understanding of how planets form and evolve was based on the eight (or nine) planets in our solar system. But over the last 25 years, the discovery of more than 4,000 exoplanets, or planets outside our solar system, changed all that.
- A new study in the Astronomical Journal reports on the detection of the exoplanet **HIP 67522 b**, which appears to be the **youngest hot Jupiter** ever found. It orbits a well-studied star that is **about 17 million years old**, meaning the hot Jupiter is likely only a few million years younger, whereas most known hot Jupiters are more than a billion years old.
- The planet takes about **seven days** to orbit its star, which has a mass similar to the Sun's. Located only about 490 light-years from Earth, HIP 67522 b is about 10 times the diameter of Earth, or close to that of Jupiter. Its size strongly indicates that it is a gas-dominated planet.
- HIP 67522 b was identified as a planet candidate by **NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS),** which detects planets via the transit method: Scientists look for small dips in the brightness of a star, indicating that an orbiting planet has passed between the observer and the star.
- But young stars tend to have a lot of dark splotches on their surfaces — starspots, also called sunspots when they appear on the Sun — that can look similar to transiting planets. So scientists used data from NASA's recently retired infrared observatory, the Spitzer Space Telescope, to confirm that the transit signal was from a planet and not a starspot. (Other methods of exoplanet detection have yielded hints at the presence of even younger hot Jupiters, but none have been confirmed.
- The discovery offers hope for finding more young hot Jupiters and learning more about how planets form throughout the universe — even right at home.

Indian Institute of Science develops Nanozymes

- A research team at the **Indian Institute of Science in Bengaluru** has developed **nanozymes** that destroy the **cell membrane** of bacteria by directly targeting its **phospholipids**. Nanozymes are nanomaterials that can disintegrate the cell membranes of a range of diseases causing bacteria.
- The study conducted by the Department of Inorganic and Physical Chemistry and the Department of Microbiology and Cell Biology was published in ACS Applied BioMaterials journal. The nanomaterial developed in IISc is tested on several potentially pathogenic bacteria causing typhoid, gastroenteritis, dysentery, cholera and pneumonia.

- It was found that the nanozyme stopped growth and killed the microbes. Former PhD students Kapudeep Karmakar and Kritika Khulbe who conducted the research say that nanozymes developed by them can replace the antibiotics that have become ineffective as several bacteria have developed resistance to them by producing their own enzymes.

Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport becomes 1st in India with this new tech at both ends of runway

- **Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport** gets **Aviation Weather Monitoring System** for the first time in India, an **Aviation Weather Monitoring System** has been installed at the Bangalore airport at **both ends of the runway.**
- The Aviation Weather Monitoring System has been developed by Bengaluru-based **CSIR-National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL).**
- Apart from this, Bengaluru airport has also installed four **Drishti Transmissometers** which is expected to help in measuring the **Runway Visibility Range (RVR).** With this, the number of RVRs installed at the both runways have reached six.
- According to the airport authorities, the Drishti Transmissometers are also made by NAL in association with the **Indian Meteorological Department (IMD).**
- The move of installing RVRs and AWMS boosts the airport's vision of 'Made in India.'

IISc in process of commercialising ICU-grade ventilator 'Project Praana'

- Researchers at **the Indian Institute of Science (IISc),** has successfully completed the prototyping of an **intensive care unit (ICU) grade ventilator** which is now in the process of being commercialised. Code-named **'Project Praana',** the product is a technology development, to address the shortage of medical ventilators in the fight against Covid-19.
- The prototype consists of a custom-designed pneumatic system controlled by a microprocessor and uses proprietary algorithms and techniques to blend air and oxygen in the desired ratio. It also offers fine-grained control of patient-side respiratory parameters such as respiration rate, inspiration to expiration ratio, FiO2 (concentration of oxygen that a person inhales), and PEEP (positive end-expiratory pressure).
- It supports both invasive and non-invasive ventilation.
- The ventilator uses only components **made in India** or those, which are easily available in the domestic supply chains at low cost.

NASA Renamed Its Headquarters For 'Hidden Figure' Mary Jackson

- **NASA** renamed the **street outside their headquarters** as the **'Hidden Figures Way'.**
- **Jim Bridenstine, a NASA administrator,** announced that their Washington headquarters will be renamed after **Mary Jackson,** who overcame hurdles to become NASA's first Black woman engineer.
- A few years after Mary Jackson's death in 2005, she was awarded the 'Congressional Golf Medal' for her immense contribution not just to NASA but also to American history. The 'Congressional Gold Medal' is the highest award granted to civilians in the United States.

CSIR-NCL and BEL manufacture Oxygen Enrichment Unit useful in Covid-19 treatment

- **Oxygen Enrichment Unit (OEU),** developed by scientists from Polymer Science and Engineering Division **of CSIR-National Chemical Laboratory (CSIR-NCL),** will help reduce the requirement of ventilators and oxygen cylinders in homecare, villages and remote places.
- The technology has been licensed to NCL-start up GEnrich Membranes and the OEUs will be manufactured by **Bharat Electronics Ltd. (BEL).**

- Oxygen enrichment units have special significance in view of the **Covid-19 pandemic**. Patient recovery can be faster with supplemental oxygen in early stages.
- It can reduce the number of patients who will need ventilators. Post-ventilator treatment patients can be served with this unit, thus reducing demand for oxygen cylinders. Its portability makes it convenient for using such units in home care, villagesand remote places.

Bharat Biotech Announces India's First COVID-19 Vaccine Candidate 'COVAXIN' With DCGI Approval For Human Clinical Trials

- **Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech** announced that it has successfully developed **Covaxin,** India's first vaccine candidate for Covid-19, in collaboration with the **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** and **National Institute of Virology (NIV).**
- The Drug Controller General of India - CDSCO, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare granted permission to initiate Phase I & II Human clinical trials after the company submitted results generated from preclinical studies, demonstrating safety and immune response. Human clinical trials are scheduled to start across India in July 2020. The SARS-CoV-2 strain was isolated in NIV, Pune and transferred to Bharat Biotech
- The indigenous, inactivated vaccine developed and manufactured in the company's Bio-Safety Level 3 (BSL-3) High Containment facility located in Genome Valley, Hyderabad.
- Expedited through national regulatory protocols, the company accelerated its objective in completing the comprehensive pre-clinical studies. Results from these studies have been promising and show extensive safety and effective immune responses.
- Bharat Biotech's track record in developing vero cell culture platform technologies has been proven in several vaccines for Polio, Rabies, Rotavirus, Japanese Encephalitis, Chikungunya and Zika.

<p style="text-align:center;color:red;">Revision Points</p>

Institutions/Persons	Things to be Discovered/Developed
DRDO	Ultra Swachh
South Africa & NASA	Human missions to Moon, Mars
DRDO	SUMERU-PACS
IIT Ropar	Machine to sterilise products using UV rays
IIT Hyderabad	Low cost AI based test kit for COVID-19
CSIR-National Chemical Laboratory	Nasopharyngeal swabs
International Advanced Research Centre for Powder Metallurgy & New Materials	Magnetocaloric material for cancer treatment
Defence Institute of Advanced Technology, Pune	Disinfectant Spray
Arvi	Contactless thermal scanning kiosks
VST Mobility Solutions-Cochin	Mask disposal smart bin & UV light disinfection device
DRDO	GermiKlean
Central Railway	Captain Arjun robotic
Central Railway	Setting up of FebriEye – Body screening facility

G Kishan Reddy	GermiBAN
Central Railway Zone	ATMA – Automated Ticket Checking & Managing Access Machine
IIT Hyderabad	AI based low-cost testing kit
IIT Mandi	Herbal Infusion Technology
IIT Madras & GEITC	3D printed combustor
IIT Bombay	Dhruva
IISc - Bangalore	Nanozymes
IISc	Project Praana
CSIR-NCL & BEL	Oxygen Enrichment Unit
Bharat Biotech	COVAXIN

Important Environment News

Cyclone Nisarga, set to hit Maharashtra and Gujarat on 3 June

- A **cyclonic storm** has developed off the eastern coast of India over the **east-central Arabian Sea and Lakshadweep area**, according to the **India Meteorological Department (IMD).**
- Unlike **cyclone Amphan**, which was categorised as an extremely severe cyclonic storm that devastated parts of West Bengal, **the cyclone Nisarga** is expected to be less intense when it hits the coast.
- The IMD has released a new list of **169 cyclone names** adopted by the **WorldMeteorological Department (WMO)** panel in April.
- The list will be used to name tropical cyclones forming over the north of Indian Ocean.
- The **name Nisarga** is the first in the list proposed by **Bangladesh.**

Rare scorpionfish found in Gulf of Mannar

- Researchers at the **Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI)** have found a rare fish from **Sethukarai coast** in the **Gulf of Mannar**.
- Camouflaged within the seagrass meadows, the band-tail **scorpionfish (Scorpaenospsis neglecta)**, well-known for its stinging venomous spines and ability to change colour, was found during an exploratory survey of the seagrass ecosystem.
- This was the first time that the particular species was found alive in Indian waters. The fish has the ability to change colour and blend with its surrounding environment to escape from predators and while preying.
- The fish is called 'scorpionfish' because its spines contain neurotoxic venom.

Millipede from Scotland is world's oldest-known land animal

- A fossilized **millipede-like creature** discovered in **Scotland** may represent the **oldest-known land animal**, a humble pioneer of terrestrial living **425 million years ago** that helped pave the way for the throngs that would eventually inhabit Earth's dry parts.
- Researchers stated the fossil of the **Silurian Period creature**, called **Kampecaris obanensis** and unearthed on the island of Kerrera in the Scottish Inner Hebrides, inhabited a lakeside environment and likely ate decomposing plants. Fossils of the oldest-known plant with a stem, called **Cooksonia,** were found in the same ancient lake region as Kampecaris.

- While Kampecaris is the earliest land animal known from a fossil, soil worms are believed to have preceded it, appearing perhaps 450 million years ago, according to paleontologist Michael Brookfield of the University of Texas and the University of Massachusetts Boston, lead author of the research published this month in the journal Historical Biology.
- Kampecaris, about an inch (2.5 cm) long with a segmented body, resembled modern millipedes but was a member of an extinct group and is not ancestral to millipedes alive today. Its legs were not preserved in the fossil.
- It was an arthropod, a broad group that includes insects, spiders, millipedes, centipedes and crustaceans like crabs and shrimp.

New fish species discovered in Arunachal Pradesh

- A new species of fish has been discovered in **Arunachal Pradesh**. Dr. Keshav Kumar Jha, Associate Professor & Head, Department of Zoology, Jawaharlal Nehru College, Pasighat discovered a new fish species from genus **Schizothorax**.
- The fish species is named as **Schizothorax sikusirumensis**. The name of this fish species has been derived from the name of the rivers where it was found.
- This fish was collected from the junction of River Siku and Sirum near Gakang area under Mebo circle of East Siang District. The fish inhabits the water logged area of torrential river drainage.

500-year-old Odisha Temple Submerged in Mahanadi River Resurfaces

- An ancient temple that remained submerged in **Mahanad**i in **Odisha** has been found, stated experts who are leading a documentation project of heritage sites in the river valley.
- The **60-feet temple**, believed to be around **500 years old**, was located recently during an exercise as part of the project, stated Anil Dhir, project coordinator of the Indian National Trust for Art & Cultural Heritage (INTACH) in Odisha.
- The temple was found in the **mid-river near Baideswar** in the **Padmavati area** in Cuttack, he stated.
- The temple dates back to the late 15th or early 16th century, considering the construction style of the Mastaka and the materials used for the construction, Dhir stated, adding that INTACH would approach the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to take steps for relocating and restoring the temple.
- INTACH has so far located as many as 65 ancient temples in the Mahanadi river during its documentation project, Dhir stated many of the temples in the Hirakud reservoir too can be dismantled and reconstructed.
- The temple was dedicated to Gopinath Dev, he stated. The region used to be known as "Satapatana" in the early days. However, with the river changing its course due to catastrophic floodings, the entire village was submerged, Nayak stated.
- In the mid 19th century, the deities of the vulnerable temple were shifted and installed in a safer and higher place, which is presently the Gopinath Dev temple of Padmavati village, he stated.
- Dhir stated INTACH Odisha had launched its project on the documentation of the heritage of the Mahanadi valley early last year.

Important Rankings and Indexes

Index	India's Rank	Top	Released By
Global Startup Ecosystem	23	USA	Startup Blink

Environmental Prformance Index	168	Denmark	Yale University and Columbia University
Covid-19 safety and risk assessment	56	Switzerland	
Report on the recipient of FDI in 2019	9	-	United Nations
World Competitiveness Index	43	Singapore	Institute for Management Development

India drops six places in the ranking for world's best startup ecosystems

- **India** is home to the **third largest startup ecosystem**, but in a latest ranking of global startup ecosystems by **Startup blink**, India has **dropped** 6 places to the **23rd spot.**
- **United States has topped** the ranking list with a score of 123.167.
- United Kingdom, Israel, Canada and Germany are the top 5 countries in the list respectively.
- StartupBlink is a global comprehensive startup ecosystem map and research centre.
- India's Silicon Valley **Bengaluru** dropped three places to have the **14th rank** in the top cities with best startup ecosystem ranking, while the national **capital Delhi** climbed three spot to the **15th rank**. Meanwhile, **Mumbai** held the **22nd rank**. **Hyderabad** lost 21 spots to be ranked **96th.**
- Globally, San Francisco Bay, United States, New York, United States and London, United Kingdom are the tp three cities with best startup ecosystems.

COVID-19 to shave USD 25 bn off from top 100 domestic brands' value

- The coronavirus pandemic is likely to shave at least USD 25 billion off from the January 2020 cumulative brand value of top 100 domestic brands.
- According to the latest report by **Brand Finance,** globally, the **top 500 brands** could see a value erosion of **USD 1 trillion** from their **January 2020 brand value**, following COVID-19 disruptions.
- **Tata Group** has retained **the title of the most valuable brand,** breaking USD 20 billion brand value mark for first time this year and the group's luxe hotel brand Taj is the strongest brand in the country with brand strength index score 90.5 out of 100.
- LIC retained its second position with a value of USD 8.1 billion, followed by Reliance at third (USD 7.9 billion), Infosys fourth (USD 7.08 billion), SBI at fifth slot (USD6.4 billion).
- Also, the **Tata Group** is the **only domestic brand** to feature in the top 100 of the Brand Finance global 500 2020 list.
- Globally, it is ranked at 85th spot with brand value of USD 20 billion, becoming the first Indian brand to cross this mark.

8 Indian institutes in top 100, IITs on a 'decline': Times Higher Education Asia University Ranking

- **THE Asia University Ranking**: With eight institutes in the top 100, **India** is the **third most** represented country in the **Times Higher Education (THE)** Asia University Ranking .

- While the **Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bangalore** retains its top position in the country by attaining the **36th spot** globally, **eight Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs)** have also been featured in the top 100. This is India's best performance since 2016, in terms of the number of institutes. Last time, India had eight institutes in the top 100 in 2016. However, the picture is different in terms of 'quality'.
- Even as more IITs have been featured in the ranking; THE claims that "overall picture for India's IITs (is) one of general decline amid increased regional competition". Apart from IIT-Kharagpur and IIT-Delhi which have improved their performance since 2019, and IIT-Ropar which has debuted in the ranking this year, the rest of the IITs have scored lower

India's Ranking –
- Rank 36 – IISc Bangalore
- Rank 47 – IIT-Ropar
- Rank 59 – IIT-Kharagpur
- Rank 55 – IIT-Indore
- Rank 65 – IIT-Delhi
- Rank 69 – IIT-Bombay
- Rank 83 – IIT-Roorkee
- Rank 92 – Institute of Chemical Technology

Global top 10 Universities –
- Rank 1: Tsinghua University, China
- Rank 2: Peking University, China
- Rank 3: National University of Singapore, Singapore
- Rank 4: University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong
- Rank 5: The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
- Rank 6: Nanyang Technological University, Singapore
- Rank 7: The University of Tokyo, Japan
- Rank 8: Chinese University of Hong Kong
- Rank 9: Seoul National University, South Korea
- Rank 10: University of Science and Technology of China
- Rank 10: Sungkyunkwan University, South Korea
- Further, a total of **489 universities** across India qualified for the ranking this year which was an increase of 72 institutes of 17 per cent as compared to last year. China not only got the global top rank with Tsinghua University but also dominated the table with 81 universities, however, the most represented country was Japan with 110 institutes.
- THE Asia University Rankings 2020 use the same 13 performance indicators. THE claims that varsities are judged in four core areas: teaching, research, knowledge transfer and international outlook.

India loses 750 tigers in last eight years; MP, Maharashtra report maximum casualties
- As many as 750 tigers have died in the country in the last eight years due to poaching and other causes, with **Madhya Pradesh** reporting the **highest casualties at 173.**
- Of these total tiger mortalities, 369 were due to natural causes, 168 due to poaching, 70 deaths are under scrutiny and 42 due to unnatural reasons, including accident or conflicts events.

- There was also seizure of 101 big cats during the eight year period between 2012 and 2019 by different authorities across the country, **the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA).**
- Now the tiger count is 2,976. Madhya Pradesh has the highest number of 526 tigers in the country.
- Maharashtra has reported second highest deaths, as it lost 125 big cats during this period followed by 111 in Karnataka, 88 in Uttarakhand, 54 each in Tamil Nadu and Assam, 35 each in Kerala and Uttar Pradesh, 17 in Rajasthan, 11 in Bihar and West Bengal and 10 in Chhattisgarh.

Gujarat Tops India's Food Safety Index, Followed By Tamil Nadu & Maharashtra

- **Gujarat** has topped among larger states in terms of **food safety index**, while **Chandigarh** tops among **UTs**. Goa leads smaller states as far as food safety is concerned, as per the details shared by FSSAI. Gujarat is followed by Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra, stated the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), which released the results of the second 'State Food Safety Index' to celebrate the World Food Safety Day during a webinar.
- Among smaller states, Goa is followed by Manipur and Meghalaya. Among UTs, Chandigarh, Delhi and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands have secured top ranks.
- FSSAI also released an e-handbook on 'Eat Right during COVID-19' for the citizens. It highlights safe food practices to be followed diligently and tips on health and nutrition. An updated guidance note 'Food Hygiene and Safety Guidelines for Food Businesses during Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Pandemic' was also released on the occasion.

India ranks 168th on Environmental Performance Index

- **India** secured **168 rank** in the 12th edition of the biennial **Environment Performance Index (EPI Index 2020)** that measured the environmental performance of **180 countries** and was released by the **Yale University and Columbia University.**
- The country scored 27.6 out of 100 in the 2020 index.
- In the 2020 EPI - a biennial scorecard of national results on a range of sustainability issues - Denmark has **ranked first in the world**, followed by Luxembourg, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, France, Austria, Finland, Sweden, Norway and Germany in the top 10 countries. While Japan has ranked 12th, the United States of America ranks 24th, and China stands at 120th.
- The 2020 EPI features new metrics that gauge waste management, carbon dioxide emissions from land cover change, and emissions of fluorinated gases – all important drivers of climate change.
- India comes in near the bottom of the global rankings at 168th place worldwide, and only Afghanistan (178th place) ranks below India in Southern Asia. Leading the region is Bhutan (107th), with relatively high scores in biodiversity & habitat protection. Sri Lanka (109th) and Maldives (127th) round out the top three countries in Southern Asia, followed by Pakistan (142nd), Nepal (145th), and Bangladesh (162nd).

MP becomes country's top wheat procurer; farmers get Rs 25,000 crore boost

- **Madhya Pradesh** is set to pump in around **Rs 25,000 crore** into its rural economy by the time its all-time high wheat procurement draws to a close. This has made the state **the country's largest wheat purchaser** in 2020-21.
- The state procured around **12.77 million tonnes of wheat**, which is expected to reach 13 million tonnes by the time the process ends in the next few weeks. **Punjab** has closed its procurement for this year at **12.76 million tonnes.**
- This year, Madhya Pradesh produced around 30 million tonnes of wheat.
- Usually, around 1 million farmers sell wheat in Madhya Pradesh to the government every year. However, this year, the number jumped by almost 60 per cent as private buying was negligible.

India ranks 56th among 200 countries on Covid-19 safety assessment

- **India** has been ranked **56th out of 200 countries** in a comprehensive report on **safety and riskassessment** of nations tackling **Covid-19.**
- According to **Deep Knowledge Group,Switzerland** is the **safest country** in the world for Covid-19, followed by Germany and Israel. **South Sudan is the most dangerous.**
- The study also created a subset of four distinct tiers, ranking each nation under different parameters according to available data.
- The first tier comprises a list of 20 most safe countries while those in the fourth tier are amongst the riskiest lot. The study focusses on nations and their safety capability against the pandemic.

Top 10 safest countries from coronavirus:

- Switzerland
- Germany
- Israel
- Singapore
- Japan
- Austria
- China
- Australia
- New Zealand
- South Korea
- Pakistan, on the other hand, is ranked at 148th position our of a total of 200 nations.

Mumbai most expensive Indian city for expats, 19th most expensive in Asia

- India's financial capital **Mumbai** has emerged as the **most expensive city** in the country for expatriates in terms of **cost of living.**
- According to **Mercer's '2020 Cost of Living Survey'**, Mumbai is the **60th** most expensive city for expatriates **globally**, while it ranks **19th in Asia.**
- Mumbai is the most expensive among Indian cities surveyed, followed by **New Delhi (101st globally) and Chennai (143rd globally).**
- **Bengaluru (171) and Kolkata (185) are the least expensive** Indian cities in the rankings.
- The global list was topped by **Hong Kong**, followed by **Ashgabat (Turkmenistan) in second position.Japan's Tokyo and Switzerland's Zurich** remain in the **third and fourth** positions, respectively, whereas Singapore is in fifth position, down two places from last year.
- On the other hand, Tunis in Tunisia, Windhoek (Namibia), Tashkent (Uzbekistan), Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan) and Karachi (Pakistan) were ranked at the bottom as the least expensive cities in the world.

QS World University Rankings, IIT Bombay is India's top university

- **Quacquarelli Symonds World University Rankings** 2020-21 released. Notably, only three institutes from India managed to find a place in top 200 in QS World Rankings this year.
- The Indian institutes in the list are **IIT Bombay, IIT Delhi and IISc Bangalore.** It may be recalled that **IIT Delhi** was ranked 182 in 2019 and it fell down to **193 this year.**

- **IIT Bombay** is **ranked 172nd**, while **IISc is 185th** and **IIT Delhi is at 193rd place**. A total of 21 Indian higher education institutions are in the top 1000.
- **IISc** is ranked as **India's best research university** with a score of 100/100 on the 'citations per faculty' indicator.
- Other IITs in the top 500 are: Madras (275), Kharagpur (314), Kanpur (350), Roorkee (383) and Guwahati (470).
- **Massachusetts Institute of Technology** is ranked as the **world's best university**, followed by **Stanford University (2nd) and Harvard University (3rd).**

NIRF Ranking 2020: IIT Madras, IISc Bangalore, IIT Delhi top 3 institutes

- **Union Human Resource Development** minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank has released the **National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF)** Ranking 2020.
- Every year, MHRD ranks the universities and institutions of India based on the pre-determined parameters. In the year 2019, IIT Madras had topped the list of higher education institutions followed by IISc Bengaluru and IIT Delhi.
- **Overall Category**: IIT Madras, IISc Banglore, IIT Delhi
- **University category**: IISc Bangalore, JNU New Delhi, BHU Varanasi
- **Engineering Category**: IIT Madras, IIT Delhi, IIT Bombay
- **Management Category**: IIM Ahmedabad, IIM Bangalore, IIM Calcutta
- **Pharmacy Discipline**: Jamia Hamdard Universitt, Punjab University, National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research Mohali
- **Law Discipline**: National Law School of India University, Bengaluru, NLU New Delhi, Nalsar University of Law, Hyderabad
- Architecture Discipline: IIT Kharagpur, IIT Roorkee, NIT Calicut
- **Dental College**: Maulana Azad Institute of Dental Science, Manipal College of Dental Science, Dr DY Patil Vidyapith Pune

India retains 108th spot; no change in Fifa team rankings over Covid-19

- **Indian football team** has retained the **108th spot** in the **latest FIFA rankings** issued as international football has been suspended since March due to the coronavirus pandemic.
- Although club football has slowly restarted or been scheduled to restart in various leagues around the world, the spread of Covid-19 remains an obstacle to the staging of international matches. This has again affected the latest FIFA World ranking, which remains unchanged, the FIFA stated.
- **Belgium** remains at the summit ahead of **France and Brazil**, who complete the podium, while **England** and **Uruguay** continue to occupy **fourth** and **fifth position** respectively. Lying in wait behind them are Croatia and Portugal on sixth and seventh place respectively followed by Spain, Argentina and Colombia.
- Outside of the top 10 rankings, 200 other national teams are waiting to get back in action and shake up world football's hierarchy.
- The resumption or start of qualifying for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 in the respective confederations is awaited with eagerness and should see plenty of movement in the Ranking in the months ahead.
- Indian football team is set to host Asian champions Qatar on October 8 in its next 2022 Fifa World Cup qualifying round game, which would be India's first international fixture amid the coronavirus pandemic.

3 DST institutes among top 30 Indian Institutions in Nature Index

- **Three of the autonomous institutions** of **the Department of Science & Technology**, Government of India have found their place among **top 30 Indian Institutions** including universities, IITs, IISERs, and Research Institutions and Labs

as per **Nature Index 2020 ratings** based on the research published in the top journals, a measure of research quality.

- These are the **Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science (IACS), Kolkata** at **7th position, Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), Bangalore** at **14th position** and **S. N. Bose National Centre for Basic Sciences, Kolkata at 30th position.**
- **Globally** the top-rated Indian institutions in this list are **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR),** a group of 39 institutions at the **160th position** and **Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bangalore** at the **184th position.**
- **The Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) in Beijing has topped the Nature Index 2020.**

India 9th largest recipient of FDI in 2019, will continue to attract investments: UN

- India received **51 billion US dollar** in foreign investment in 2019. **UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)** in its report Stated, it was the world's **ninth largest recipient** of Foreign Direct Investments (FDI). The report Stated, India's large market will continue to attract market-seeking investments to the country.
- In the developing Asia region, India was among the top five host economies for FDI. The report Stated, FDI to India, the largest South Asian recipient, increased 20 per cent to 51 billion US dollar, sustaining the country's upward FDI trend. Most of the investments were in the information and communication technology and the construction industry.

UP becomes top state in country to provide employment to workers under MGNREGA

- **Uttar Pradesh** has become the **top state** in the country to provide employment to the workers under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme **MGNREGA.**
- Uttar Pradesh provided employment to more than **57 lakh workers** under MGNREGA.
- According to the data released by officials, 57 lakh 12975 workers got employment in around 57 thousand village panchayat of the state which is **18%** of the total work generated under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in the country.

India's data consumption may touch 25 GB per month per user by 2025: Ericsson

- According to telecom gear maker **Ericsson,** Indians used about **12 GB data per month** on an average in **2019,** the highest consumption globally, and this is expected to rise even further to about **25 GB (gigabytes) per month by 2025,** driven by affordable mobile broadband services and changing video viewing habits.
- India's data traffic growth continued its upward trajectory and it remains the region with the highest usage per smartphone and per month.
- Given that only 4% of households have fixed broadband, smartphones are the only way to access the internet in many cases.
- Total traffic is projected to triple, reaching **21 EB (exabytes) per month in 2025.**
- Ericsson expects the global number of 5G subscriptions to top 190 million by the end of 2020, and 2.8 billion by the end of 2025.

India ranked 43rd on IMD's World Competitiveness Index; Singapore on top

- **India** continues to remain **ranked 43rd** on an annual **World Competitiveness Index** compiled by **Institute for Management Development (IMD).**
- **Singapore** has retained its **top position** on the 63-nation list.
- Denmark has moved up to the second position (from 8th last year), Switzerland has gained one place to rank 3rd, the Netherlands has retained its 4th place and Hong Kong has slipped to the fifth place (from 2nd in 2019).

- India has recorded improvements in areas like long-term employment growth, current account balance, high-tech exports, foreign currency reserves, public expenditure on education, political stability and overall productivity.

India, China increased nuclear weapons since last year: SIPRI

- **India and China** have increased their **nuclear arsenal** over the last year, according to the **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).**
- According to the **SIPRI Yearbook 2020**. India has 150 nuclear warheads, while China and Pakistan have 320 and 160. The figures are until January. Last year, India had 130-140 warheads, while China had 290 and Pakistan 150-160.
- The nine nuclear-armed states—the US, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea—together possessed an estimated 13,400 nuclear weapons at the start of 2020.

India 2nd biggest driver of global energy consumption in 2019: BP Statistical Review

- India was **second biggest growth** driver of **primary energy consumption** in the world, behind **China**, in 2019 even though it witnessed fall in demand in oil and coal, according to BP Statistical Review released.
- Global primary energy consumption growth slowed to **1.3 per cent** last year, less than half the rate of growth in 2018 (2.8 per cent), BP stated.
- The increase in energy consumption was driven by **renewables and natural gas**, which together contributed three quarters of the expansion. All fuels grew at a slower rate than their 10-year averages, apart from nuclear.
- By country, China was by far the biggest driver of energy, accounting for more than three quarters of net global growth. **India** and **Indonesia** were the next largest contributors to growth, while the US and Germany posted the largest declines, it stated. But the growth in 2019 was slower than 2018.
- World primary energy consumption rose to 583.90 Exajoules (EJ). India's consumption rose 2.3 per cent to 34.06 EJ. The growth was lower than 5.2 per cent in 2018.
- In absolute terms, India's energy consumption was only behind that of China (141.70 EJ) and US (94.65 EJ).
- China was the biggest driver of energy, accounting for more than three quarters of net global growth.
- The energy consumption is made up of oil, natural gas, coal, electricity and renewables.
- The increase in energy consumption was driven by renewables and natural gas. All fuels grew at a slower rate than their 10-year averages, apart from nuclear.
- Carbon emissions from energy use grew by 0.5 percent in 2019.

Tech Mahindra recognised among India's 50 best companies to work for in 2020

- **Tech Mahindra Ltd**. a number one supplier of virtual transformation, consulting and trade reengineering services and products has been recognised among **India's 50 very best firms** to paintings for in 2020 by means of the **Great Place to Work® Institute**. Listed among the 'Best in Mega Employer' (organizations with greater than 50,000 staff), Tech Mahindra may be some of the 5 'Best Companies in Career Management'. Tech Mahindra has completed the **21st rank amongst India's 100 'Best Companies to Work For 2020**: Top 50' by means of the Great Place to Work® Institute. This used to be some of the greatest office learn about in India, representing the voice of greater than 2.1 million staff, over 21 industries.
- Tech Mahindra has earned this reputation for developing a great spot to paintings for all of the staff and has excelled at the Five dimensions of establishing a High-Trust, High-Performance CultureTM – Credibility, Respect, Fairness, Pride and Camaraderie.

- The awarding group, Great Place to Work® Institute, is the 'Global Authority' for developing, maintaining and figuring out High-Trust, High-Performance CultureTM. Great Place to Work® is regarded as the 'Gold Standard' in Workplace Culture Assessment and so they determine Best Workplaces only at the foundation of Employee Feedback and high quality of People Practices in a company.

Mukesh Ambani 9th among top-10 richest men

RIL's market capitalisation crossing the **Rs 11-trillion mark**, its chairman and managing director Mukesh Ambani became the ninth-richest billionaire globally on the Forbes Real-time Billionaires List with a net worth of $64.6 billion.

- **Jeff Bezos** owns an 11.1 per cent stake of his e-commerce colossus **Amazon, topped the list** with net worth **$160.1 billion.**

Top 10 billionaires

- Jeff Bezos- $160.1 billion
- Bill Gates- $108.7 billion
- Bernard Arnault & family- $103.2 billion
- Mark Zuckerberg- $87.9 billion
- Warren Buffett- $71.4 billion
- Steve Ballmer- $68.9 billion
- Larry Ellison- $68.9 billion
- Amancio Ortega- $65.8 billion
- Mukesh Ambani- $64.6 billion
- Larry Page- $64.3 billion

India becomes 12th largest holder of US govt securities

- **India** became the **12th largest** holder of **US government securities** at the end of April, with holding worth **$157.4 billion.**
- It is released by US Treasury Department.
- At the end of April, **Japan** remained the country with the **maximum exposure** at **USD 1.266 trillion**, followed by **China ($1.073 trillion)** and **the UK ($368.5 billion)** at the second and third positions, respectively.
- **India,** which was at the **13th place in March, climbed to the 12th position in April.** This was on account of **Saudi Arabia** coming down to the 15th spot after the major oil producing country drastically trimmed its exposure to $125.3 billion.
- The American government securities are held by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) as it invests in foreign assets as part of its prudential liquidity management.

RIL 57th most valuable firm globally by market-cap; Saudi Aramco tops chart

- **Reliance Industries (RIL)** became the **first Indian company** to be valued at **$150 billion** with the stock hitting a fresh all-time high of Rs 1,804 on the BSE. Over the past three months, the RIL stock has doubled – from a low of Rs 883.85 hit on March 23 as compared to a 35 per cent rise in the S&P BSE Sensex.
- The up move in RIL has been triggered by a series of investments in its telecom business vertical – Reliance Platforms – by marquee global companies and investors that include Facebook, Silver Lake Partners, KKR,

General Atlantic, Mubadala, and TPG. In the process, RIL has become net-debt free much ahead of its deadline to achieve this status by March 2021.

- The oil-to-telecom conglomerate now stands at **57th position** in the overall market capitalisation (market-cap) ranking of listed companies globally. It ranked at 104th position as on March 24, 2020, and at the 70th position at the beginning of the current calendar year 2020, Bloomberg data show.

- RIL, the only Indian company, is currently featuring in the top 100 list of most valued global companies. **Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)** ranked at **104th position** and **HDFC Bank** which is at **149th position** in the overall market-cap ranking.

- Following stellar gains in its share price, RIL became the first Indian firm to achieve the milestone of crossing Rs 11 trillion market valuation mark and the fourth most-valued firm in the energy sector globally by market-cap – only after Saudi Arabian Oil Company (Saudi Aramco), and US firms Exxon Mobil Corp (market-cap around $194 billion; ranked 40th globally) and Chevron Corp (market-cap around $169 billion; ranked 51st globally).

Nita Ambani only Indian among top global philanthropists of 2020

- Reliance Foundation chairpersonNita Ambani became the only Indian to feature in **Town & Country** magazine's top **global philanthropists of 2020 list.**

- While RIL's **Mukesh Ambani,** with a net worth of **$64.5 billion**, recently became the only **Asian tycoon** among the world's top 10 richest people, according to the **Bloomberg Billionaires Index.**

- Ambani features alongside prominent global individuals including Tim Cook, Oprah Winfrey, Laurene Powell Jobs, the Lauder Family, Donatella Versace, Michael Bloomberg and Leonardo Di Caprio among others.

India retains position as third largest economy in PPP, global actual Individual consumption, capital formation

- **India** has retained its position as the **third-largest economy** in the world in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP), behind the US and China.

- India accounts for **6.7% or $8,051 billion**, out of the world's total of $119,547 billion of global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in terms of PPP compared to **16.4 %** in case of **China** and **16.3 % for the US**, World Bank data for reference year 2017 show.

- Globally 176 economies participated in the 2017 cycle of ICP. The next ICP comparison will be conducted for reference year 2021.

- In the **Asia-Pacific Region**, in 2017, **India** retained its regional position, as the **second largest** economy, accounted for 20.83 % in terms of PPPs where China was first at 50.76% and Indonesia at 7.49% was third.

- India, was the third-largest economy, followed by Japan, Germany, and the Russian Federation.

BSE bags spot among world's 10 most valued exchanges

- **BSE** figures among the **world's 10** largest exchanges in terms of cumulative **market capitalisation** of all companies listed on its platform, as per the latest data from the **World Federation of Exchanges**.

- BSE is at the **tenth place** in the top-10 list, with a market capitalisation of **$1.7 trillion.**

- **The New York Stock Exchange (NYSE)** tops the chart with a valuation of **$19.3 trillion.**

- **Nasdaq**comes second with a market capitalisation of **$13.8 trillion.**

- Others ranked in the list include Tokyo Stock Exchange, placed third with a market valuation of $5.7 trillion, followed by Shanghai Stock Exchange ($4.9 trillion).

THE Young University Ranking 2020: IIT-Ropar best in country, two Indian institutes in global top 100

- **Times Higher Education (THE)** has released the world's young university ranking for the relatively newer generation of universities, which are 50 years old or younger.
- The 2020 ranking includes 414 universities, up from 351 in 2019. As many as two Indian universities made it into the top 100, while none could enter the '50 under 50′ category.
- The best among the youngest institutes in the country is **IIT-Ropar at 62nd rank**. This is despite the institute having scored **0 per cent in the international students' category**. The second in India is **IIT Indore at 64th rank.**

  101-150 band – IISER Pune

  101-150 band – IIT-Gandhinagar

  151-200 band – Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham

  151-200 band – IIT-Bhubaneswar

  151-200 band – IIT-Guwahati

  151-200 band – IIT-Hyderabad

The best among the global varsities in the world is **The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.**

- Rank 1: The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
- Rank 2: Nanyang Technological University, Singapore
- Rank 3: Paris Sciences et Lettres – PSL Research University, Paris
- Rank 4: Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies – Pisa
- Rank 5: Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST)
- Rank 6: Maastricht University
- Rank 7: City University of Hong Kong
- Rank 8: Pohang University of Science and Technology (POSTECH)
- Rank 9: Sorbonne University, France
- Rank 10: Pompeu Fabra University, Spain

Max Life at Rank 24 is the Only Life Insurance Company to be Amongst India"s Top 100 Great Places to Work

- Ranked amongst **Top 50 Best Workplaces** for the 4th consecutive year of participationMoves up 11 places from 35 in 2019 to **24** current Rank in 2020 and Also recognized as one of the top **25 'Best Workplaces** in BFSI (Banking, Financial Services and Insurance Sector)'
- **Max Life Insurance Company Ltd**. ("Max Life"/"Company"), announced that it has been ranked 24th amongst India's Top 100 Great Places to Work. The annual survey is the benchmark when it comes to ranking India's best employers with participation from over 1000 companies.
- Of this, 83 companies were from the BFSI sector this year. Improving on its last year's performance, Max Life moved up 11 places from its rank of 35 in 2019 to its current position, making it the only life insurer to be recognised amongst India's **'Top 100 Great Places to Work For'** by **Great Place to Work Institute ("GPTW")** in its 2020 study.
- 'India's Best Companies to Work For' Study evaluates organisations on the five dimensions of building a high-trust, high-performance culture including credibility, respect, fairness, pride, and camaraderie.
- In line with these parameters, the Company has also been recognized as one of the top 25 'Best Workplaces in BFSI (Banking, Financial Services, and Insurance Sector)'. Max Life has also been ranked amongst 'Top 50 Best Workplaces' for the 4th consecutive year of participation. This recognition is a true reflection of the Company's

commitment to building a workplace based on key differentiators of superior human capital and value-driven culture.

India slips to 77th rank, accounts for 0.06% of all foreign funds with Swiss banks

- **India** has moved down three places to **77th rank** in terms of **money parked by its citizens and enterprises with Swiss banks** at the end of 2019, while the **UK has retained its top position**, as per the latest data from **Switzerland's central bank.**
- **India** was ranked **74th** in the **previous year.**
- Accounting for just about **0.06 per cent** of the aggregate funds parked by **all foreign clients** of Switzerland-based banks.
- Funds parked by Indian individuals and enterprises in Swiss banks, including through India-based branches, fell by **5.8 per cent** in 2019 to **899 million Swiss francs (Rs 6,625 crore).**
- Among the top-ranked jurisdictions, the UK is followed by the US, West Indies, France and Hong Kong in the top five.

Bengaluru in world's top 30 startup ecosystem list

- Indian's startup capital **Bengaluru** has been ranked in the **world's top 30 startup ecosystems**. Topped by **Silicon Valley** in California, Bengaluru is at the **26th spot** and the only India city to feature in the list by '**The Global Startup Ecosystem Report 2020**' by Startup Genome.
- While Delhi is in the runner-up category at the **36th spot**, **Mumbai** ranks first in the list of top 100 emerging ecosystem ranking. The list of emerging startup hubs also includes Chennai, Hyderabad and Pune.
- **Bengaluru,** along with **Paris** and **Singapore**, stand out for high access as well as quality and activity of funding, the report stated. Delhi ranked well for the volume and complexity of patent creation in the analysis, which found London and New York tied for second spot.
- The report by Startup Genome, a California-headquartered innovation policy advisory and research firm, analyses cities around the world where early stage startups have the best shot at building global success.

IIM Bangalore jumps 25 places to break into top 50 of QS EMBA Rankings

- From **61st position** last year, the **Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Bangalore** has broken into the global top **50 Executive MBA** (EMBA) Rankings by QS (Quacquarelli Symonds) this year at 36th position.
- The EMBA rankings measure management programs meant for executives with prior work experience. In India, business schools (B-schools) like IIMs have their flagship programs open for both freshers and working professionals. However, they also run one year executive management program or MBA that are strictly meant for those with prior work experience of anywhere between five and ten years or beyond.
- Under QS' EMBA rankings, IIM Bangalore's EPGP program has been ranked.
- There are also two new Indian entries into the EMBA Rankings this year, including Indian School of Business (ISB) debuting at 81st position, while IIM Kozhikode ranks in the 101+ grouping.
- However, the Executive MBA sector is still one dominated by institutions in the United States (US) and United Kingdom (UK) with 62 of the 141 single-provider programs ranked are offered by American or British providers.
- Globally, **The Wharton School** retains its position as the world's best, while **Spain's IESE Business School** and France's HEC Paris – 2nd and 3rd respectively – indicate that Europe is also home to world-class providers. In total, 161 EMBA programs have been ranked.

- Meanwhile, Asia's leading Executive MBA program is offered by the **National University of Singapore Business School** at 15th rank which went up by three places, followed by globally 17th ranked CUHK Business School which went up by seven places, breaking into the top 20.

Important Books and Authors

Authors/ Released by	Books
Luke Coutinho (-authored by Sheikh Abdulaziz Bin Ali Bin Rashed Al Nuami)	The Dry Fasting Miracle: From Deprive to Thrive
Dinyar Patel	Naoroji: Pioneer of Indian Nationalism (released in India by Harper Collins and in the United States and UK by Harvard University Press)
Kazuo Ishiguro	Klara and the Sun (Published by Faber & Faber in the UK, Alfred A. Knopf in the US and Knopf in Canada)
Amish Tripathi	Legend of Suheldev: The King Who Saved India (Published by , Westland Publications Pvt Ltd)
Dr. Adyasha Das	The Yogini Poems: Love and Life (Published by Black Eagle Books)
Priyamvad	Bharatiya Loktanktra Ka Koras: Kuch Bisari Bikhari Dhwaniyan (Published by Penguin Random House)

I&B Ministry releases e-booklet on Narendra Modi govt 2.0's 1st year

- **I&B Ministry** released **an e-booklet** highlighting its key achievements during the second term in which it stated that India was among the first few countries to put in place a "comprehensive action plan" to stop the spread of coronavirus.
- The 92-page booklet **'One Year of Modi 2.0 - Towards A Self-Reliant India'** has been brought out by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
- Abrogation of Article 370, settlement of the Ram Temple issue, criminalisation of triple talaq, Bodo accord and the amendment to the Citizenship Act have been listed in the booklet.
- The booklet has a separate section for the actions taken to fight the COVID-19 pandemic and deal with the economic fallout of the crisis.
  It also highlights the government's decisions for the welfare of farmers, the Howdy Modi event in the US, the Namaste Trump event in Gujarat and the Mamallapuram Modi-Xi Jinping summit.

Important Peoples' in News

India Captain Rani Rampal Nominated for Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award

- Indian women's hockey team captain **Rani Rampal** has been nominated for the **Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award** by **Hockey India**.
- Her teammates **Vandana Katariya** and **Monika** were nominated for the **Arjuna award**, as was **Harmanpreet Singh** from the **men's team.**

- RP Singh and Tushar Khandker nominated for the Major Dhyan Chand award for Lifetime Achievement and Coaches BJ Kariappa and Romesh Pathania nominated for the Dronacharya award have contributed to Indian Hockey in their respective roles as players, administrators and coaches.

TTFI nominates Table Tennis star Manika Batra for Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna

- India's table tennis star **Manika Batra** was recommended for the prestigious Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award by the national federation **TTFI.**
- In 2019, wrestler Bajrang Punia and para-athlete Deepa Malik were the recipients of Khel Ratna.
- The federation has recommended veteran Madhurika Patkar, Manav Thakkar and Suthirtha Mukherjee for the Arjuna Award. Mukherjee recently broke into the top-100 of the ITTF world rankings.
- Coaches Jayanta Pushilal and S Raman have been nominated for the Dronacharya honour.

On Menstrual Hygiene Day, Manushi Chhillar teams up with UNICEF to spread awareness about menstruation

- **On WorldMenstrual Hygiene Day (May 28),** former Miss World **Manushi Chhillar** underlined the need to spread awareness on feminine hygiene.
- Chillar shared a picture of herself with a red dot on her palm and wrote that every menstruating female has the right to accurate information on how to safely manage their period.
- The former Miss World runs her own initiative on menstrual hygiene called 'Project Shakti' that works across several states in the country.
- Previously, actresses like Dia Mirza, Diana Penty, Mrunal Thakur, Aditi Rao Hydari, Kubbra Sait, Neeru Bajwa, among others have taken part in the Red Dot Challenge.

Forbes highest-paid celebrities: Kylie Jenner tops, Akshay Kumar only Indian on the list

- **Kylie Jenner and Kanye West** topped the annual **Forbes list** of the **highest paid celebrities**, but sports stars, including Roger Federer and Lionel Messi, dominated the top 10.
- Forbes estimated that Jenner earned **$590 million** in the last 12 months, mostly from the sale of a 51% stake in her Kylie Cosmetics line to Coty in 2019.
- Bollywood actor **Akshay Kumar** is the only Indian to feature on Forbes 2020 list of World's Highest-Paid Celebrities.
- The actor placed on **52nd spot** with estimated **$48.5 million** earnings (approximately Rs 366 crore); he was on the 33rd spot last year with earnings of $65 million.

Michael Clarke receives Order of Australia honour

- **Michael Clarke** has been honoured in the **Queen's Birthday list** for **Australia** with the **former cricket captain recognised** for both his sporting career and community work.
- The 39-year-old, who retired from cricket in 2015, was appointed an **Officer in the general division of the Order of Australia**, the citation on the Governor General's website stated.
- Clarke has been recognised for his "distinguished service to cricket as a player at the national and international level, through leadership roles, and to the community".
- Former women's captain **Lynnette Larsen** and two-time Olympic hockey gold medallist **Renita Garard** were both named a Member of the Order of Australia.
- Clarke played 115 Tests for Australia, including 47 as captain, and led the side to their fifth one day World Cup title in 2015. He scored 8,643 Test runs at an average of 49.10, with 28 centuries.
- Clarke has been heavily involved in numerous health and children's charities.

- Clarke's predecessor Ricky Ponting received an AO in 2012, while Steve Waugh, Mark Taylor, Allan Border and Bob Simpson have also picked up the same gong following fine careers in the baggy green.
- From Jack Ryder (Test captain No.18) to Clarke (No.43), all Test captains have received either an Order of Australia or Order of the British Empire except Kim Hughes, Ian Chappell, Graham Yallop and Barry Jarman.

Salwa Eid Naser, 400m world champion, faces two-year ban for missed drug tests

- **Salwa Eid Naser**, who ran the third-fastest 400m in history when winning gold at last year's world championships in Doha, is facing a two-year ban after being provisionally suspended for missing three drug tests in a 12-month period.
- The suspension was by the **Athletics Integrity Unit**, Naser had been issued with a charge for violating World Anti-Doping Agency rules.
- Naser, who moved from Nigeria to Bahrain when she was 14, also won a silver medal over 400m at the 2017 world championships in London and is a former world youth champion.

Indian sprinter Gomathi Marimuthu banned for 4 years

- **Indian athlete Gomathi Marimuthu** is handed a **4-year ban** by the **Athletes Integrity Unit** of the World Athletics. Gomathi won the gold medal in the women's 800 m event at the 2019 Asian Athletics Championships in Doha, Qatar with her personal best timing of 2 minutes and 2.70 seconds.
- In her defence, Gomathi could not prove the point of tampering with the samples. A provisional ban was imposed on her from 17 May 2019, which will now end on 16 May 2023.
- Unfortunately, she will lose her gold medal which she won at the Asian Championship last year. The sprinter also has to pay a **fine of 1,000 pounds**, which stands at Rs 1 lakh.

First American Woman to Walk in Space Reaches Deepest Spot in the Ocean

- The **first American woman** to walk in space has **become the first woman** to reach the **deepest known spot** in the ocean.
- **Kathy Sullivan**, 68, an astronaut and oceanographer, emerged from her 35,810-foot dive to the **Challenger Deep**, according to EYOS Expeditions, a company coordinating the logistics of the mission.
- This also makes Dr. Sullivan the first person to both walk in space and to descend to the deepest point in the ocean. The Challenger Deep is the lowest of the many seabed recesses that crisscross the globe.
- Dr. Sullivan and Victor L. Vescovo, an explorer funding the mission, spent about an hour and a half at their destination, nearly seven miles down in a muddy depression in the Mariana Trench, which is about 200 miles southwest of Guam.
- In 1978, Dr. Sullivan joined NASA as part of the first group of U.S. astronauts to include women. On Oct. 11, 1984, she became the first American woman to walk in space.
- The Challenger Deep was discovered by the H.M.S. Challenger, a British ship that sailed the globe from 1872 to 1876. Since then, many expeditions have sought to measure the fissure's depth, prompting disagreements not only about the precise figures but also over who truly was the first to reach the deepest point.

Russian high jumper Alexander Shustov given four-year ban over doping offence

- **Alexander Shustov,** the European men's high jump champion in 2010, has been handed **a four-year ban** for a breach of **anti-doping rules.**
- Shustov had been sanctioned for "use or attempt to use an prohibited substance or prohibited method by an athlete" under World Athletics' anti-doping rules.

- Shustov will be suspended until June 4 in **2024.**
- Shustov, who achieved a personal best of 2.33 metres to win the European title in Barcelona in 2010, has claimed he will pursue the case further.

India CWG champion lifter Sanjita Chanu cleared of doping charges

- **International Weightlifting Federation (IWF)** has cleared India's **K Sanjita Chanu** of anti-doping violation over charges brought up in November 2017 citing **"non conformities"** in the handling of her sample.
- Chanu is a two-time Commonwealth Games gold medallist—at Glasgow in 2014 (48kg) and in Gold Coast in 2018 (53kg).
- The International Weightlifting Federation (IWF), on the recommendation of World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) dropped the doping charge against Chanu after more than two-and-a-half years of investigation, making eligible to apply for the Arjuna Award.

Kathy Lueders to become first female head of human spaceflight

- **Kathy Lueders**, the **first National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)** official, who led the inaugural private crewed flight into space, has ascended to the position of the **first female head of human spaceflight**. NASA broke the news as it prepares to return people to the moon in 2024, as per the Reuters report.
- Kathy Lueders has been selected to lead @**NASA's Human Exploration & Operations Mission Directorate**, NASA head Jim Bridenstine announced.
- Kathy has successfully managed both the Commercial Crew & Commercial Cargo programs and is the right person to lead HEO as we prepare to send astronauts to the Moon in 2024, he added.
- Lueders, who joined NASA in 1992, looked after the May 30 launch of two astronauts on a SpaceX rocket to the International Space Station. It was the first crewed commercial flight into space.
- She has overseen many a space testing progam for space capsules developed by SpaceX, Boeing, and other companies that are partnering with NASA to build vessels that can safely take humans into space.
- The program to develop commercial space flight programs for NASA was launched a decade ago under the administration of then-president Barack Obama. The flight marked a momentous change for the space agency, which had previously designed and built its own rockets and space vehicles.
- NASA's schedule, set by the administration of President Donald Trump, aims to put two astronauts, including the first woman, on the Moon in 2024 using the heavy SLS rocket and the Orion capsule, Reuters report added.
- But the program is behind schedule and NASA has not made the final decision as to which company will build the Moon lander.

Former world champion boxer Gvozdyk retires

- The **former world light heavyweight boxing** champion **Oleksandr Gvozdyk** has **retired.**
- Gvozdyk won the WBC title in December 2018 when he knocked out Adonis Stevenson, who had held the belt for five years.
- Gvozdyk also won a bronze medal for Ukraine at light heavyweight at the 2012 Olympics.

The Undertaker retires from WWE

- Wrestling legend and WWE superstar **The Undertaker** whose original name is **Mark Calaway** has announced **his retirement** from **World Wrestling Entertainment.**
- The Undertaker's last match was against AJ Styles at WrestleMania 36.

New Zealand's Rachel Priest Announces Retirement from International Cricket

- **Rachel Priest**, the **New Zealand** wicketkeeper-batter, has announced her **retirement** from international cricket.
- She has signed up with Cricket Tasmania to play in Australia Women's National Cricket League.
- Priest played 87 ODIs and 75 T20Is for New Zealand, scoring 1694 and 873 runs respectively.

Mario Gomez: Former Germany and Bayern Munich striker announces retirement

- **Former Germany striker Mario Gomez retired** from football after scoring in his last game for Stuttgart.
- Gomez won the Bundesliga title during his first spell at Stuttgart in 2007 before winning another two league titles at Bayern Munich after moving to the German giants in 2009.

India's Nitin Menon becomes youngest umpire to enter ICC Elite Panel

- **India's Nitin Menon** became the **youngest member** of the **International Cricket Council's Elite Panel of Umpires,** replacing **England's Nigel Llong** for the upcoming 2020-21 season after an annual review.
- He has officiated in three Tests, 24 ODIs and 16 T20Is, is only the third from India to make it to the prestigious group after former captain Srinivas Venkatraghavan and Sundaram Ravi.
- England's Michael Gough, 40, was the youngest in the current panel before Menon's elevation.

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Important Mergers and Acquisitions

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Tata Power acquires 51% stake in Odisha's TPCODL; stock jumps 7%

- Shares of **Tata Power** rallied nearly 7 per cent in intraday trade on the Bombay Stock Exchange after electric utility company stated it has completed the acquisition of **51 per cent stake** in **TP Central Odisha Distribution** Ltd (TPCODL) for **Rs 178.5 crore**.
- In a filing to exchanges, Tata Group firm stated it has taken over the management of Central Electricity Supply Utility of Odisha (CESU), after receiving the Letter of Intent (LOI) from the **Odisha Electricity Regulatory Commission** (OERC) for the distribution and retail supply of electricity in Odisha's five circles consisting of Bhubaneshwar, Cuttack, Puri, Paradeep and Dhenekal. Tata Power has received a license for 25 years.
- As per order issued by the Odisha Electricity Regulatory Commission (OERC) on May 28, 2020, Tata Power will hold 51 per cent equity with management control and the state-owned Grid Corporation of Odisha (GRIDCO) will hold balance 49 per cent equity stake in TPCODL, it stated in the exchange filing.

Facebook to acquire 9.9% stake in Jio Platforms via Jaadhu Holdings

- **Facebook** will acquire **9.9 per cent** stake in **Jio Platforms** announced last month via a new entity -- **Jaadhu Holdings LLC,** as per regulatory documents.
- In April, Facebook had announced an investment of $ 5.7 billion (Rs 43,574 crore) in Jio Platforms.
- Jaadhu Holdings, LLC is an indirect wholly owned subsidiary of Facebook, Inc.
- Jaadhu is a newly incorporated company formed in March 2020 under the laws of the State of Delaware, US.
- The notification form is being filed in relation to Jaadhu's proposed acquisition of a minority, the non-controlling shareholding of approximately 9.99 per cent of the fully diluted equity share capital in Jio Platforms.
- Over the past few weeks, Reliance Industries' digital unit Jio Platforms has raised Rs 78,562 crore from marquee technology investors including Facebook, KKR, Silver Lake Partners, Vista Equity Partners and General Atlantic.

Abu Dhabi's Mubadala to buy 1.85% stake in Jio Platforms for Rs 9,093.6 crore

- **Abu Dhabi**-based Abu Dhabi-based sovereign investor **Mubadala Investment Company** will invest **Rs 9,093.60 crore** in **Jio Platforms** at an equity value of Rs 4.91 lakh crore and an enterprise value of Rs 5.16 lakh crore.

- Mubadala's investment will translate into a **1.85 per cent** equity stake in Jio Platforms on a fully diluted basis. With this investment, **Jio Platforms** has raised **Rs 87,655.35 crore** from leading global technology and growth investors in under six weeks.
- In April 2020, American social media company **Facebook**, Inc. bought a **9.9% stake in Jio** for **$5.7 billion (Rs 43,574 crore)**
- American private equity firm **Silver Lake** Partners bought **1.15% stake in Jio Platforms** for **Rs 5,655.75 crore ($750 million).**
- **Vista Equity** Partners picked up a **2.32%** stake in Jio Platforms for **Rs 11,367 crore.**
- **General Atlantic** picked up a **1.34%** for **Rs 6598.38 crore**
- Private equity giant **KKR** will buy **2.32%** stake in Jio Platforms for **Rs11,367 crore**

Abu Dhabi Investment Authority to invest Rs 5,684 crore in Jio Platforms for 1.16% stake

- **Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA)** will invest **Rs 5,683.50 crore** for a **1.16 percent stake** in **Jio Platforms.**
- With the eight investments, the total amount invested in Jio Platforms now stands at Rs 97,886 lakh crore for 21.06 percent share in the telecom major.
- Abu Dhabi Investment Authority is a sovereign wealth fund of the Abu Dhabi emirate of the United Arab Emirates. ADIA manages a global investment portfolio that is diversified across more than two dozen asset classes and sub-categories.
- Earlier, **Mubadala,** which is also owned by Abu Dhabi, had announced a Rs 9,093.60 crore investment for a **1.85 percent stake.**
- **Silver Lake Partners** also announced an additional Rs 4,547 crore investment for a further **0.93** percent stake in the telecom major, having invested earlier in May.
- **Facebook** was the first to put its finger in the Jio Platforms pie with a Rs 43,574 crore ($5.7 billion) investment for a **9.99 percent stake.**
- Private equity firm **Silver Lake Partners** announced a Rs 5,655.75 crore investment for **1.15 percent** stake in early May. It was followed by **Vista Equity Partners'** Rs 11,367 crore investment for a **2.32 percent stake.**
- **General Atlantic** announced a Rs 6,598.38 crore investment for a **1.34 percent stake** in Jio Platforms. And it was followed by **KKR**, which announced an investment worth Rs Rs 11,367 crore for a **2.32 percent stake.**

Saudi Arabia's PIF buys 2.32% stake in Jio for Rs 11,367 crore

- **Reliance Industries Ltd** has sold a **2.32 per cent** stake in its digital unit to **Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund (PIF)** for **Rs 11,367 crore.**
- With this investment, Jio Platforms has raised **Rs 115,693.95 crore** from some of the leading global investment powerhouses at a time when the world is deeply impacted by the coronavirus pandemic, resulting in a recession kind of environment for the global economy.
- **Facebook** kicked off the party, investing Rs 43,573.62 crore for a **9.99 per cent** stake. This was closely followed by a further Rs 60,753.33 crore in investment **Silver Lake** - the world's largest tech investor - bought a **1.15 per cent** stake in Jio Platforms for Rs 5,665.75 crore .
- It invested another Rs 4,546.80 crore for additional **0.93 per cent** stake, taking its total holding to **2.08 per cent**
- Private equity **KKR and Vista Equity Partners** have taken **2.32 per cent** stake each for Rs 11,367 crore apiece.

- Abu Dhabi sovereign wealth fund **Mubadala Investment** Co picked up **1.85 per cent** in Jio Platforms for Rs 9,093.60 crore.
- **Abu Dhabi Investment Authority** invested Rs 5,683.50 crore for a **1.16 per cent** stake in Jio Platforms.
- Global equity firm **General Atlantic** picked up **1.34 per cent** stake in Jio Platforms for Rs 6,598.38 crore.
- Global investment firm **TPG** picked up **0.93 per cent** for Rs 4,546.80 crore while **L Catterton** bought **0.39 per cent** for Rs 1,894.50 crore.

Facebook acquires Sweden's Mapillary for unknown sum to take on Google Maps

- **Facebook** has acquired **Swedish startup Mapillary**, that is building a detailed, accurate, and up to date global street-level imagery platform, for an undisclosed sum.
- Facebook is building tools and technology to improve maps through a combination of machine learning, satellite imagery and partnerships with mapping communities.
- The startup plans to continue being a global platform for imagery, map data, and improving all maps.
- It is a move aimed at taking on **Google Maps.**

CCI approves acquisition of 9.99% stake in Jio Platforms by Jaadhu Holdings LLC

- The **Competition Commission of India (CCI)** has approved acquisition of **9.99 per cent stake** in Jio Platforms by **Jaadhu Holdings LLC**.
- Jaadhu is an indirect wholly owned subsidiary of Facebook. It is a newly incorporated company formed in March this year under the laws of the State of Delaware in the United States.
- Whereas, Jio Platforms is a company organised and existing under the laws of India, and is a subsidiary of Reliance India Limited.

Carlyle to pick up 20 pc stake in Piramal pharma business for $490 million

- The **Carlyle Group** has agreed to pick up a **20 per cent** stake in **Ajay Piramal's pharma** business for **490 million dollars (about Rs 3,698 crore)**, making it one of the largest private equity deals in the Indian pharmaceutical sector.
- The deal is expected to close this year, subject to customary closing conditions and regulatory approvals, Piramal Enterprises stated.
- The transaction values Piramal Pharma at an enterprise value of 2.7 billion dollars with an upside component of up to 360 million dollars depending on the company's FY21 performance. Carlyle will make the investment through CA Clover Intermediate II Investments, an affiliated entity of CAP V Mauritius Ltd.
- Piramal Pharma will include Piramal Pharma Solutions -- an end-to-end contract development and manufacturing business, Piramal Critical Care -- a complex hospital generics business selling specialised products across over 100 countries, Consumer Products Division -- a consumer healthcare business selling over-the-counter products in India, Piramal Enterprises' investment in the joint venture with Allergan India -- a leader in ophthalmology in the domestic market -- and Convergence Chemicals Pvt Ltd.
- Piramal Enterprises stated it has demonstrated a three-decade track record of growth and re-invention in pharma. Following the sale of its domestic pharma business to Abbott in 2010 for 3.8 billion dollars, the company has demonstrated its ability to build a solid and resilient pharma business over the last 10 years.
- Carlyle has invested more than 2.5 billion dollars in India as of March 31, 2020. Notable investments in India include SBI Life, SBI Card, HDFC, India Infoline, Delhivery and PNB Housing Finance.

<p style="text-align:center; color:red;">Revision points</p>

Company	Merging Company

Tata Power	Odisha's TPCODL (51%)
Facebook	Jio Platforms (9.9%)
Mubadala Investment Company	Jio Platforms (1.85%)
Abu Dhabi Investment Authority	Jio Platforms (1.16%)
Saudi Arabia's PIF	Jio Platforms (2.32%)
Facebook	Mapillary (Sweden)
Jaadhu Holdings LLC	Jio Platforms (9.99%)
Carlyle Group	Ajay Piramal's pharma business (20%)

Important Web Portals and Mobile Apps

PM Modi launches tech platform "CHAMPIONS" for MSMEs

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched technology platform **"CHAMPIONS"** to help **micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs)** facing difficulties, and to handhold them to become national and international champions.
- **CHAMPIONS**, which stands for **Creation and Harmonious Application of Modern Processes for Increasing the Output and National Strength**, is a portal for making smaller units big by solving their grievances, encouraging, supporting, helping and handholding.
- This ICT (Information and Communications Technology) based system is set up to help the MSMEs in present difficult situation and also to handhold them to become national and international champions.
- The portal entails a grievance redressal mechanism to resolve problems of MSMEs, including those of finance, raw materials, labour, regulatory permissions, among others, particularly in the COVID-19 created difficult situation.
- It will also help MSMEs capture new opportunities, including manufacturing of medical equipments and accessories like PPEs, masks, among others, and supply them in national and international markets.
- The platform will also help identify and encourage the sparks -- the potential MSMEs who are able to withstand the current situation and can become national and international champions.
- CHAMPIONS is a technology packed control room-cum-management information system.

J&K launches app to provide salary information to employees

- Lieutenant Governor, **Girish Chandra Murmu** launched **JK Employees Salary Tracker Mobile App- 'MeraVetan' (Version-1).**
- The newly launched application is aimed to provide Salary Related information to Employees.
- With the launch of **MeraVetan App (V-1),** the employees especially posted in remote & rural areas who don't have access to the DDO will easily access their salary and other details anytime.
- Similar application may be developed for Pre and Post Matric Scholarship and Integrated Social Security Scheme for Social Welfare Department so that the beneficiaries are able to track the scholarship/ pension disbursement details.
- It was informed that MeraVetan Mobile app has been developed by **NIC J&K**, on Android Platform, for providing end to end computerization of JKPaySys Application.
- The App is available on JKPaySys main page and instructions for installation and use of App are available on JKPaySys portal. After the Installation, the employees shall have to enter their CPIS ID, DOB and GPF / NPS subscription number. In case they don't have this information, they can have it from their DDO.
  The Android based App enables the employees to view details of their salary from anywhere and anytime. It

provides information such as Pay Scale, GPF/NPS Subscription, Allowances, Deductions, GPF/NPS Statement, Income Tax Statement, SLI statement etc. Detail of salary of an employee shall be updated every month after payment from the Treasury.

- After drawal of Salary Bill, employees can view their salary information from the App. It will facilitate the employees to get the salary slip quickly, thereby reducing the load on DDO.

Karnataka govt launches app for real time info on rains, flooding in Bengaluru

- The **Karnataka government** launched **"Meghasandesha"** App that would provide real-time information as well as forecast on rains, flooding and thunderstorm alerts in Bengaluru.
- The app has been developed by Karnataka state natural disaster monitoring centre along with the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and the Department of science and technology among others.
- A dedicated portal, **Varunamitra**, was also launched that aims to **leverage technology** driven solutions **to manage and mitigate the Urban Floods**.
- Bengaluru has taken up a demand driven Project on **"Urban Flood Model (UFM)** for the city which includes providing a hydrologic model and associated systems for issuing flood / inundation forecasts for Bengaluru city for different rainfall quantum and intensity.

'Air-Venti': Mumbai gets app for real-time information on ICU beds, ventilators

- **Mumbai** announced the launch of the **'Air-Venti' app** that will tell citizens how many intensive care unit (ICU) beds and ventilators are available in hospitals across the city.
- It will also help people during emergency situation.
- The application will be connected to the dashboard of Mumbai's disaster control room and can also be accessed through the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation app.

Yes Bank, UDMA Technologies launch digital wallet Yuva Pay

- **Yes Bank** announced the launch of '**Yuva Pay**, a **digital wallet**, in partnership with **UDMA Technologies** to **enable contactless payments**.
- Through the app, utility bills like municipal, house, water tax, electricity, LPG, DTH, mobilephone bill, licence fee, windmill and solar park fee, building sanction fees and billboard taxes can be paid via Bharat Bill Pay and Unified Payments Interface (UPI).
- Besides, insurance renewal, fastag recharge, EMI payment, school fee can be paid through the facility, the bank stated in a statement.
- The first live programme of the solution will be implemented by the Rural Development & Panchayat Raj Department, Karnataka, and the first phase will cover 158 gram panchayats with 238 villages, the statement stated.
- Subsequently, the programme would be rolled out to 6,200 gram panchayats covering 12 million households across 29,000 villages in the second phase, it stated.

Ghar Ghar Nigrani app launched in Punjab for COVID-19 house-to-house surveillance

- **The Punjab** government launched a **mobile application** aimed at undertaking **house to house surveillance** to contain the spread of COVID-19. The app, **'Ghar ghar nigrani'**, was launched by Chief Minister Amarinder Singh through video conference.
- The entire rural and urban population of Punjab above 30 years of age shall be surveyed as part of the drive, which will also cover persons below the age of 30 having co-morbidity or influenza-like illness.

- The ASHA workers and community volunteers will be paid Rs 4 per head incentive/honorarium for every person surveyed and shall cover 500 households.
- A supervisor will oversee the work of ASHA and community volunteers, and would be engaged on a voluntary basis for Rs 5,000 per month.
- The survey would help the state to develop an extremely important database and further plan its COVID containment strategy and make targeted interventions for the community.

IIT-Guwahati students develop mobile app for contactless air travel

- A group of **IIT-Guwahati students** has developed a mobile application for **seamless and contactless air travel** not only during the current pandemic but also during non-crisis situations.
- The aim of the mobile app **Flyzy**, developed as per **International Air Transport Association (IATA)** guidelines, is to provide contactless boarding, keeping in mind the easier baggage drop, manageable parking, better shopping experience and providing necessary updates during the whole journey, IIT-Guwahati stated.
- The **hybrid software** will support face-biometric recognition in future, without even changing the complete software system of the airport and is secured as the app is hosted on the cloud.
- Proper IATA and DGCA guidelines were followed in the development of the app, it stated.
- The passengers can shop from the airport using the app and can make payment as well, besides they can either opt for the takeaway or gate delivery option. Flyzy also supports multi-currency payments.
- The founders believe that the application will help the aviation industry save money as the process will become automated, faster and easier.
- The company provides an end-to-end service at a low infrastructure cost. The team is already in the process of talking to the authorities for implementing the application at some airports, IIT-Guwahati stated.

Germany Launches Coronavirus App as EU Eyes Travel Revival

- **Germany** launched an app to help break the chain of **coronavirus infections**, one of several such apps that European governments hope will revive travel and tourism safely.
- The **Corona-Warn-App,** now available for Apple and Android devices, uses Bluetooth short-range radio to measure close contacts between people and issues a warning should one of them later test positive for COVID-19.
- Germany joins Italy, Poland, and Latvia in launching apps based on technology from Apple and Alphabet's Google that preserves privacy by logging Bluetooth contacts securely on devices.

'NADA INDIA' Mobile Application launched to help athletes Stay Updated about Prohibited Substances

- National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) has launched its mobile application 'NADA INDIA' for creating a bridge with the athletes under which information on prohibited substances would be provided easily.
- The mobile application was launched by the Union Minister of State (I/C) for Youth Affairs and Sports Kiren Rijiju.
- Through this initiative, NADA has taken an important step towards creating clean and dope free sports.

<div align="center">Revision Points</div>

Applications/Web portals	Launched By/Developed By
CHAMPIONS	PM Modi
Mera Vetan	J & K
Meghasandesha	Karnataka government

Air Venti	Mumbai
Yuva Pay	Yes Bank & UDMA Technologies
Ghar Ghar Nigrani	Punjab govt
Flyzy	IIT Guwahati
Corona – Warn App	Germany

Important Sports News

Cricket

ICC approves replacements in test cricket, bans use of saliva to shine ball

- **International Cricket Council, ICC** has approved substitution in case a player shows symptoms of COVID-19 during a Test match besides ratifying the interim ban on using saliva to shine the ball. ICC has also re-introduced non-neutral umpires for bilateral series as part of its interim playing regulations to tackle the threat posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- In the five new regulations, recommended by the **Anil Kumble-chaired Cricket Committee**, and ratified by the Chief Executives Committee (CEC), the teams will also be allowed an additional DRS call as home umpires will now be officiating in bilateral Test series.
- The ICC stated that a 32-inch additional logo would also be permitted on the players' jerseys, for Boards to make up for financial losses due to pandemic. However, the regulation for COVID-19 replacements will not be applicable in ODIs and T20Is, it added.
- The ICC stated, ban on use of saliva was taken as it is considered to be a transmitter of novel coronavirus unlike sweat which will still be allowed to shine the ball. Repeated violation of the ban would at first invite a warning before a five-run penalty is imposed. It added, A team can be issued up to two warnings per innings but repeated use of saliva on the ball will result in a 5-run penalty to the batting side. Whenever saliva is applied to the ball, the umpires will be instructed to clean the ball before play recommences.
- The introduction of two home team umpires for bilateral after nearly two decades is purely due to the logistical challenges of travelling given the flight restrictions in place globally. The requirement to appoint neutral match officials will be temporarily removed from the playing conditions for all international formats owing to the current logistical challenges with international travel.

Rahul Dravid beats Sachin Tendulkar in Wisden poll on greatest Indian Test batsman

- According to a poll conducted on social media by **Wisden India, Dravid beat Tendulkar** by a narrow margin of votes in the final round of voting.
- **Rahul Dravid is the greatest Indian Test batsman,** got 52 per cent of the votes, with as many as 11,400 fans taking part in the final round of voting.
- The poll initially had 16 Indian batting greats, with Sunil Gavaskar and Virat Kohli being the two others to have made it through to the 'semi finals'. Gavaskar beat Kohli in the **'third-place play-off'** by a narrow margin.

Bangladesh board launches app to track Covid-19 symptoms among its players

- The **Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB)** has come up with an app **'Covid-19 well-being app' to help its players track symptoms** related to contagious disease.
- This app will help the players maintain their fitness and for the board to keep their records and track of their fitness and health status.

- Former captain Mashrafe Mortaza and two other former Bangladesh cricketers, Nazmul Islam and Nafees Iqbal have so far tested positive for the dreaded coronavirus and in its bid to help the players.
- This is basically to bring the players under one umbrella and the BCB has introduced it primarily for the contracted players (Men, women and Under-19 team).

Football

Former India Football Captain IM Vijayan Recommended For Padma Shri

- The **All India Football Federation (AIFF)** has **recommended** former skipper **IM Vijayan** for **Padma Shri**, the country's fourth-highest civilian award.
- The 51-year-old former India striker, who scored 40 goals in 79 matches for India since making his debut in early 90s.
- He was awarded the Arjuna award in 2003. He was also awarded the Indian **'Player of the Year'** in 1993, 1997 and 1999.

Australia, New Zealand win joint bid to host 2023 Fifa Women's World Cup

- **Australia** and **New Zealand** will co-host the **2023 Women's World Cup**.
- The island neighbours beat Colombia 22-13 in a vote by the **FIFA Council**.
- The expanded 32-team tournament, eight more than the 2019 edition in France, is expected to open in July 2023.
- The winning bid proposed 12 cities with seven in Australia and five in New Zealand. It includes the main stadium used for the 2000 Sydney Olympics.
- After a successful World Cup last year, FIFA wants the next women's tournament to further establish its independence from the men, and show it is commercially attractive.
- At least **$100 million** is expected to be paid by the governing body in 2023 for prize money, team preparation costs and to clubs releasing players for the tournament Fifa president Gianni Infantino pledged last year in France.

Others

Amit Panghal, Vikas Krishan nominated for Khel Ratna by BFI; 3 names for Arjuna

- World silver-medallist **Amit Panghal** and the seasoned **Vikas Krishan** were nominated for the **Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award** by the **Boxing Federation of India.**
- The BFI has nominated world bronze-winning trio of **Lovlina Borgohain (69kg), Simranjit Kaur (64kg) and Manish Kaushik (63kg)** for the **Arjuna awards.**
- For the Dronacharya awards, the BFI has finalised the names of national women's coach Mohammed Ali Qamar and assistant coach Chhote Lal Yadav.
- The 24-year-old Panghal (52kg), also an Asian Games champion, has not won any national sports award. He was being nominated for the Arjuna award for the past three years but was not considered by the selection committee because of a 2012 "inadvertent" dope offence.
- Commonwealth and Asian Games gold-medallist Krishan (69kg) won the Arjuna award in 2012. The 28-year-old had turned professional in 2018 after his CWG top finish followed by a third Asian Games medal — a bronze.

SAI to launch Khelo India e-Pathshala, an online coaching programme for grassroot level

- The **Sports Authority of India (SAI)** is all set to launch Khelo India **e-Pathshala** in association with National Sports Federations (NSF) with an aim to provide first-ever national-level open online coaching and education programme for **grassroot-level athletes.**

- The **e-learning programme** will feature eminent athletes demonstrating technical skills and interacting with young athletes about techniques to improve their overall game.
- The programme will also be led by a committee of eminent coaches and observed by a committee of Sports Scientist, High-Performance Directors and High-Performance Managers, who will give their on-ground feedback about the course.

AFC Grants India the Rights to Host AFC Women's Asian Cup 2022 Finals

- India is all set to host the **AFC Women's Asian Cup Finals** in **2022** after the **Asian Football Confederation (AFC)** granted All India Football Federation the rights for it, at the AFC Women's Football Committee.
- The tournament comes into India's bag after the country is slated to host the **FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup India 2020** from February 17 to Match 7, 2021.
- India previously hosted the FIFA U-17 Men's World Cup in 2017. Furthermore, India had also hosted the AFC U-16 Championship India in 2016.

Fit India to launch special films promoting 10 indigenous sports of India under Ek Bharat, Shrestha Bharat

- Sports Ministry's flagship programme **Fit India** is joining hands with the **Department of School Education and Literacy,** to launch a series of **special films promoting10 indigenous sports of India** under the **Ek Bharat, Shrestha Bharat** initiative.
- The series is aimed at creating awareness about not just the indigenous games but also the culture and heritage of the states to which they belong. Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat aims to create awareness among youngsters about the culture and heritage of states across India. This initiative aims to further that effort.
- These special films have been customized for school-going children to make them aware of the history and heritage of the state from which a game emanates, the particular sport as well as how it is played
- The short films have been curated in a manner to highlight and bring forth the origin, progress and other key aspects of each sport. The 10 sports to be covered in the series are **Kho-kho, Gatka, Kalaripayttu, Mallakhamb, Thang-Ta, Sqay, Kabaddi, Roll Ball, Tug of War** and **Shooting Ball**. The indigenous sports of India cover a mix of very old sports, for example, Kalaripayattu, and some as recent as Roll Ball which has gained a lot of popularity and is now played in at least 50 countries spread over 5 continents.

Chelsea women awarded WSL title, Aston Villa win Women"s C'ship

- **Chelsea FC Women** were named the **Womens Super League champions** overtaking **Manchester City** on a points-per-game record, following the termination of the 2019/20 season last month.
- The Blues were in second place but with one game in hand over Manchester City who was a point ahead when it was decided the league is to finish prematurely due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- On the basic points-per-game system, **Aston Villa Women** were announced as **champions of the Women"s Championship.**
- In addition, Chelsea and Manchester City will be nominated as the two English clubs to qualify for the 2020/21 UEFA Women"s Champions League competition, having finished in the top two places of the 2019/20 Women"s Super League season.
- The final team positions across both leagues also confirmed that Aston Villa would be promoted to the Women"s Super League for the 2020-21 season, and that Liverpool would be relegated to the Women"s Championship for the 2020-21 season.

2020 World Archery Field C'ships postponed to 2022 due to COVID-19

- The **2020World Archery Field Championships** in Yankton, USA, have been postponed until **2022** in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The event was due to take place in September this year at the NFAA Easton Yankton Archery Center, the world's largest dedicated archery facility which has previously hosted the world youth and world indoor championships.
- World Archery (WA) and Yankton orgainsing committee took the joint decision recently to safeguard athlete's well-being and due to restrictions still in place because of the pandemic.
- WA stated that it decided against a one-year postponement because of a cramped calendar in 2021. **Yankton** is also scheduled to host next year's World Archery Championships.
- The world field event was planned as the primary qualifier for the upcoming World Games in Birmingham. That event was initially scheduled for 2021 but moved to 2022 following the delay of the Olympics.
- The world body stated a separate qualification event will now be held, likely in the summer of 2021.

Bayern Munich wins 8th straight Bundesliga title

- **Bayern Munich** secured its **eighth successiveGerman Bundesliga title** with two games to spare after beating **Werder Bremen** 1-0 with a goal from Robert Lewandowski.
- Bayern powered to its 30th German title with a perfect record of seven wins in the Bundesliga since it resumed last month in empty stadiums amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Asian Youth Para Games to be held in Bahrain in December 2021

- The **Asian Paralympic Committee (APC)** announced that **Bahrain** will host the fourth edition of the **Asian Youth Para Games** from December 1 to 10 **2021.**
- An estimated 800 athletes under 20 years of age are expected to compete in nine sports including athletics, badminton, powerlifting, swimming and table tennis.
- The competition will take place across numerous venues in Khalifa Sports City, a multi-use stadium in Isa Town, and Isa Sports City, the national indoor facility.
- This will be the first time that Bahrain will host a big para-sport event and the national body is determined to use the Games as a platform to develop Paralympic movement in the Kingdom.
- Chairman of the Bahrain Paralympic Committee, **Shaikh Mohammed bin Duaij Al Khalifa**

Sports Ministry all set to establish Khelo India State Centres of Excellence

- The Sports Ministry is all set to establish **Khelo India State Centres of Excellence** under the **Khelo India Scheme**. One such centre will be identified in each State and Union Territory with an aim to create a robust sporting ecosystem in the entire country. In the first leg, the Ministry has identified state-owned sports facilities in eight states including **Karnataka, Odisha, Kerala, Telengana, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram** and **Nagaland** which will be upgraded into Khelo India State Centre of Excellence.
- Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju stated, these centres are being established to strengthen India's pursuit for excellence in Olympics. He stated, the effort is to scale up the best sporting facilities available in each state into academies of world-class standard. Mr. Rijiju stated, the sporting facilities have been identified after in-depth analysis by a government committee. He expressed confidence that this step will tap the talents from across the country and will prove beneficial in training of athletes.
- The State and Union Territory will run the centre and build capacity to turn it into the world-class sporting facility. They will be responsible for all aspects of management of the centre including, boarding, lodging and

maintenance, while funds for expert coaches, supporting staff, equipments, infrastructure will be extended through the Khelo India Scheme.

Napoli beat Juventus on penalties to win sixth Italian Cup

- **Napoli** beat **Juventus** on penalties to lift the **Italian Cup for the sixth time** in an empty **Stadio Olimpico in Rome.**
- It is the first trophy for the southerners since 2014, and also a maiden coaching trophy for Gennaro Gattuso, who replaced Carlo Ancelotti in December, and claimed a crown he won as a player with AC Milan.

Shakhriyar Mamedyarov wins World Stars Sharjah Online

- Due to the coronavirus outbreak, some tournaments decided to compensate a bit by organizing online events.
- The **World Starts Sharjah Online** was a six-player double round-robin with participants rated between 2661 and 2764.
- Top seed **Shakhriyar Mamedyarov** won the tournament.
- Pentala Harikrishna and Radoslaw Wojtaszek finished second and third respectively.

Sports Ministry to establish 1000 district-level Khelo India centers to engage past champions in training

- Government has decided to establish **1000 Khelo India Centers (KIC)** at the district level across the country. These centers will either be run by a past champion or have them as coaches. The move is to tap into the expertise of past sporting champions for grassroot-level training of athletes and also to ensure a sustained source of income for them in the sports ecosystem.
- The decision, while strengthening grassroot level sports, will also ensure that past champions can contribute in making India a sporting superpower while earning a livelihood from sports. Union Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju stated, as the government strives to make India a sporting superpower, one of the things we have to ensure is that sports becomes a viable career option for youngsters.
- He stated the Centre wants to ensure that anyone who has played sport at the national level has a life of dignity and financial stability. A shortlisting mechanism has been put in place to identify past champions who are eligible to either establish their own academy or work as a coach in a KIC. To build the country-wide network of **Khelo India Centres,** existing SAI extension centres will be given the option of converting into a KIC and recruiting a past champion to avail the financial grant under the scheme.

IOC joins forces with WHO and the United Nations to fight COVID-19

- The **International Olympic Committee** and **WHO** together with the **United Nations** launch a partnership to encourage individuals and communities around the world to be **#HEALTHYTogether**. The three partners and Olympic athletes will spotlight the global collaboration needed to stay healthy and reduce the spread and impact of COVID-19.
- Olympic athletes will help deliver important public health information, to inspire people to adopt or continue behaviours that will curtail the pandemic and provide information that promotes physical and mental health. The partnership kicks off with Olympians around the world showcasing various exercises to stay healthy during this time.
- A WHO survey showed that many people who had severe COVID-19 disease were already living with or at risk for noncommunicable diseases (NCDs). The results emphasize the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle including being physically active, having a healthy diet, and avoiding tobacco and alcohol.

- The global partnership will act locally, through the voices of Olympic athletes – voices that symbolize perseverance, dedication and endurance – qualities all individuals need during this public health challenge. WHO will work with athletes to bring tailored health messages to people who are living through various stages of the pandemic through digital platforms.

World Karate Federation provisionally de-recognises KAI

- The **World Karate Federation (WKF)** has provisionally de-recognised the **Karate Association of India** with immediate effect for infighting and violating the world body's statutes during its elections last year.
- The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) disaffiliated KAI in January this year for violating its constitution and guidelines.
- The WKF further informed that KAI will no longer be entitled to the rights reserved only to WKF members, including but not limited to participate in WKF events, use the WKF logo and name and represent the WKF in India.

US Open Include Wheelchair Tennis In 2020 Tournament

- The **United States Tennis Association** announced that the **2020 US Open Wheelchair Tennis Competition** will be held from September 10 -13 at the **Billie Jean King National Tennis Center** in Flushing.
- The decision was made following multiple virtual meetings with a group of wheelchair athletes and the International Tennis Federation over the last week, the organisers said in a statement.
- The 2020 US Open Wheelchair Competition will feature men's and women's singles and doubles and quad singles and doubles, with draw sizes similar to past US Opens.
- Wheelchair athletes will follow the same health and safety procedures as all players participating in the US Open and will be able to access the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center beginning on September 7, the statement further added.
- The initial setup dropped wheelchair, junior and mixed doubles competitions altogether, along with singles qualifying, while the fields for women's and men's doubles were halved to 32 teams apiece.
- The International Tennis Federation is carefully reviewing the impact of this evolving situation related to awarding wheelchair ranking points and we expect a decision to be announced in the coming days.

Liverpool crowned Premier League champions for first time after Chelsea win

- Thirty years of hurt came to an end for **Liverpool** when they were confirmed as **Premier League champions** courtesy of second-placed Manchester City's 2-1 defeat by Chelsea.
- The result at **Stamford Bridge** means Liverpool have an unassailable 23-point lead over City with seven games left.
- Liverpool were last champions of England when they won the old First Division title in 1989-90 after which a decline in fortunes saw Manchester United and Arsenal, then Chelsea and Manchester City seize power.
- Inspirational manager Juergen Klopp has rekindled the Anfield flame though and delivered the club's 19th top-flight title, one behind arch-rivals United's record of 20, after finishing runners-up to City in a thrilling race last season.As the Chelsea game moved into stoppage time at an empty stadium in London, 350km away outside Anfield Liverpool fans began lighting red flares as the celebrations began in earnest.
- Liverpool finished last season with nine straight league wins and, after claiming the Champions League by beating Tottenham Hotspur in Madrid, began the new campaign in relentless fashion to leave rivals trailing in their wake.
- With 28 wins and one defeat in 31 games, Liverpool have set a record-breaking pace and were 25 points clear in February — the biggest lead in Premier League history.

World Athletics launches 'Road to Tokyo' qualification tracking tool

- **World Athletics** has launched **'Road to Tokyo'**, an online tool **to track the qualification** process for next year's Olympic Games.
- The tool will provide a real time view of each event over the course of the Tokyo 2020 qualification period which ends on **June 29, 2021.**
- The Games will now be held from July 23 to August 8, 2021.
- However, the qualification principles remain unchanged with athletes able to qualify through entry standards and then the World Athletics World Rankings.
- Athletes who have already met the entry standard since the start of the qualification period in 2019 remain qualified and will be eligible for selection by their respective member federations and national olympic committees, together with the other athletes who will qualify within the extended qualification period.

Sanjita Chanu to receive Arjuna award after IWF drops doping charges

- Two-time Commonwealth Games gold medal winning **weightlifter K. Sanjita Chanu**, who was recently exonerated from doping charges, will get the **Arjuna award for 2018.**
- Sanjita, who fought a long battle for over two-and-a-half years before seeing her name being cleared of doping charges by the **International Weightlifting Federation (IWF).**

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Revision Points

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Organization	Headquarters	Key Person
All India Football Federation	Dwarka, Delhi	Praful Patel
Indian Steel Association	New Delhi	Dilip Oommen
United Nations	New York, USA	António Guterres
International Monetary Fund (IMF)	Washington D.C.	Kristalina Georgieva
Financial Action Task Force (FATF)	Paris, France	Xiangmin Liu
NTPC Ltd	New Delhi	Gurdeep Singh
Oil and Natural Gas Corporation	New Delhi	Shashi Shanker
Power Finance Corporation	New Delhi	Ravinder Singh Dhillon
India Infrastructure Finance Company Limited	New Delhi	PR Jaishankar
World Economic Forum (WEF)	Cologny, Switzerland	Klaus Schwab
Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank	Beijing, China	Jin Liqun
World Bank	Washington D.C, USA	David Malpass
Asian Development Bank	Mandaluyong, Philippines	Masatsugu Asakawa
International Cricket Council (ICC)	Dubai, UAE	Manu Sawhney
ARIES	Nainital	Sohan Roy S K
IFFCO	Lausanne, Switzerland	Narinder Batra
United Nations Childrens' Fund (UNICEF)	New York, USA	Henrietta H. Fore
World Health Organization	Geneva, Switzerland	Tedros Adhanom

United Nations Environment Programme	Nairobi, Kenya	Inger Anderson
Defence Research Development Organization	New Delhi	Sateesh Reddy
FlipKart	Bengaluru	Kalyan Krishnamurthy
United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization	Paris	Audrey Azoulay
Indian Council of Medical Research	New Delhi	Balram Bhargava
ICAR	New Delhi	Trilochan Mohapatra
National Anti-Doping Agency	New Delhi	Navin Agarwal
Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)	New Delhi	Uday Kotak
Twitter	San Francisco	Jack Dorsey
Larsen & Toubro	Mumbai	SN Subrahmanyan
United Nations Security Council (UNSC)	New York	Zhang Jun
Bharat Biotech	Hyderabad	Krishna Ella
Indian Council of Medical Research	New Delhi	Balram Bhargava

<h2 style="color:red; text-align:center">Important Obituaries</h2>

Name	Field
Wajid Khan	Composer duo of Sajid-Wajid
Bobby Morrow (America)	Former Olympic Sprinter
P Namyal	Former Union Minister & 3-time Congress MP from Ladakh
Jayantilal Nanoma	Archery Coach
KN Lakshmanan	Former two-time TN state BJP president
Wes Unseld	NBA Hall of Famer
Basu Chatterjee	Filmmaker (Received IIFA Lifetime Achievement Award, Filmfare Award)
Pritam Singh (Padma Shri Awardee)	Former Director of IIM- Lucknow & MDI- Gurgaon, Director General at IMI – New Delhi. Former Professor of IIM Bangalore
Anwar Sagar	Lyricist
Riaz Sheikh	Pakistani Cricketer (Due to COVID-19)
Anil Suri	Bollywood Producer
Ved Prakash Marwah	Former Delhi Police Commissioner, Former DG – NSG, Governor of Manipur, Mizoram & Jharkhand
Hamza Koya	Former Santosh Trophy Player

A. Balasamy	Former Vice President of Chennai Football Association
Chiranjeevi Sarja	Kannada Actor
Kurt Thomas	World Champion Gymnast
Arjun Charan Sethi	Former Union Minister (8-time MP from Bhadrak)
J Anbazhagan	DMK MLA (Tamil Nadu) (due to COVID -19)
Pierre Nkurunziza	President of Burundi
Jagesh Mukati	Television Actor
Atul Srivastava	Director, SAIL Ltd
Jas Waters	Writer
Vasant Raiji	Oldest first-class Cricketer
Anand Mohan Zutshi 'Gulzar' Dehlvi'	Urdu Poet
Dr A Vaidyanathan	Former Member of Planning Commission
Tony Dunne	Manchester United's European Cup winning defender
Sushant Singh Rajput	Bollywood Actor
Matt Poore	Former New Zealand Cricketer
Madhavrao Patil	Former LS MP (From Nashik) and founder of Janalaxmi Cooperative Bank
Mohammad Nasim	Former Bangladesh Minister&Awami League Presidium member
Heera Singh Rana (Uttarakhand)	Folk Singer
Surinder Kaur	Former Head of Publications Division and Directorate of Advertising & Visual publicity
Madhav Patankar	Editor of 'Saamana' (Father-in-Law of Maharashtra CM Uddhay Thackeray)
Arunkumar Ramniklal Mehta	Founder of the B. Arunkumar & Co
Padmaja Radhakrishnan	Lyricist & Painter
Dinu Ranadive	Journalist & Freedom Fighter
Lt Gen RM Vohra	Former GOC-in-C Eastern Command
Haribhau Jawale	Formet two-time MLA from Jalgaon (due to COVID-19)
Achyut Kashinath Sinai Usgaonkar	Former Goa minister
Madan Mohan Dutta	Balasore Sadar MLA of BJP
B J Damodharan	TN CM's private secretary (due to COVID-19)
Vera Lynn	British Singer
BPR Vithal Baru	Economist & ex-IAS officer
KR Sachidanandan	Malayalam writer-director
Kirk Smith	Professor of global KEM hospital environmental health

Ahmed Radhi	Iraqi Footballer (Due to COVID-19)
Rajinder Goel	Indian Left-arm spinner
M Ilaiah Yadav	Indian Kabaddi player
Lachhman Singh Lehl	Major General
Pournima Zanane	Former Indian Shooter
K Surendran	KPCC general secretary, INTUC national organising secretary & Former Kannur DCC president
Vidyaben Shah	Social Worker (Padma Shrr awardee)
Vishwa Bandhu Gupta	Former MP and journalist
MLA Tamonash Ghosh	Trinamool Congress MLA from Falta (Due to COVID-19)
Joel Schumacher	Filmmaker
K Raghunath	Former Karnataka Basket Ball player
Sqn Ldr Parvez Jamasji	Vir Chakra Awardee, 1971 war hero
Kelly Asbury	Writer-Director (Shrek 2, Smurfs)
Bhupinder Singh Slathia	Senior advocate & former president of Jammu and Kashmir High Court Bar Association
Milton Glaser	Graphic Designer (I ♥ NY)
Charles Webb	Author of 1963 novel 'The Graduate'
Sanjay Dobal	Former Delhi Cricketer (Due to COVID-19)
Abdullah Al Mohsin Chowdhury	Bangladesh Defence Secretary
Geetha Nagabhushan	Kannada novelist