# Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – September 2020

# Important Days

| Date | Day | Theme/Others |
| --- | --- | --- |
| September 1 to 7 | National Nutrition Week | Events of NNW are organised by the Food and Nutrition Board of the Ministry of Women and Child Development |
| September 2 | World Coconut Day (1st celebrated in 2009) | Invest in Coconut to save the world |
| September 4 | National Wildlife Day | - |
| September 5 | International Day of Charity | Declared by the United Nations General Assembly in 2012 |
| September 5 | Teachers' Day | birth anniversary of Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan |
| September 7 | International Day of Clean Air for blue skies | - |
| September 8 | International Literacy Day (by UNESCO) | Literacy teaching and learning in the COVID-19 crisis and beyond |
| September 9 | Himalaya Diwas | - |
| September 9 | International Day to Protect Education from Attack | Established by a unanimous decision of the UN General Assembly (1st time in 2020) |
| September 10 | World Suicide Prevention Day | Working together to prevent suicide |
| September 12 | United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation | Pathways toward the SDGs through South-South solidarity beyond COVID-19 |
| 2nd Saturday of September | World First Aid Day | Campaign is to promote the importance of first aid training in preventing injuries and saving lives. |
| September 14 | Hindi Diwas | In 1949, the constituent assembly adopted Hindi written in Devanagari as the official language |
| 15 September | World Lymphoma Awareness Day | - |
| September 15 | Engineer's Day | Birth anniversary of Indian Engineer Bharat Ratna Mokshagundam Visvesvaraya. |
| September 15 | International Day of Democracy | COVID-19: A Spotlight onDemocracy |
| September 16 | International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer or World Ozone Day | Ozone for life: 35 years of ozone layer protection (It marks 35 years of the Vienna Convention) |
| September 17 | World Patient Safety Day | Health Worker Safety: A Priority for Patient Safety (Slogan: Safe health workers, Safe patients) |
| September 18 | International Equal Pay Day | First time in 2020 |

| September 18 | World Water Monitoring Day | |
|---|---|---|
| September 18 | World Bamboo Day | BAMBOO NOW (established at the 8th World Bamboo Congress held in Bangkok in 2009 and declared by the Thai Royal Forest Department) |
| 3rd Saturday in September | International Coastal CleanUp Day | - |
| 3rd Saturday in September | International Red Panda Day 2020 | - |
| September 21 | International Day of Peace | Shaping Peace Together |
| September 21 | World Alzheimer's Day | Let's talk about dementia |
| September 22 | World Rhino Day | Five Rhino Species Together (World Wildlife Fund-South Africa announced the day in 2010) |
| September 22 | World Car Free Day | - |
| September 23 | International Day of Sign Languages | Sign Languages Are for Everyone |
| September 23 | International Week of the Deaf | - |
| September 24 | World Maritime Day | Sustainable shipping for a sustainable planet |
| September 25 | World Pharmacist Day | Transforming global health |
| September 25 | Antyodaya Diwas | Birth anniversary of Deendayal Upadhyaya. |
| September 26 | World Environmental Health Day (Launched by the IFEH Council) | Environmental Health A Key Public Health Intervention in Disease Pandemic |
| September 26 | International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons | - |
| September 26 | World Contraception Day | - |
| September 27 | World Tourism Day (Since 1980) | Tourism and Rural Development |
| Last Sunday of September | World Deaf Day | Reaffirming Deaf People's Human Rights |
| 4th Sunday of September | World Rivers Day | Day of Action for Rivers |
| 4th Sunday of September | International Daughters Day | - |
| September 28 | World Rabies Day | End Rabies: Collaborate, Vaccinate |
| September 28 | International Day for Universal Access to Information | Access to Information – Saving lives, Building Trust, Bringing Hope |
| September 29 | International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste | Stop food loss and waste. For the people. For the planet |
| September 29 | World Heart Day | - |
| September 30 | International Translation Day | Finding the words for a world in crisis |

## National Nutrition Month
- The **month of September** will be observed as **'Nutrition Month'** in the entire nation.
- The **entire month of September 2020** is being celebrated as **Rashtriya Poshan Maah** which is PM's overreaching scheme for holistic nourishment – Poshan Abhiyaan is a multi-ministerial convergence mission to address malnutrition with a targeted approach by 2022.
- During nutrition month, a food and nutrition quiz will be organized on **My Gov portal** and there will be a meme competition.

# Important Banking News
## RBI

## RBI announces more measures to foster orderly market conditions
- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** will conduct additional special open market operations involving the simultaneous **purchase and sale of government securities** for **Rs 20,000 crore** in two tranches of Rs 10,000 crore each.
- The RBI will conduct **term repo operations** for an aggregate amount of **Rs one lakh croreat floating rates** (that is at the prevailing repo rate) in mid-September to assuage pressures on the market on account of advance tax outflows.
- In order **to reduce the cost of funds**, banks that had availed of funds **under long-term repo operations (LTROs)** may exercise an option of reversing these transactions before maturity. Thus, the banks may reduce their interest liability by returning funds taken at the repo rate prevailing at that time (5.15 per cent) and availing funds at the current repo rate of 4 per cent.
- Currently, banks are required to **maintain 18 per cent** of their **net demandand time liabilities (NDTL) in statutory liquidity ratio (SLR) securities**. The extant limit for investments that can be held in **held for trading (HTM) category** is **25 per cent** of total investment.
- Banks are allowed to exceed this limit provided the excess is invested in SLR securities within an overall limit of **19.5 per cent of NDTL**. SLR securities held in HTM category by major banks amount to around **17.3 per cent of NDTL** at present.
- The RBI will allow banks to hold fresh acquisitions of SLR securities acquired from September 1 under HTM up to an overall limit of **22 per cent of NDTL up to March 31, 2021.**

## RBI Issues Revised PSL Guidelines to Increase Credit Penetration
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) issued revised guidelines for priority sector lending to enable better credit penetration to credit deficient areas and increase lending to small and marginal farmers besides weaker sections.
- In addition, the initiative will boost credit to renewable energy and health infrastructure.
- The RBI stated bank finance to start-ups up to Rs 50 crore, loans to farmers for installation of solar power plants for solarisation of grid-connected agriculture pumps, and loans for setting up compressed bio-gas (CBG) plants have been included as fresh categories eligible for finance under priority sector.
- To address regional disparities in the flow of priority sector credit, higher weightage has been assigned to incremental priority sector credit in identified districts where priority sector credit flow is comparatively low.
- Besides, the targets prescribed for small and marginal farmers and weaker sections are being increased in a phased manner. Higher credit limit has been specified for farmers producers organisations and companies undertaking farming with assured marketing of their produce at a pre-determined price.

- Loan limits for renewable energy have been doubled. For improvement of health infrastructure, credit limit for health infrastructure including those under Ayushman Bharat has been doubled.
- The central bank stated it comprehensively reviewed the PSL guidelines to align it with emerging national priorities and bring sharper focus on inclusive development after having wide-ranging discussions with all stakeholders.

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

- **Reserve Bank of India** has revised **Priority Sector Lending guidelines**. RBI stated the move is aimed at addressing regional disparities in the flow of priority sector credit. In the revised guidelines, higher weightage have been assigned to incremental priority sector credit in identified districts where priority sector credit flow is comparatively low.
- Bank finance to start-ups up to **50 crore rupees**, loans to farmers for installation of solar power plants for solarisation of grid connected agriculture pumps and loans for setting up Compressed Bio Gas plants have been included as fresh categories eligible for finance under priority sector.
- Priority sector loans refer to loans that banks need to mandatorily lend to economically weaker sections of the society.
- Also, the targets prescribed for "small and marginal farmers" and "weaker sections" are being increased in a phased manner, the RBI stated.
- The RBI also stated loan limits for renewable energy have been increased under the revised guidelines. For improvement of health infrastructure, credit limit for health infrastructure (including those under 'Ayushman Bharat') has been doubled, the RBI stated.

## Kamath committee identifies 26 sectors for loan restructuring

- **Reserve Bank of India** released the **K V Kamath-led Committee report**, which had recommended financial parameters to be factored in the resolution plans under the **'Resolution Framework for Covid19-related Stress'** along with sector specific benchmark ranges for such parameters.
- The committee has recommended financial ratios for **26 sectors** which could be factored by lending institutions while finalizing a resolution plan for a borrower. The financial aspects include those related to leverage, liquidity, debt serviceability.
- The RBI had formed a **five-member committee** under the chairmanship of **Kamath** to make recommendations on the financial parameters to be considered for the one-time restructuring of loans impacted by the Covid 19 pandemic. Other members of the committee are former State Bank of India executive **Diwakar Gupta**, current Canara Bank chairman **TN Manoharan**, consultant **Ashvin Parekh** and Indian Banks' Association (IBA) CEO **Sunil Mehta** who was also a secretary to the committee.
- It had asked the panel to recommend a list of financial parameters, including leverage, liquidity, and debt serviceability, to decide on the resolution plan. The committee will also vet the resolution plans for all the accounts where the exposure is more than **Rs.1,500 crore**.
- The committee panel recommended lenders to mandatorily consider total outstanding liabilities/adjusted tangible net worth, total debt/EBITDA, Current Ratio, Debt Service Coverage Ratio, and average debt service coverage ratio.

## RBI issues guidelines for appointment of CCO in banks

- **Reserve Bank of India** has issued guidelines for a**ppointment** of **Chief Compliance Officer (CCO)** in banks to ensure uniform approach with regard to compliance and risk management culture across the banking industry.
- Accordingly, RBI has stated that the CCO must be appointed for a minimum fixed period of **three years**. The person should be a **senior executive** of the bank, preferably in the rank of a general manager or an equivalent position or he could also be recruited from outside.

- Further, there shall not be any responsibility which brings elements of conflict of interest, especially the role relating to business. He must not be a member of any committee which brings his/her role in conflict with responsibility as member of the committee, including any committee dealing with purchases/sanctions.
- As per the circular, no vigilance case or adverse observation from the RBI should be pending against the candidate identified for appointment as the CCO. Selection of the candidate for the post of the CCO should be done on the basis of a well-defined selection process and recommendations made by the senior executive-level selection committee constituted by the board for the purpose.

## RBI mandates automated recognition of NPAs, provisioning by June 2021

- **The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) mandated** the **automation of bad-loan** recognition by **banksby June 30, 2021.**
- The processes of provisioning calculation and income recognition will also have to be automated and banks will be required to upgrade their systems accordingly.
- Banks had earlier been advised to have appropriate **information technology (IT) systems** in place for **identification of non-performing assets (NPA)** and **generation of related data/returns**, both for **regulatory reporting** and **banks' own management information system (MIS) requirements.**
- All borrowal accounts, including temporary overdrafts, irrespective of size, sector or types of limits shall be covered in the automated IT- based system for asset classification, upgradation and provisioning processes. Banks' investments shall also be covered under the system. Asset classification rules shall be configured in the system, in compliance with regulatory stipulations.
- The system shall handle both downgrade and upgrade of accounts through a straight through process (STP) without manual intervention.

## RBI suggests five-pillared approach to deal with cybersecurity issues in UCBs

- **The Reserve Bank** came out with a **five-pillared strategic approach 'GUARD'** to deal with **cyber security** threats being faced by **Urban Cooperative Banks (UCBs).**
- The RBI stated in its document **'Technology Vision for Cyber Security for Urban Cooperative Banks 2020-2023'** that the number, frequency and impact of cyber incidents and attacks have increased manifold in the recent past, more so in the case of the financial sector, including UCBs.
- Therefore, it has become essential to enhance the security posture of UCBs to prevent, detect, respond to and recover from cyber-attacks.
- According to the central bank, the technology vision document, which was formalised after obtaining inputs from various stakeholders, is aimed at enhancing the cybersecurity posture of UCBs against evolving IT and cyber threat environment.
- Observing that the cybersecurity landscape will continue to evolve with wider adoption of digital banking channels, necessitating the UCBs to manage the associated risks effectively, the RBI stated that the active collaboration within UCBs and their stakeholders would be necessary for sharing and coordinating various measures taken on cybersecurity aspects.

## RBI approves 3-member committee of directors to manage Lakshmi Vilas Bank

- **Reserve Bank of India** has approved appointment of **three-member Committee of Directors (CoD)** to run the daily affairs of debt-ridden **Lakshmi Vilas Bank (LVB).**
- This CoD will exercise the discretionary powers of MD & CEO in the ad-interim.
- The RBI appointed the CoD composed of three independent directors **Meeta Makhan, Shakti Sinha, and Satish Kumar Kalra.** The committee will be headed by **Meeta Makhan.**

- With **Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR) of about 262 per cent**, against minimum **100 per cent required by RBI**, the deposit-holders, bond-holders, account-holders and creditors are well safe guarded

## RBI extends WMA limit relaxations for six months

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has decided to extend the interim relaxation in **WMA (Ways and Means Advances) limits** and **OD (overdraft) regulations** for States/ Union Territories (UTs) for another **six months** till March 31, 2021.
- Both these relaxations, which are aimed at helping States/UTs overcome short-term liquidity mismatches, are currently available till September 30, 2020. Under WMA, States/ UTs get short-term credit up to three months from the RBI to bridge temporary mismatches in cash flows.
- On April 17, the RBI had announced an increase in WMA limit of the States/UTs by 60 per cent over and above the level as on March 31.
- Further, in order to provide flexibility to State governments to tide over their cash flow mismatches, the OD regulations were relaxed with effect from April 7.
- Under the OD relaxation, the number of days for which a State/ UT can be in overdraft continuously was increased to **21 working** days from **14 working days**; and the number of days for which a State/ UT can be in overdraft in a quarter was increased to **50 working days** from **36 working days**. The interest rate on WMA is the Repo rate (4 per cent).
- For OD up to 100 per cent of WMA limit, the interest rate is 2 per cent above the Repo rate.
- For OD exceeding 100 per cent of the WMA limit, the interest rate is 5 per cent above the Repo rate.

### Policy Rates

| 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% |

### SBI

## SBI planning to launch loan product 'SAFAL' for organic cotton growers

- **State Bank of India** is planning to launch a loan product, **SAFAL**, primarily focussed on **organic cotton growers** who don't have any credit history, stated a top official of the country's largest lender.
- The bank is using **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** and **Machine Learning (ML)** in a big way for generating business, SBI managing director C S Setty stated speaking at a Fintech conference organised by Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).
- He further stated that any buyer of this cotton across the world could check whether the farmer actually is growing the organic cotton.
- Observing that the bank has fully appreciated the power of data analytics, he stated, "our AI/ML department is not an experimental department, it is a business-oriented department. We have had a net income creation of about Rs.1,100 crore in the last two years."

- Currently, he stated, the bank has more than **40 Machine Learning based models** which it uses across the spectrum for business, risk mitigation, fraud management.
- The bank has built a capability which is unmatched in the banking industry, he claimed.

## SBI Modernizes its Payment Switching System with ACI Worldwide Technology

- **ACI Worldwide**, a global provider of real-time **digital payment software and solutions**, has modernized payments infrastructure for **ATM** and **point-of-sale (POS)** at **State Bank of India (SBI),** the country's largest bank with more than 440 million account holders.
- SBI is India's largest public sector bank, with a network of more than 22,000 branches spread across the country, as well as a presence in 32 countries around the world. Operating more than 58,000 ATMs, the bank is a long-time ACI customer, utilizing its market-leading Retail Payments solution to acquire, authenticate, route, switch and authorize financial transactions across its ATM, POS and eCommerce channels.
- The solution enables SBI's ATM network to acquire **Visa, Mastercard** and **RuPay cards**, as well as manage ATM/POS authorizations. Transaction processing volumes frequently exceed **30 million transactions** per day.
- ACI collaborated closely with SBI to ensure the solution implementation not only met the bank's complex switching needs but also could be executed with minimal downtime and business impact. Increased resilience and scalability, delivered through code consolidation and technology upgrades, will enable the processing of higher volumes across a growing number of channels in the future, ultimately benefitting the customers of the bank.

## SBI General Insurance, YES Bank ink corporate agency agreement

- **SBI General Insurance** and **YES Bank** have signed a **corporate agency agreement** for the distribution of the **general insurer's retail products** to customers of the private sector lender.
- "SBI General has been doing meaningful associations with banks, payments apps, e-commerce players, brokers to strengthen its distribution footprint across the country," it stated, adding that the partnership will be committed to offering customers a broad range of non-life insurance products and services and deploying technology across the customer value chain to facilitate superior experiences for them.

## SBI plans 24x7 OTP-based cash withdrawal above Rs.10,000

- State Bank of India has decided to extend **OTP-based cash withdrawal** of **Rs.10,000** and above throughout the day across all its ATMs starting September 18.
- India's largest bank had introduced OTP-based cash withdrawals above Rs.10,000 between 8 pm and 8 am through its ATMs from January 1. This was done to reinforce its ATM security system and safeguarding customers.
- For withdrawing Rs.10,000 and above, SBI debit card holders now have to enter the OTP sent on their registered mobile numbers, along with their debit card PIN each time, the bank stated.
- The OTP is a system-generated numeric string of characters that authenticates the user for a single transaction.
- "Once customers enter the amount they wish to withdraw, the ATM screen will ask for OTP, where they would require to enter the same received on their registered mobile number.
- "The OTP-based cash withdrawal facility is available only at **SBI ATMs** as this functionality at non-SBI ATMs has not been developed in **National Financial Switch (NFS),**" the bank stated.
- According to SBI, implementing this facility throughout the day would prevent its debit cardholders from the risk of falling prey to fraudsters, unauthorised withdrawals, card skimming, card cloning and the likes.

## Titan with SBI launches first contactless payment watches

- **Titan Company** has partnered with the country's largest lender **YONO-State Bank of India (SBI)**to launch**contactless payment watches.**

- Known as **Titan Pay**, Titan and SBI are launching a range of stylish new watches with **contactless payment functionality** for the **first time in India.**
- SBI account holders can tap their Titan Pay watch on contactless payment POS machine without the need of swiping or inserting their SBI bank card.
- Payments of **up to Rs.2,000 can be made without entering a PIN**.
- A secure certified **Near-Field Communication (NFC) chipembedded in the watchstrap** by **Tappy Technologies** enables all the functionalities of a standard contactless SBI debit card.

## SBI starts women self-reliance programme in Assam

- **State Bank of India (SBI)** started a programme by the name **"Mahila Atmanirbharshil Aachani" (Women Self-Reliance programme)** in Guwahati, Assam.
- The basic objective of the programme is to create a **strong bonding with the SHG member** besides extending credit linkages to the women SHGs nurtured and sponsored by NRLM, Assam for self-reliance and economic upliftment.
- It also empowers the women by encouraging them to create their micro enterprises for self-reliance and to maintain a sustainable economic condition.
- SBI plans to cover more number of women SHG for sustainable development and create opportunities for self-reliance of women.
- SBI branches of Assam sanctioned 856 numbers of SHGs sponsored by NRLM with financial outlay of **Rs. 38 crore**.

## SBI Card launches new brand campaign 'Contactless Connections'

- **SBI Card, India**`s second largest credit card issuer, announced the launch of its new brand campaign, "**Contactless Connections**" that spreads the message that love and care can be shared even during this difficult period where social distancing is the norm. The campaign endeavours to bring a fresh breath of positivity by demonstrating that people can connect emotionally and spread joy despite the social distancing practices by which we are bound.
- Amidst the need to maintain physical distance, payments are one aspect of everyday life where consumers must adopt safe practices and avoid physical contact. Contactless payments, enabled by **SBI Card**, allow consumers to stay safe. Consumers can simply wave their card or phone or scan a **QR code** to make safe, secure payments, without handing over their card or punching in the **PIN**.

## World Bank

## World Bank so far provided three loans worth 2.5 bn dollars to support India's response to COVID-19 pandemic: Govt

- Minister of State for Finance Anurag Singh Thakur has stated that the **World Bank** has so far provided **three loans** worth **2.5 billion dollars** to support Government of India's response to COVID-19 pandemic situation.
- Mr Thakur stated, for health **1 billion dollars**, for social protection **0.75 billion dollars** and for economic stimulus **0.75 billion dollars** have been provided and the benefits of which have accrued to all States and UTs.
- The Minister stated, the first loan relating to health measures worth 1,000 million dollars was signed on 3rd April this year to part finance Government of India's 15 thousand crore rupees COVID Health measures to prevent, detect and respond to the threat posed by COVID-19 and strengthen national systems for public health preparedness.

## World Bank approves 200 million dollar loan for safe water & sanitation in Bangladesh

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

- The WB stated that the project will help prevent diseases and protect from pandemics like COVID 19 by providing better access to **Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)** facilities at homes and in public places.
- The project will also help in setting up more than 2500 handwashing stations in public places with overhead tanks for running water and sanitation facilities. To ensure quality and sustainability of piped water scheme and fecal sludge management, the project will also train local entrepreneurs.
- The 30 year concessional credit has a five year grace period. It comes from the World Bank's International Development Association (IDA). Bangladesh currently has the largest ongoing IDA program totaling over USD 13.5 billion.

## ADB

### India, ADB sign 500 million US dollar loan for Delhi-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System corridor

- **India** and the **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** signed a **500 million US dollar loan** for **Delhi-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) corridor**.The first tranche of a total **one billion dollar facility**, to build a modern, high-speed **82-kilometer Delhi-Meerut RRTS** corridor will improve regional connectivity and mobility in India's national capital region (NCR).
- The signatories to the loan agreement for the Delhi-Meerut RRTS Investment Project were Sameer Kumar Khare, Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Finance and Kenichi Yokoyama, Country Director of ADB's India Resident Mission who signed for ADB.
- The first tranche loan will support construction of the first of three priority rail corridors planned under the NCR Regional Plan 2021 to connect Delhi to other cities in adjoining states.
- With a design speed of 180 kilometer per hour and high-frequency operations of every 5 to 10 minutes, the 82-kilometer corridor connecting Sarai Kale Khan in Delhi to Modipuram in Meerut in Uttar Pradesh is expected to reduce the journey time to about one hour from the present 3 to 4 hours. The RRTS will have multimodal hubs to ensure smooth interchange with other transport modes.

### ADB to Provide Rs.4.66 Billion Loan to ENGIE for a 200 MW Solar Project in Gujarat

- The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** and **ENGIE** have signed a long-term loan agreement worth **Rs.4.66 billion (~ $65.6 million)** to develop and operate a **200 MW (AC)** solar project in **Gujarat**.
- Electro Solaire Private Limited, a special purpose vehicle owned by ENGIE, will implement the project. The ADB will provide the whole debt required to develop the solar project with another international lender.
- Electro Solaire is expected to commission the 200 MW solar power project in the first half of 2021. The project is expected to generate 440 GWh of electricity while reducing 385,000 tons of carbon dioxide emissions annually.
- The company stated the government of Gujarat has collaborated with ENGIE to develop the project through a power purchase agreement for 25 years.
- According to Mercom's India Solar Project Tracker, ENGIE has 619 MW of large-scale solar projects in operation, and 200 MW of project is under development pipeline as of June 2020.

### ADB, JICA to fund ORR-Airport Metro rail connectivity

- **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** agreed to invest **$500 million** to **Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation's (BMRCL) line** linking Central Silk Board Junction to Kempegowda International Airport — ORR-Airport Metro – Phase-2A and 2B.
- "Funding from the external agency is to build metro rail project Phase-2A and 2B. The total cost for airport linkage is estimated at Rs.14,844 crore. The ADB funding is part-finance of the project cost. In addition to ADB, BMRCL is getting around $500 million funding from **Japan International Cooperation Agency(JICA),**" stated a senior BMRCL official.

- For the **56-km ORR-Airport Metro**, Karnataka government is looking for sovereign guarantee lending through **ADB** and **JICA**.
- "ORR-Airport Metro connectivity line will have 30 stations, with 28 elevated and two at the Airport Terminal. Also two depots — one new depot and upgradation of an existing depot," the official stated.
- For ADB this is the second funding to BMRCL. Earlier, the agency had funded $250 million to commence Metro corporation's construction during phase I . The earlier funds were through non-sovereign guarantees.

## ADB approves Rs 2,200 crore loan to develop Rajasthan's secondary towns

- The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has approved a **300 million dollar (about Rs 2,200 crore) loan** to finance inclusive water supply and sanitation infrastructure and services in **secondary towns of Rajasthan.**
- The project is expected to build citywide access for improved water supply services for about 5.7 lakh people and enhanced sanitation services for about 7.2 lakh people in at least 14 secondary towns.
- Through the project, water supply systems in at least eight project towns are expected to improve by 2027 with about one lakh households including all urban poor households benefiting from five new or rehabilitated water treatment plants and 1,350 km of distribution networks.
- Citywide sanitation systems based on the most cost-effective solutions will also be developed. The project will build on three earlier related projects and sector reforms funded by ADB in Rajasthan.
- The project will strengthen institutional capacity of local governments and Rajasthan Urban Drinking Water, Sewerage, and Infrastructure Corporation Ltd, a corporate entity established with ADB's technical support.
- The project will provide enhanced support to women and vulnerable groups through skills training, paid internships, and community engagement and awareness activities.

## Other Banking News

## ICICI Bank launches virtual property exhibition

- Private sector lender **ICICI Bank**, launched a virtual property exhibition that digitally showcases real estate projects from key cities across the country.
- Called **Home Utsav**, the exhibition is available for everyone, including ICICI Bank's customers, and those who are not customers of the bank.
- They can also avail exclusive offers such as attractive interest rates, special processing fees and digital sanction of loans on buying a property through this exhibition," the lender stated in a statement, adding that its customers can get further benefits such as pre-approved and insta series of products.

## Federal Bank & Innoviti Tie-Up To Extend Affordability In Times Of COVID Crisis Through Debit Card EMI On POS Terminals

- **Federal Bank and Innoviti Payment Solutions** announced their partnership to provide convenient and affordable options of Federal Bank Debit Cards through Innoviti POS terminals.
- This partnership will offer convenient EMI options to over 7.5+ million Federal Bank Debit Card holders at over 70,000+ Innoviti POS terminals across 1000+ cities.
- This scheme will enable customers to access credit which can be repaid in convenient EMIs through their Federal Bank debit card. The customer just needs to enter their PIN and access the credit in a seamless manner. Merchants and brands can also enable product specific EMI schemes.
- This initiative will provide the convenience of credit to debit card users, in the most convenient manner.

## Irdai sets up panel to study index-linked products for life insurance companies

- Insurance regulator Irdai constituted a **six-member working group** to examine various aspects for allowing **life insurance companies to offer index-linked products.**
- The current regulations of Insurance Regulatory and Develop Authority of India (Irdai) do not specifically permit insurers to sell index-linked products.
- Life insurers had approached Irdai with a request to allow them to offer index-linked products. Life insurance companies currently offer two product categories -- **unit-linked insurance plans and traditional plans.**
- **The working group will be headed by Dinesh Pant**, appointed actuary of LIC, and submit the report within two months.
- Other members include Anil Kumar Singh, appointed actuary, Aditya Birla Sun Life Insurance; Jose C John, appointed actuary, Max Life Insurance; Manish Kumar, chief investment officer, ICICI Pru Life Insurance; Y Srinivasa Rao, DGM, investment department, IRDAI and DNK LNK Chakravarthi, AGM, actuarial department, IRDAI.
- The working group will examine the need for index-linked products in the country, especially with respect to the availability of various indexes and how it will better serve the needs and interests of customers relative to traditional savings product.
- It will also examine the index-linked products, which were earlier available for sale in the country in terms of product structure, ease of customer understanding and administrative processes, sales volumes and any other matter of relevance.

## RBL Bank launches cardless cash withdrawal facility through ATMs

- **RBL Bank** has launched **cardless cash withdrawal facility from ATMs**, leveraging the Instant Money Transfer (IMT) system.
- It has tied-up with **Empays Payment Systems**, a global financial technology provider, to offer this service.
- To avail the service a customer has to log into **RBL Bank's MoBank app** to locate an ATM that supports the IMT function and initiate cash withdrawal by either using his or her mobile number linked to the account or by following a few easy steps on the app.
- The customer selects the IMT button on the mobile app, gets a code, and uses it to withdraw money from the ATM.

## PayPal & DSCI report on 'Fraud & Risk Management in Digital Payments'

- Data Security Council of India and PayPal India, released a study report on Fraud & Risk Management in Digital Payments by Lt. Gen (Dr) Rajesh Pant, National Cyber Security Coordinator, GoI in the presence of K. Rajaraman, Addl. Secretary, Dept. of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance.
- The report attempts to discuss about the sophisticated online payment fraud mechanisms, threats in the payment ecosystem, incorporating better fraud prevention strategies, role of upcoming technologies, and recommendations for various stakeholders involved in the payment ecosystem.
- UPI transactions in India have crossed 1.49 bn in volume and USD 41bn in transaction value, in July 2020. RBI predicts the number of digital transactions to increase from INR 2069cr in Dec'2018 to INR 8707cr by Dec'2021.
- The internet userbase is expected to grow to 835 million by 2023 from 560 million in 2018. As of March 31, 2019, 925 million debit and 47 million credit cards have been issued in India, second only to China. As a result of the above momentum, the growth of online shoppers is 73% in tier-I cities whereas a staggering 400% in tier-II and tier-III cities.
- The report covers various types of frauds scenarios such as buyer side, merchant side and cyber security frauds, and recent fraud case studies with their modus operandi. The key challenges to safeguard frauds remain fraud detection, investigation and legislative challenges, multilevel awareness, cross-industry collaboration, security as a cost overhead, privacy laws, and organized criminal involvement.

## Aditya Birla Idea Payments Bank Ceased to Be Banking Company: RBI

- **Aditya Birla Idea Payments Bank** has ceased to be a **banking company** within the meaning of the **Banking Regulation Act,** the Reserve Bank stated. In November last year, the RBI had stated that Aditya Birla Idea Payments Bank was headed for liquidation after the company's application for voluntary winding up.
- The 'Aditya Birla Idea Payments Bank Limited' has ceased to be a banking company within the meaning of the **Banking Regulation Act, 1949** with effect from **July 28, 2020**," one of the notifications stated. The decision to shut operations by the Aditya Birla Idea Payments Bank was taken due to unanticipated developments in the business landscape which have made the economic model unviable, a regulatory filing by the Vodafone Idea Limited had stated in July last year.
- Aditya Birla Idea Payments Bank had received the banking licence from the RBI in April 2017 for carrying on the business of a payments bank and had also received an authorisation to carry on the business of Prepaid Payments Instrument business. It had commenced business from February 22, 2018. Aditya Birla Idea Payments Bank was promoted **by Grasim Industries Limited** and **Vodafone Idea Limited** with 51 and 49 per cent shareholdings respectively.
- In another notification, the RBI stated Westpac Banking Corporation has also ceased to be a banking company.

## LazyPay launches LazyUPI digital credit card

- **LazyPay** has launched a digital credit card that combines the power of **UPI and the Buy-Now-Pay-Later** concept., Called **LazyUPI.**
- The offering enables users to access real-time credit using UPI across omnichannel networks, including offline merchants and e-commerce platforms.
- The solution is a strategic response to the market's demand for easy access to credit across online and offline platforms and higher ticket-size pay-later options.
- LazyPay will offer a credit limit (upto INR 1 lakh) to users for UPI transactions at stores (online and offline).
- This feature is available for select LazyPay users, with plans of rolling it out to a wider customer base soon. With no minimum purchase-value requirement and a repayment cycle of 15-days, the new LazyUPI is offering an introductory zero-fee service for the initial phase of the product launch to its active users.

## Srei Equipment Finance bags €10-m loan from KfW IPEX-Bank

- **Srei Equipment Finance** has bagged a **€10-million** (about Rs.87 crore) loan from **KfW IPEX-Bank** to facilitate **German exports** to India. The financing is backed by cover from Euler Hermes.
- Through this arrangement, KfW IPEX-Bank will provide modern and energy-efficient construction machinery for use in Indian infrastructure projects.
- The financed machinery from a German construction machine manufacturer includes asphalt machines, road pavers and rollers.

## WE HUB, NutriHub partner to aid women entrepreneurs in agri business

- **WE HUB**, an incubator to foster and promote women entrepreneurship, has announced its partnership with **NutriHub**, a first of its kind incubator to cater start-ups needs in the **Nutricereals sector**.
- **NutriHub** is the Central government's Department of Science & Technology (DST) supported Technology Business Incubator hosted by the Indian Institute of Millet Research, ICAR – IIMR, Hyderabad.
- The MoU was inked between Vilas A Tonapi, Director, Indian Council of Agricultural Research, Indian Institute of Millets Research and Deepthi Ravula, CEO, WE HUB, a Government of Telangana initiative.
- The partnership will initiate virtual co-incubation for women-led start-ups in the **agripreneurship space**. NutriHub, through its existing R&D facility, will support WE HUB start-ups with technical advice, testing, product development,

access to laboratories, equipment, and technical staff. It plans to help in technical and product development support, technology transfer and cross-learning for women entrepreneurs.

- WE HUB and NutriHub will collaborate in conducting start-up related events, workshops, to generate interest among potential start-ups. These programmes will enable women entrepreneurs to gain a deeper understanding of the industry landscape, hence helping them scale-up and sustain in the ecosystem.

## NABARD organizes awareness cum sensitization programme for newly proposed FPO in J&K

- In **Jammu and Kashmir**, an awareness cum sensitization programme for newly proposed **Farmer Producer Organizations (FPO)** was organized by **NABARD** in coordination with District Administration in Anantnag.
- The programme was organised to promote sustainable and equitable agriculture and rural prosperity through effective credit support related services, institutional development and other initiatives.
- The **District Development Manager (DDM) NABARD** informed the farmers that central government has recently launched the scheme for providing financial assistance and training to the farming community for establishment of FPO's.
- A large number of farmers engaged in different agri activities and self help groups of NRLM participated in the programme.

## ESAF Bank announces fintech conclave

- **ESAF Small Finance Bank** has announced its **first fintech conclave** providing fintech firms a platform to showcase their **new digital banking solutions** that facilitate last-mile financial inclusion.
- The conclave endorses entrepreneurship in the banking sector and is open for start-ups, established and growth-phase technology firms, social innovators and entrepreneurs having innovative solutions that align with ESAF's core mission of providing responsive banking services to underserved and unserved populations.
- The competent finalist can eventually become a long-term strategic partner of the bank as the co-creator of new financial digital products that will be the latest enhancement in the banking sector, stated.
- **Fintech Conclave 2020** invites entrepreneurs who offer digital solutions to multi-partite banking. As the banking sector explores new digital avenues with customer satisfaction in the spotlight, the doors are open for entrepreneurs to devise digital products that meet the need.

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

- **Bank of India (BoI)** launched "**Signature Visa Debit Card**" for the affluent/high net worth individuals maintaining an average quarterly balance of **Rs.10 lakhs** and above.
- The public sector bank, in a statement, stated this international contactless debit card will be available in metal and plastic variants.
- This card will have a spending limit of up to **Rs.5 lakhs** on POS & e-commerce and **Rs.1 lakh** on ATM.
- Other features include complimentary lounge access (2 per quarter) and offers on travel, retail, dining, lifestyle, entertainment, luxury hotels, reward points for online usage etc. It will also provide Insurance against fraudulent transactions, the statement stated.

## Finance Minister unveils Doorstep Banking Services and declares EASE 2.0 Index Results

- Union Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs Smt. **Nirmala Sitharaman** inaugurated **Doorstep Banking Services by PSBs and participated in the awards ceremony to felicitate best performing banks on EASE Banking Reforms Index**.
- Doorstep Banking Services is envisaged to provide convenience of banking services to the customers at their door step through the universal touch points of Call Centre, Web Portal or Mobile App. Customers can also track their service request through these channels.

- The service aims to provide banking services to the customers of Public Sector Banks at their doorstep via three modes-
- Call Centre (18001037188 or 18001213721)
- Web Portal (www.psbdsb.in)
- Mobile App (Doorstep Banking(DSB)
- The services can be availed by customers of Public Sector Banks at nominal charges. The services shall benefit all customers, particularly Senior Citizens and Divyangs who would find it at ease to avail these services.
- **Bank of Baroda, State Bank of India, and erstwhile Oriental Bank of Commerce** were felicitated for being the top three (in that order) in the **'Top Performing Banks'** category according to the EASE 2.0 Index Results.
- **Bank of Maharashtra, Central Bank of India &erstwhile Corporation Bank** were awarded in the **'Top Improvers'** category basis EASE 2.0 Index.
- **Punjab National Bank, Union Bank of India, and Canara Bank** were also recognized for outstanding performance in select themes.

## PNB launches festival offer, waives processing charges on some loans

- State-owned **Punjab National Bank (PNB)** launched **'Festival Bonanza Offer'** for its customers to give a push to **subdued loan demand** due to the COVID-19 crisis.
- Under the **'Festival Bonanza Offer'**, the bank will waive all upfront or processing fees and documentation charges on some of its major retail products like housing loans and car loans.
- **On home loans**, customers are now exempted from paying the processing fees i.e. **0.35%** of the loan amount, **maximumRs.15,000**, besides the documentation charges.
- **On car loans**, customers can now save up to **0.25%** of the total loan amount, while **on myProperty loans (loan against property),** it could be **up to Rs.1 lakh** depending on the loan amount.
- The bank now offers an attractive interest rate at **7.10%** on home loans and **7.55%** on car loans effective September 1, 2020.

## ICICI Prudential Life partners with NSDL Payments Bank to offer insurance products

- **ICICI Prudential Life Insurance** has entered into a **corporate agency agreement** with **NSDL Payments Bank,** a subsidiary of National Securities Depository Ltd (NSDL).
- ICICI Prudential Life will provide its **customer-centric protection and savings productsto customers** of NSDL Payments Bank.
- This partnership is also a step towards fulfilling our commitment to address the huge protection gap in the country.

## Mastercard launches CBDC testing platform for central banks

- **Mastercard** has built a **virtual testing platform** to help **central banks assessand explore national digital currencies.**
- Mastercard is looking to support these efforts with its new platform, which promises to enable the **simulation of issuance, distribution and exchange of CBDCs between banks, financial service providers and consumers.**
- The payments giant is inviting central banks, as well as commercial banks and tech and advisory firms, to assess CBDC tech designs, validate use cases and evaluate interoperability with existing payment rails.
- This new platform supports central banks as they make decisions now and in the future about the path forward for local and regional economies.

## Sebi issues clarification on asset allocation framework for multi-cap MFs

- **Regulator Sebi** stated that mutual funds have many options to meet with the requirements of its circular pertaining to asset allocation framework for multi cap schemes based on the preference of their unit holders.

- The markets watchdog clarified that apart from rebalancing their portfolio in the **Multi Cap schemes**, mutual funds (MF) could inter-alia facilitate switch to other schemes by unit holders, merge their Multi Cap scheme with Large Cap scheme or convert their Multi Cap scheme to another scheme category, for instance, Large cum Mid Cap scheme.
- The clarification came after the regulator tweaked asset allocation framework for multi cap mutual funds through a circular issued, requiring them to invest a minimum of **25 per cent** each in Large, Mid and Small Cap stocks, and giving flexibility to the fund manager with the balance **25 per cent**.
- It is reiterated that to achieve the desired objective of True to Label and Appropriate Benchmarking, Sebi will examine proposals of the industry received in this regard, it added.
- Multi Cap schemes had flexibility in terms of allocation to Large, Mid and Small Cap stocks but it was observed that some Multi Cap Schemes have skewed portfolios, with over 80 per cent of investment in large cap stocks akin to Large Cap schemes, and some Multi Cap schemes have near zero or insignificant asset allocation to small cap companies.

## NABARD to implement new loan scheme for women's self help groups

- The **National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development - NABARD** - will be implementing a new loan scheme for women's self help groups to start production of value added food products like chips, pickles, jams etc from the next Gandhi Jayanthi day on October 2nd
- This was announced by NABARD Chairman **Shri G R Chinthala** in Virudhunagar, Tamilnadu.
- After reviewing the working of various NABARD schemes, he stated the discussions will be held with Tamilnadu Chief Minister Edapadi Palanisamy within a day or two about allowing self help groups to start production of fertilisers.
- Shri Chinthala stated that the Covid 19 pandemic had affected **68% of agriculture** and allied activities and that NABARD is giving top priority to help this sector.

## LVB merger with Clix Group on track; completes substantial due diligence

- **Lakshmi Vilas Bank (LVB)** stated the mutual due diligence relating to the proposed amalgamation of the **Clix Group** with the Bank is substantially complete, and the parties are in discussions on the next steps.
- The private sector bank, in a regulatory filing, observed that as per the mutual understanding between parties, the exclusivity period was extended till September 15, 2020 due to prevailing pandemic situation.
- The Bank will continue to share any further information as and when they materialise," LVB added.
- The Bank is in dire need of capital as its total Capital to Risk-Weighted Assets Ratio (CRAR) as per Basel III guidelines stood at 1.12 per cent as on March-end 2020 as against the minimum regulatory requirement of 10.875 per cent.
- During FY2020, many accounts of LVB slipped to the non-performing asset (NPA) category from different segments including Corporate, MSME & Retail. The total slippage during the FY 2019-20 was to the tune of Rs.1,553.24 crore.

## ICICI Lombard General Insurance, YES Bank enter into bancassurance pact

- **ICICI Lombard General Insurance** has entered into a **bancassurance tie-up with** private sector lender **YES Bank.**
- The partnership will provide the bank's diverse customer base access to the insurer's portfolio and make insurance more accessible to its customers across India.
- It aims to offer innovative insurance solutions to the bank's customers across the country.

## Mastercard (MA) Rolls Out Premium Debit Card With SBM Bank

- **Mastercard Incorporated MA** and **SBM Bank India** have collaborated to **launch SBM World Debit Card**, a premium and exclusive card. This card will be custom-built and offered to SBM Private Wealth customers on request.
- **The SBM World Debit Card** will club niche **banking solutions** and carefully curated lifestyle privileges including some of **the finest shopping and dining opportunities.**

- The card comes with highest security standards like superior fraud detection and decision intelligence features, which detect, resolve and prevent fraud issues rapidly.
- Customers can spend/withdraw money with this card in any foreign currency with 0% foreign currency mark-up fee.
- The launch of this card will allow Mastercard to penetrate the Indian market. The card processor is already in a tie-up with SBM Bank. Earlier this year, the bank and Mastercard together offered **real-time business-to-consumer transfers** via the **Mastercard Send.**

## Volvo Car India Partnered With HDFC Bank To Launch Volvo Car Financial Services

- **Volvo Car India** has introduced **Volvo Car Financial Services** in **collaboration with HDFC Bank** to enable buyers to receive easy finance for a Volvo car of their choice.
- Loans can be availed for upto 7 years. There is also an option to finance insurance, extended warranty, service package and accessories.
- Volvo Car Financial Services allows a faster loan approval and a uniform processing fee, giving a hassle-free finance experience to buyers.

## Irdai to develop standardised products for bridging protection gap

- **The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai)** is looking to come out with a series of **standardised products for various sectors** so that the protection quotient in each segment can be increased significantly.
- It is developing a standard term product in the life insurance space, and **two offerings in the MSME** segment--**one for micro enterprises, the other for small industries.**

## IDFC Mutual Fund launches 'SIP in Fixed Income' campaign

- **IDFC Mutual Fund** has started a new campaign called **SIFI or `SIP in Fixed Income'** to make investors more aware about the benefits of investing in fixed income products via **Systematic Investment Plans.**
- Many investors use SIP to invest into mutual funds, especially equity funds, as it allows to them invest regularly wihout bothering about volatility or prevailing market conditions. However, since debt mutual funds are realtively less volatile than equity mutual funds, SIP investing is not very prevalent among debt mutual fund investors.
- Investors should instead have a **SIP in Fixed Income (SIFI),** as it could help cushion the fall during downturns in equity markets when SIP returns in equity turn negative, thereby playing an important part in balancing your allocation IDFC Mutual Fund's SIFI initiative aims to inform investors how a combination of equity and debt SIPs can help them navigate troubled times.

## Canara Bank introduces i-Lead 2.0 to boost customer services

- **Canara Bank** has launched **lead management system (LMS) - i-Lead 2.0 (Inspiring Leads System version 2.0).**
- This new initiative is being introduced with the motive of building and sustaining **business relationships with both new customers to bank and existing customers to bank.**
- Through LMS, customers can enquire and get services rendered through simple modes such as internet banking, mobile banking, call centre, SMS and missed call.
- A unique reference number will be generated, which is communicated to the customers at the time of lead generation from above sources.
- Along with that, SMS/notifications are triggered to the customer at every stage of the lead cycle (from lead generation to lead closure).

## HDFC Bank launches video KYC facility for savings, salary accounts and personal loans

- HDFC Bank launched its **Video KYC (Know Your Customer) facility** for **Savings and Corporate Salary accounts and Personal Loans.**
- After a successful completion of the pilot project, the bank deployed its consent-based Video KYC facility as an alternate method of establishing the prospective customer's identity during account opening process.
- The new video KYC facility was a result of agile pods which consisted members from its Branch Banking, Digital Banking and Retail assets.
- The Video KYC process is online, secure and quick, the bank said adding that customers can now sit in their home or office and open a full KYC – all benefits account in HDFC Bank in a few minutes. It is a paperless, contactless, and recorded interaction between a bank official and the customer.

## StanChart launches online remittance service

- **Standard Chartered Bank, India**, announced the launch of its **online remittance service solution** for both **outward** and **inward remittances**.
- The outward remittance online service will enable clients to transfer funds overseas using their laptops or mobile phones. Through this facility, Resident Indians, Expats working in India and Non-Resident Indians (NRI) and Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) can send funds overseas from India. This facility enables resident clients to make a remittance under the **Liberalised Remittance Scheme** without visiting the branches, it stated.
- The inward remittance option will be available for existing NRI clients through the bank's internet banking platform, it further stated.

## Bandhan Bank sets up new vertical to serve unbanked customers

- **Bandhan Bank**, which recently completed five years of operations as a bank, has **set up a new vertical** called **Emerging Entrepreneurs Business (EEB)** to support the **emerging needs of the unbanked and underbanked segment of customers**.
- The vertical will focus on supporting this segment of customers in their journey to becoming entrepreneurs.
- In addition to micro loans, the vertical will also manage micro home loan, micro bazaar loan and micro enterprise loan.
- **The bank** has further **appointed Kumar Ashish** as the **Executive President and Head to spearhead EEB.**
- Ashish has over 26 years of experience in setting up and managing businesses of significant scale in retail and business banking, rural banking, microfinance, agri banking and treasury.

## ICICI Home Finance launches home loan scheme 'Apna Ghar Dreamz' for skilled workers in Delhi

- **ICICI Home Finance** has launched **a new loan scheme "Apna Ghar Dreamz"**, with credit amount in the range of **Rs 2 lakh to 50 lakh**, for **skilled workers** employed in the informal sector **in Delhi.**
- The scheme is meant for skilled workers such as carpenters, plumbers, electricians, tailors, painters, welders, auto mechanics, manufacturing machine operators, computer mechanics, RO repair technicians, small and medium business owners and grocery store owners in the city.
- The loan scheme is targeted at the informal segment of the population who wish to purchase their own home, but may not have all documents that a formal financial institution would require.
- Customers seeking to avail the special 20-year tenure loan would need to provide documents such as PAN and Aadhaar details, and bank statement of past six months.
- The customers should have a minimum account balance of Rs 1,500 for loan up to 5 lakh and Rs 3,000 for loan above 5 lakh.

- Customers can also avail all the benefits of the **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY)** which is a credit-linked subsidy scheme (CLSS) for Lower Income Groups/ Economically Weaker Sections (EWS/LIG) and Middle Income Groups (MIG – I & II).
- Under PMAY-CLSS, a borrower is eligible for maximum subsidy of **up to Rs 2.67 lakh.**

## KVGB launches new gold loan scheme Vikas Laghu Suvarna

- The **Dharwad -headquarteredKarnataka Vikas Grameena Bank (KVGB)** has launched a **special gold loan scheme -- Vikas Laghu Suvarna** -- with a reduced interest rate of **7.25 per cent.**
- The bank has reduced the rate of interest to provide easy and affordable credit to needy customers at a cheaper cost considering the pandemic situation in the country.
- Under this scheme, the bank is giving 80 per cent of the market value of the gold subject to a maximum of Rs.,3200 a gram.
- A maximum loan of up to Rs.15 lakh will be provided. The loan is repayable within six months.

## Kazakhstan Financial Regulator Cancels Licence of PNB Subsidiary

- State-owned **Punjab National Bank (PNB)** stated the financial regulator of **Kazakhstan** has revoked licence of its associate for failure to meet prudential standards and other mandatory norms. PNB holds 41.64 per cent in **JSC Tengri Bank**, the bank stated in a regulatory filing.
- The financial regulator of Kazakhstan has revoked the licence of JSC Tengri Bank on account of failure to observe prudential standards and other mandatory norms and limits by the JSC Tengri Bank, it stated. JSC Tengri Bank has **nine** branches in Kazakhstan.

## Bharti AXA launches new unit linked individual insurance plan

- **Bharti AXA Life Insurance**, a joint venture between Bharti Enterprises, and AXA, one of the world's largest insurance companies, announced the launch of **Bharti AXA Life Wealth Pro**, a **unit linked individual insurance plan.**
- This offers triple benefits of regular savings, enhanced protection and market-linked returns.
- The new and value-loaded ULIP helps customers plan and achieve their financial milestones as per the changing life-stages along with financial security for their families.
- The plan provides protection and wealth creation benefits from an **early age of 91 days up to the age of 99 years** by paying premiums either for a limited duration or once at the commencement of the plan.
- The plan has two variants **Growth and Legacy**.
- In the **Growth variant**, the customers have **three policy term choices, ten, 15 or 20 years,** and can pay **premium once or for five, seven, ten, 15 or 20 years**.
- While the customer chooses to pay premium once, he/she can opt for higher life insurance coverage of 10 times life insurance cover.
- The **Legacy variant** also provides the policyholder with a **life insurance cover of 10 times the annualised premium** throughout the policy term u**p to 99 years of age** and a legacy fund for his/her loved ones.
- Under this, the customer has to pay premiums for five, seven, ten or till 60 years of age.

## Sebi constitutes technical group on social stock exchange Headed by Harsh Kumar Bhanwala

- **Sebi** set up a **technical group on social stock exchange** to develop a framework for onboarding non-profit organisations and for-profit enterprises as well as prescribe disclosure requirements on financials and governance.
- The group will also prescribe disclosure requirements relating to performance and dwell upon aspects related to social impact and social audit.

- The regulator has constituted the technical group under the chairmanship of **Harsh Kumar Bhanwala**, former chairman of Nabard.
- Other members of the group include Ingrid Srinath, founder-director, Centre for Social Impact and Philanthropy at Ashoka University; Pushpa Aman Singh CEO of Guidestar; and Santhosh Jayaram, Partner and Head - Sustainability and CSR Advisory at KPMG.
- In addition, Roopa Kudva, managing director of Omidyar Network India (Social Impact Investor; part of Omidyar Group), Shaji Krishnan V, Deputy Managing Director of Nabard, Sanjeev Singhal, chairman of sustainability reporting standards board at ICAI, representatives of BSE, NSE and Sebi will be part of the technical group.
- **Earlier, a working group (WG) on the social stock exchange (SSE), chaired by Ishaat Hussain,** submitted its report on June 1, 2020.

## Bajaj Finserv launches health tech solutions business

- **Bajaj Finserv** entered the **healthcare sector** with the launch of its **health tech solutions business**.
- Bajaj Finserv Health, a fully-owned subsidiary of Bajaj Finserv, aims to improve the health outcomes of Indian consumers through smarter, connected and holistic care plans.
- "The new venture, Bajaj Finserv Health, brings to the market its core offering — **Aarogya Care**, an industry-first product, providing preventive, personalised, prepaid health care packages to consumers," it stated, adding that it uses a mobile-first approach.
- The **Bajaj Finserv Health App** would work like a personalised health manager, offering consumers a one-stop destination to avail convenient, connected and cost-effective health solutions, right at their fingertips.
- Customers would be able to receive and maintain health records digitally, which would be integrated with the National Health ID.
- It would also offer health insurance coverage from Bajaj Allianz General Insurance and pre-approved Health EMI facility from Bajaj Finance.

## HDFC Life joins hands with Yes Bank to sell insurance policies

- **HDFC Life Insurance** stated it has joined hands with **corporate agency agreement** with **Yes Bank** to offer a comprehensive bouquet of **life insurance solutions** to the bank's customers across the country.
- As part of the agreement, HDFC Life's diverse range of life insurance products will be offered to the customers of Yes Bank through the bank's branches spread across the country. HDFC Life's insurance products include solutions for protection, savings and investment, retirement and critical illness.
- HDFC Life's extensive product portfolio coupled with the bank's digital capabilities and widespread presence will ensure easy accessibility of life insurance to the customers. "HDFC Life's claims intimation process is available online. Customers and claimants can avail the services without having to step outside their homes," the insurer mentioned.

## IDFC First Bank to launch contactless debit card transaction facility 'SafePay'

- **IDFC First Bank** is set to launch **SafePay**, a digital facility that allows **contactless debit card payments** by **simply waving one's smartphone** against a Near Field Communication (NFC)-enabled POS terminal.
- **SafePay embeds Near Field Communication (NFC) technology** in the **IDFC First Mobile App** to enable **secure payments** using a debit card issued by the Bank.
- Users can simply wave, pay and go, making the payment process not only touch-free, but also faster, simpler and safer.
- SafePay enables contactless payments of **up to ₹2,000 per transaction** and up to a limit of **₹20,000 per day**, making everyday purchases easy.

- The first such facility to be made available in an integrated mobile banking app, the SafePay feature has been tested successfully and certified by Visa.

## CRIF India, SIDBI team-up to unveil sector-based insight reports

- **CRIF High Mark**, Indian credit bureau owned by **CRIF** has joined hands with **Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)** apex financial institution for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in India, for launching of sector-based insight reports titled '**Industry Spotlight'**.
- Under the partnership, a series of quarterly reports providing data and trends on key industry sectors in each edition will be launched.
- The report aims at analyzing the credit landscape of the sector, understand the borrower segments with its risk analysis and equip policymakers as well as the MSME players with the required trends and statistics for sectoral growth.

## BOB Financial Solutions Limited partners Signzy to unveil its 'Video KYC'

- **BOB Financial Solutions Limited (BFSL),** a wholly-owned subsidiary of **Bank of Baroda** has selected **RegTech firm Signzy**, in a bid to digitize its customer verification through '**Video KYC'.** With this alliance, BFSL has now enabled a quick, zero-contact and paperless KYC that omits the requirement for physical submission of KYC documents.
- By leveraging Signzy's Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning-enabled Video e-KYC solution, BFSL would now be able to easily onboard more than one lakh new credit card customers every month.
- The solution will help in delivering 98 percent faster KYC processing in comparison to the traditional process, ensuring an instant onboarding experience to a client. It also ensures end-to-end security in the entire KYC process to both financial services providers as well as their users.

## HDFC Bank launches warehouse commodity finance app

- Private sector lender **HDFC Bank** launched a **Warehouse Commodity Finance App**.
- This will enable customers in drawing down and managing the loan against pledge of commodities online without physical intervention or multiple visits to a bank branch. This, in turn, will bring in enhanced efficiencies and time savings for the agri value chain, it stated, adding that it will greatly benefit agri processors, traders and farmers who are primary beneficiaries of warehouse receipt loans.

## Axis Bank to provide affordable loans via Bayer's Better Life Farming initiative

- **Axis Bank** has joined **Bayer's Better Life Farming initiative** in India to provide holistic financial solutions to smallholder farmers and rural farming communities.
- Through the partnership, Axis Bank will offer a wide range of financial solutions and services such as affordable loans, deposits, withdrawals and payments.
- **Digital financial solutions** and doorstep delivery of these services will be part of the bank's offering to ensure convenient and hassle-free transactions.
- These solutions will be offered through Bayer's Better Life Farming centres, which are owned and operated either by a farmer producer organisation, federation, agri-graduate or a local farmer/entrepreneur.
- Launched globally in April 2018, the BLF alliance has global partners that include Bayer with its expertise in seeds, crop protection and agronomy; IFC, the development finance institution for impact assessment; and Netafim for drip-irrigation technologies.
- The BLF initiative has led to a doubling of crop yields and tripling of farm incomes among participant farmers in India.

## Sebi comes out guidelines for investment advisers on client segregation, fees

- Markets regulator **Sebi** has come out with detailed guidelines for investment advisers asking them to ensure segregation of advisory and distribution activities at the client level.
- Besides, Sebi has fixed a cap on fee that **investment advisers (IA)** can charge from clients. It has also put in place a procedural framework pertaining to audit and record-keeping.
- Under the rules, an individual IA will apply for registration as non-individual investment adviser on onboarding **150 clients** and IA will have to enter into an investment advisory agreement with its clients.
- To ensure client-level segregation at the IA's group level, Sebi stated existing clients who wish to take advisory services will not be eligible for availing distribution services within the group/family of IA, and vice versa for those availing advisory services.
- It further stated a new client will be eligible to avail either advisory or distribution services within the group or family of the investment advisers and this option needs to be made available at the time of boarding.
- "IA shall enter into investment advisory agreement with its clients including existing clients latest by **April 1, 2021**, and submit a report, confirming the same to Sebi latest **by June 30, 2021**," the regulator noted.
- The IA will have to maintain records of interactions with all clients, including prospective clients (prior to on-boarding), where any conversation related to advice has taken place in the form of SMS or telephonic conversation, among others.
- Such records will begin with first interaction with the client and will continue till the completion of advisory services to the client. They need to maintain these records for a period of five years.
- The deadline for compliance for these guidelines ranges from January 1, 2021 to April 1, 2021, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) noted.

## Vakrangee gets RBI nod to set up BBPS unit to handle billing services

- **Vakrangee Ltd** said the **Reserve Bank** has granted in-principle approval **to set up Bharat Bill Payment Operating Unit (BBPOU)** to handle payment services **related to bills.**
- Vakrangee (VL) has received in-principle authorisation to set up and operate BBPOU under the **Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007 from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).**
- The company offers banking, insurance, money transfer services, e-commerce, e-governance and other digital services on behalf of its partner banks, insurers, government agencies, e-commerce players among others through its branches mostly located in rural and semi-urban areas.

## Flipkart, Bajaj Allianz launch cyber insurance cover

- E-commerce marketplace **Flipkar**t and **Bajaj Allianz General Insurance** have launched a cyber insurance cover for online financial frauds.
- The product, '**Digital Suraksha Group Insurance'**, will help customers who want to cover themselves against financial losses caused as a result of **cyber attacks**, cyber frauds, or other such malicious activities across various online platforms, stated.
- It will compensate for direct financial loss (up to the sum insured) due to unauthorised digital financial transactions as a result of identity theft arising out of cyber-attacks, phishing/spoofing, and SIM-jacking.
- "Customers can opt for a one-year cover at premiums as low as **Rs.183** for a cover of **Rs.50,000**," it further stated.

## Yes Bank joins hands with BSE to empower small business companies

- **Yes Bank** has signed an Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **BSE — India's** premier exchange and the **world's fastest Stock Exchange** to empower the **SME segment** through awareness and knowledge-sharing programmes.

- Under this MoU, both BSE and Yes Bank will conduct knowledge events for SMEs, **export promotion of SME scale companies,** in addition to providing banking and financial solutions.
- This MoU shall further entail services pertaining to development and imparting industry-specific and related knowledge-based information. The Bank will also offer customised services and products to the listed SME members of the platform and advisory solutions to EXIM potential listed SMEs.

## IDBI Bank becomes first bank to enable document embedding feature on SFMS

- **IDBI Bank** has become the **first lender** to enable **document embedding feature** on a structured financial messaging system managed by **Indian Financial Technology and Allied Services**, according to a release.
- Indian Financial Technology and Allied Services (IFTAS) is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Reserve Bank of India. IDBI Bank Limited becomes the first bank to have implemented the new feature of document embedding facility with Letter of Credit/Bank Guarantee messages over SFMS platform of IFTAS through its middleware application **i@Connect-SFMS** developed by IDBI Intech Limited, the bank has stated .
- In an effort to further digitise the financial transactions and to secure the financial communication system, IFTAS has introduced the feature of document embedding, along with Letter of Credit/ Bank Guarantee messages.
- Transmission of digitally signed documents ensures the reliability of the transaction. "The new feature will ease the current process of manual verification, reconciliation, reduce frauds, and enable documentary evidence for all the parties involved in the transaction," the bank stated.
- Reliability of the Bank Guarantee gets enhanced when a copy of the stamp duty information gets embedded and transmitted along with the message itself

## Revision Points

| Name of the Organization | Headquarters | Head of the Organization |
|---|---|---|
| Reserve Bank of India | Mumbai | Shaktikanta Das |
| Bharti AXA General Insurance | Mumbai | Sanjeev Srinivasan |
| Karnataka Bank | Mangalore | Mahabaleshwara MS |
| NABARD | Mumbai | Govinda Rajulu Chintala |
| Dhanlaxmi Bank | Thrissur | Sajeev Krishnan |
| Securities and Exchange Board of India | Mumbai | Ajay Tyagi |
| Canara Bank | Bengaluru | T N Manoharan |
| PNB Housing Finance | New Delhi | Hardayal Prasad |
| Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India | Hyderabad | Subash Chandra Khuntia |
| National Payments Corporation of India | Mumbai | Dilip Asbe |
| HDFC Bank | Mumbai | Sashidhar Jagdishan |
| ICICI Lombard | Mumbai | Bhargav Dasgupta |
| Axis Bank | Mumbai | Amitabh Chaudhry |
| State Bank of India | Mumbai | Rajnish Kumar |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ICICI Bank | Mumbai | Sandeep Bakshi |
| Federal Bank | Aluva | Shyam Srinivasan |
| SBM Bank | Port Louis, Mauritius | Mohit Dhoorundhur |
| Lakshmi Vilas Bank | Chennai | Lakshmi Vilas Bank |
| Punjab National Bank | New Delhi | S.S Mallikarjuna Rao |
| Bank of Baroda | Vadodara | Hasmukh Adhia |
| YES Bank | Mumbai | Prashant Kumar |
| ESAF Small Finance Bank | Thrissur | K Paul Thomas |
| RBL Bank | Mumbai | Vishwavir Ahuja |
| Bank of India | Mumbai | Atanu kumar Das |
| Bajaj Allianz General Insurance | Pune | Tapan Singhel |
| Paypal | San Jose, USA | Daniel Schulman |
| Kotak Mahindra Bank | Mumbai | Uday Kotak |
| Small Industries Development Bank of India | Lucknow | Mohammad Mustafa |
| National Stock Exchange | Mumbai | Vikram Limaye |
| LazyPay | Gurgaon | Jitendra Gupta |
| Central Depository Services | Mumbai | B V Chaubal |
| Equitas Small Finance Bank | Chennai | Vasudevan P N |
| Bandhan Bank | Kolkata | Anup Kumar Sinha |
| Life Insurance Corporation of India | Mumbai | MR Kumar |
| IDFC First Bank | Mumbai | V. Vaidyanathan |
| Fino Payments Bank | Mumbai | Rishi Gupta |
| Standard Chartered Bank | London | José Viñals |
| Airtel Payments Bank | New Delhi | Anubrata Biswas |
| Aditya Birla Health Insurance | Mumbai | Mayank Bathwal |

## Important Financial & Economy Affairs

| Organization | GDP Rate (2020 – 21(FY21)) |
|---|---|
| CRISIL | -9% |
| ADB | -9% |
| Moody's | -11.5% |
| UN Report | -5.9% (CY 2020) |
| SBI's Ecowrap | -10.9% |
| NSO | -23.9% |
| NCAER | -12.6% |
| UNCTAD 2020 | -5.9% |
| Fitch Solutions | -8.6% |

| | |
|---|---|
| UBS Securities | -8.6% |
| OECD | -10.2% |
| S&P Global | - 9% |
| CARE | - 8 to -8.2% |
| Goldman Sachs | -14.8% |
| Fitch | -10.5% |
| Nomura | -10.8% |

## GDP decline for full FY21 seen at around 10.9%, up from earlier estimate of 6.8%: SBI's Ecowrap

- With first quarter (Q1) gross domestic product (GDP) contraction of **23.9 per cent** revealing a deeper economic malaise, State Bank of India's Economic Research Department has now estimated that the decline in FY21 growth will likely be in double-digits, around **10.9 per cent**, against the previous estimate of **6.8 per cent.**
- SBI's Economic Research Department, in its report Ecowrap, emphasised that the contraction in Q1 (April-June) FY21 GDP due to the nation-wide lockdown imposed on March 25, 2020, in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, is much worse than market and its own estimates.
- As per Ecowrap, Q2 real GDP decline will be in the range of **–12 per cent to –15 per cent**, Q3: -5 per cent to –10 per cent and Q4: -2 per cent to -5 per cent.
- Ecowrap observed that the GDP contraction in Q1FY21 is India's worst growth performance since the country started reporting quarterly GDP data in 1996. In the 2004-05 base, India's lowest quarterly GDP growth was 1.66 per cent in Q3FY03.
- Till now, GDP growth data of 60 countries has been released. Apart from China and Vietnam all economies exhibited decline in growth. The average decline of 60 economies in April-June 2020 is 12.2 per cent, compared to 1.4 per cent decline in January-March 2020.
- exhibited a decline of 20.6 per cent in Q1 FY21, in comparison to 5.5 per cent growth in Q1 FY20.

## India's GDP contracts by 23.9% in April-June quarter

- As per the data released by the **National Statistical Office (NSO),** India's **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)** for the April-June quarter (Q1) slipped by a sharp **23.9 per cent**.
- The data released by NSO, which comes under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), is vital as it will provide the first benchmark on the state of India's economy after the pandemic.
- The June quarter GDP data is the worst contraction in the history of the Indian economy since Independence. According to the economists surveyed by Bloomberg, India's GDP is estimated to have declined 18 per cent in the quarter ended June.

## About The National Statistical Office (NSO):

- The National Statistical Office (NSO) is the central statistical agency of the Government mandated under the Statistical Services Act (Chapter 386) 1980. NSO is responsible for the development of arrangements for providing statistical information services including collecting, compiling and disseminating official statistical information to meet the needs of the Government and other users for information on which to base policy, planning, monitoring and management decisions.

## European Investment Bank to invest 650 million euros into Kanpur city metro rail

- **The European Investment Bank (EIB)** has decided to invest **650 million euros** into the construction of **Kanpur's first city metro line**.
- The project aims at enabling some 3 million people in the city to benefit from green, safe, fast, and affordable public transport. The new metro rail system will reduce commuting hours and unlock new employment and education opportunities in this industrial capital of Uttar Pradesh. This is the second metro rail project supported by the EIB in Uttar Pradesh. EIB Has also supported the Lucknow Metro rail system with €450 million investment.
- With the Kanpur investment, the total amount of the EIB's approved support for metro rail systems in India has reached **€2.65 billion**, more than half of the entire EIB investment portfolio in India. This is the fifth EIB investment in green infrastructure and connectivity in India and the second in the state of Uttar Pradesh. Other than two metro rail projects in the state, the EIB has invested in metro rail systems in Bhopal, Pune, and Bangalore in India.
- The EIB will finance the construction of a 32.4 km urban rail line, with 18 elevated and 12 underground stations. Once completed, Kanpur metro rail will create 1100 new jobs and enable around 116 million more affordable commutes each year.

## L&T bags significant contract from Defence Ministry

- Larsen & Toubro (L&T) stated its defence arm secured a significant contract from the Indian Ministry of Defence (MoD) for supplying four regiments of Pinaka Weapon Systems.
- The contract involves supply of Pinaka launchers, battery command posts and associated Engineering Support Package (ESP) for four regiments. The Pinaka launch system has been indigenously developed by L&T as part of Pinaka development program of Defence Research & Development Organization (DRDO, ARDE) and functions as a high tech, all weather, long range, area fire artillery weapon system.
- L&T has already executed similar orders from Ministry of Defence and supplied two regiments of Pinaka systems earlier. With these orders, L&T has served cumulative six out of ten regiments of Pinaka systems with the Indian Army. L&T Defence is also engaged with DRDO for future developments on this artillery system.
- As per the L&T's classification, the valuation of the 'significant' order stands between Rs 1,000 crore and Rs 2,500 crore.

## Ind-Ra, Fitch slash India GDP forecast further

- While Ind-Ra expects contraction of **11.8%,** Fitch projects **10.5%**
- **India Ratings & Research (Ind-Ra)** and its global parent company Fitch have further slashed GDP forecast for India. GDP is the sum of value of goods and services produced in a country during a particular time period.
- Ind-Ra revised its FY-21 GDP growth forecast downward to **-11.8 per cent**, from earlier **-5.3 per cent**. Its global parent Fitch slashed GDP forecast for the current fiscal to **-10.5 per cent**, from earlier projection of -5 per cent. Both agencies changed their forecast after the numbers for April-June quarter was made public by the Government on August 31.

## Ind-Ra

- According to the agency, the **-23.9 per cent** growth in April-June quarter (Q1 of FY21) is the first contraction in quarterly GDP data series which has been made available in the public domain since April-June quarter of 1997-98. The economic loss in FY21 is estimated to be Rs.18.44 lakh crore . However, GDP is expected to rebound and grow at 9.9 per cent in FY22 mainly due to the weak base of FY21.

## Fitch

- The global agency has forecast India's sharpest GDP contractions in the April-June quarter. Nearly **24 per cent** contraction is almost double of the agency's expectation embedded in the June Global Economic Outlook amid the imposition of one of the most stringent global nationwide lockdowns. All demand components, except government

consumption, fell massively in the quarter. Private consumption lost more than 27 per cent (on quarterly basis), investment slumped 43 per cent

## GDP to contract 9% in FY21, says Crisil

- Real GDP growth will dive deeper to **-9 per cent** in fiscal **2021** against **-5 per cent** projected earlier, warned credit rating agency Crisil.
- Crisil expects a permanent loss of **13 per cent** of real GDP over the medium term. In nominal terms, this amounts to Rs.30-lakh crore, it added.
- The agency underscored that this loss of real GDP growth is much higher than a **3 per cent** permanent hit to GDP in Asia-Pacific economies (ex-China and India) over the medium run estimated by S&P Global in June.
- Crisil assessed that catch-up with the pre-pandemic trend value of real GDP would require average real GDP growth to surge to 13 per cent annually for the next three fiscals – a feat never before accomplished by India.
- The agency observed that the 61-day complete nationwide lockdown, followed by an 'unlock' phase with off-again, on-again regional lockdowns and curbs and a convulsing global economy, sent India's real GDP on its worst-ever recorded contraction of **23.9 per cent** for the quarter.
- "While the government did announce a series of measures in the wake of pandemic that provided some support to the rural economy, the overall direct fiscal stimulus was low at about 1.2 per cent of GDP .

## ADB sees India GDP shrinking 9 per cent in FY21

- ADB's forecast in line with other global agencies; raises growth outlook for **2021-22** to **8%**
- In line with global agencies, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) lowered GDP (Gross Domestic Product) forecast to negative **9 per cent** for **FY 2020-21**. Earlier it has projected growth of **4 per cent** during the fiscal.
- ADB's forecast is similar to S&P but slightly better than Fitch which estimated contraction of **10.5 per cent**.
- Inflation is expected to fall in the remainder of the current fiscal to 4.5 per cent with tamed food prices and decreased economic activity, and then further decline to 4 per cent fiscal.
- India's current account deficit is forecast to shrink to **0.3 per cent of GDP** this fiscal year, then widen to **0.6 per cent of GDP** in FY 2021-22 with exports expected to recover as global growth rebounds, the report stated.

## Moody's projects 11.5% contraction in India's economic growth in FY21

- Ratings agency **Moody's** projected **11.5%** contraction in India's economic growth in the current fiscal owing to corona virus pandemic, from **(-) 4 per cent** estimated earlier.
- "India's credit profile increasingly constrained by low growth, high debt burden and a weak financial system," stated Moody's. However, Moody's expects India's economic growth to rebound to **10.6%** in the next fiscal year (FY22) on strong base effect
- Moody's prognosis comes close on the heels of similar observations made by India Ratings, Fitch.
- India's economy is expected to contract 10.5 per cent in the current fiscal before bouncing back in the next financial year, Fitch Ratings stated.
- India's gross domestic product (GDP) contracted by a massive 23.9 per cent in April-June and some agencies have predicted negative growth even during the July-September quarter of the current fiscal (April 2020 to March 2021).

## India's nominal GDP to grow 19 per cent in 2022, finance ministry

- Finance ministry has estimated that **India's nominal GDP** will grow by **19 per cent** in nominal terms in financial year **2021-22**. Nominal GDP is an assessment which includes the current prices of goods and services in its calculation.

- There are varied estimates. The chief economic advisor stated in his presentation that it could go as high as 19%, while some had even stated it could be 21% as an extreme case and others stated it could be more modest, NK Singh, chairman of the 15th Finance Commission.
- In the first quarter of this financial year, the nominal GDP contracted by **22.6 per cent** to **Rs 38.08 lakh crore**, compared to **Rs 49.18 lakh crore** in the same period last year.

## SEBI to set up 'backstop entity' to buy MFs' illiquid corporate bonds

- **SEBI** plans to set up a '**backstop entity'** to buy **illiquid investment-grade corporate bonds** from mutual funds in a bid to reduce the stress in **debt schemes**. A backstop will ensure that a part of the offering is purchased if it goes unsold.
- "The backstop facility would be an entity, which can trade in relatively illiquid investment-grade corporate bonds and be readily available in times of stress to buy such bonds from participants in the secondary market," SEBI Chairman Ajay Tyagi stated at the **25th AGM of the Association of Mutual Funds in India** (AMFI).
- "As a broad guiding principle for any such entity to be set up, the market participants should have skin in the game and the moral hazard problem ought to be satisfactorily addressed," he added.
- Industry experts stated MFs would have to set up such an entity with enough capital so that it would be able to buy illiquid assets in exchange for government bonds.

## NSE, SGX ink formal pact on NSE IFSC-SGX Connect

- **National Stock Exchange (NSE)** and **Singapore Exchange (SGX)** stated they have entered into a formal agreement to cement the key terms for operationalising the **NSE IFSC-SGX Connect**. The two exchanges will also withdraw arbitration proceedings.
- The **NSE International Financial Service Centre (IFSC)-SGX** Connect aims to bring together the trading of Nifty products to **Gujarat International Finance Tech-City (GIFT)** and create a larger pool of liquidity, comprising international and home market participants.
- In addition, NSE and SGX will withdraw the arbitration proceedings, the Indian exchange stated.
- The two exchanges have recently received further regulatory clarifications from the relevant authorities on the implementation of the Connect, since receiving consent from their respective statutory regulators on the proposed Connect model last year.
- Both exchanges will continue to work with key stakeholders to develop the infrastructure for the Connect and ensure member readiness prior to its implementation.

## India's Economy To Contract By 5.9% In 2020 Amid Covid: UN Report

- India's economy is forecast to contract by **5.9 per cent** in **2020**, the UN has stated in a report, warning that while growth will rebound next year, the contraction is likely to translate into a permanent income loss.
- The Trade and Development Report 2020 by UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) stated that the world economy is experiencing a deep recession amid a still-unchecked pandemic.
- It stated the global economy will contract by an estimated **4.3 per cent** this year, leaving global output by year's end over USD 6 trillion short (in current US dollars) of what economists had expected it to be before the coronavirus began to spread.
- UNCTAD expects South Asia to contract **4.8 per cent in 2020** and recover to **3.9 per cent in 2021**. India's GDP is forecast to contract **5.9 per cent** in 2020 and recover to **3.9 per cent** next year, the report stated.
- The report stated that while UNCTAD expects a rebound in India's GDP growth in 2021 in line with the growth rates of the Indian economy in recent years, "the contraction registered in 2020 is likely to translate into a permanent income loss".

## Tata Power Signs a PPA With Tata Motors To Commission India's Largest Carport At Pune

- **Tata Power**, India's largest integrated power utility has achieved a new milestone by signing a **Power Purchase Agreement (PPA)** with **Tata Motors** to commission **India's largest Carport**. With 6.2 MWp capacity, the project is expected to reduce 1.6 lakhs ton of carbon emission for Tata Motors in its life time.
- The grid-connected carport plant requires high-level engineering and customised designing to assemble the massive carport structures. Furthermore, advanced technology and intricate planning is Tata Power's strength which will facilitate them to execute the project.
- Solar Carports continue to prove themselves as excellent examples in terms of 'efficient use of space' for solar installations and are expected to demonstrate their potential by being a source of growth for the rooftop sector in the future.
- Tata Power's solar arm-Tata Power Renewables comes with a successful background of executing the World's largest Rooftop at a single location at RSSB, Amritsar-16MW, 2.67MW at Cochin International Airport, World's largest solar powered Cricket stadium - Cricket Club of India with 820.8 kWp capacity, unique installation of solar vertical farm at Dell Bangalore-120kW, 1.4MW floating solar at Tata Chemicals, Nellore & many such landmark projects.

## Vodafone Idea re-brands itself 'Vi'

- **Vodafone Idea** announced its **new unified brand identity** by renaming **all its products** under **a new name and logo "Vi".**
- The announcement was made by the telco's **MD and CEORavinder Takkar.**
- The rebranding comes at a time the company looks to raise up to ₹25,000 crore to meet government dues, pay interest, and invest in operations.

## Razorpay Introduces Cash Advance To Provide Instant SMB Loans

- India-based financial solutions company **Razorpay** is rolling out a **new solution for companies** in need of **business loans**, helping them to instantly access capital.
- With its new **Cash Advance solution**, the company will let **small- to medium-sized businesses (SMBs)** borrow **working capital** with a credit limit of **50000 to 1 lakh in 10 seconds** by using the **Razorpay dashboard.**
- Once a Razorpay Cash Advance loan is approved, SMBs should be able to access the funds whenever they need and repay whenever they want.
- Last year, Razorpay rolled out a suite of financial services for credit and banking to help SMBs, including tools to receive payment quicker and launch corporate cards.

## Silver Lake to invest Rs. 7,500 crore in Reliance Retail Ventures

- Reliance Industries announced that **Silver Lake** will invest **Rs. 7,500 crore** in **Reliance Retail Ventures Limited (RRVL)**, a subsidiary of Reliance Industries.
- This investment values RRVL at a **pre-money equity value** of **Rs. 4.21 lakh crore**.
- Silver Lake's investment will translate into a **1.75% equity stake in RRVL** on a fully diluted basis.
- This marks the **second billion dollar investment by Silver Lake** in a Reliance Industries subsidiary **after the $1.35 billion investment in Jio Platforms** announced earlier this year.

## Mahindra Insurance Brokers launches digital insurance portal PayBima

- **Mahindra Insurance Brokers (MIBL)** has launched a **digital insurance portal** called **PayBima** that will help customers directly buy insurance policies online.
- Customers will be able to buy car, two-wheeler, health and life insurance products on PayBima. Devare stated that the company is setting up a separate team for this portal. The portal will enable customers to search for policies, compare features, buy and renew policies online.
- MIBL is a profit-making entity, though there was a dip in numbers due to the pandemic. During the quarter ended June 30 (Q1FY21), the insurance broker registered an income of Rs 41.2 crore, which was a 48 percent decline over the year-ago period. The profit after tax registered was Rs 2 crore during Q1, showing a YoY decline of 68 percent.
- PayBima is partnered with 19 insurance companies so far including ICICI Prudential Life, Max Life, HDFC Life, Kotak General Insurance, Digit Insurance among others. Devare said that this number will double over the next few months.

## TPT South Africa Partners with TCS for Pioneering Logistics Supply Chain Transformation

- **Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)** ,a leading global IT services, consulting and business solutions organization, has partnered with **Transnet Port Terminals (TPT)** in **South Africa**, part of **Transnet SOC Ltd**, a state-owned freight transport and handling company, to help the latter develop an integrated online marketplace platform by bringing together cargo owners, shipping lines, clearing and forwarding agents, and road/rail haulers.
- It partnered with TCS to create the new platform named Cargo Connect, which will function as an online logistics marketplace where customers can submit logistics related requests and allow service providers to bid online. Customers will be able to select the preferred proposal and award the cargo contract to that bidder.
- Tata Consultancy Services is an IT services, consulting and business solutions organization that has been partnering with many of the world's largest businesses in their transformation journeys for over 50 years. TCS offers a consulting-led, cognitive powered, integrated portfolio of business, technology and engineering services and solutions. This is delivered through its unique Location Independent AgileTM delivery model, recognized as a benchmark of excellence in software development.

## Microsoft, Nasscom's FutureSkills to launch AI-skilling initiative in India

- **Microsoft** in collaboration with **Nasscom's FutureSkills** will launch a nation-wide initiative in India to skill students in **Artificial Intelligence**. The initiative aims to skill **1 million students** by **2021.**
- As part of the collaboration, Microsoft and Nasscom experts will skill the students in AI, machine learning and data science through modules such as live demos, hands-on workshops and assignments as part of the AI classroom series.
- These introductory sessions on AI will be available for undergraduate students at no cost and will cover the basics of data science, machine learning models on Azure, and understanding of cognitive services to build intelligent solutions, Microsoft stated.
- The AI Classroom Series will begin from September 21. Students can pick their preferred timeslots for sessions. Registered students will also have access to content and developer tools from **Microsoft** and **GitHub** and will receive a participation certificate from Nasscom and Microsoft at the end of the series.
- The entities will also collaborate with various academic institutes and colleges "to integrate new cloud and AI technologies into the curriculum."

## Mukesh Ambani's RIL becomes first Indian firm to cross $200 billion M-cap

- Industrialist Mukesh Ambani's **Reliance Industries Limited (RIL)** has become **India's first company** to cross **$210 billion market cap**, entering the top **40 of worlds most valuable firms.**

- At this market valuation, Reliance Industries is now worlds **40th most valuable firm** ahead of the likes of **Exxon Mobil, PepsiCo, SAP, Oracle, Pfizer and Novartis**. Also, Reliance Industries is now among **Asia's top 10 most** valuable companies.
- Reliance had crossed **$150 billion market capitalisation on June 19**. This means it has added **$60 billion** in investor value in less than **60 market days** - or **an average of $1 billion** (over Rs 7,300 crore) per session.
- The **surge in share prices** comes on the back of the announcement of **Rs 7,500 crore investment** by **Silver Lake into Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd**, an RIL subsidiary.

## Japan' ORIX Corp. set to invest $980 million in Greenko Energy Holdings for 17% stake

- In the single largest foreign investment in India's clean energy space, **ORIX Corp.** is set to invest **$980 million** in **Greenko Energy Holdings**; the Japan' financial services firm stated.
- The deal will also add **873 MW** of Orix' operating wind assets to **Hyderabad-based Greenko's portfolio**, and will contribute $100 million to Greenko's EBITDA in the first year. The deal will also peg GIC Holdings Pte. Ltd and Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA) backed Greenko's equity and enterprise value at $5.75 billion and $10.2 billion respectively.
- ORIX is a major player in the renewable energy business in Japan which includes solar, wind, biomass, power trading and retailing. With 1 GW portfolio, it is also one of the largest corporates in the Japanese solar power generation market.
- The addition of these wind projects that NYSE listed Orix had acquired from bankrupt **Infrastructure Leasing and Financial Services (IL&FS),** will take Greenko's portfolio near-term capacity to 6.5 gigawatt (GW).
- ORIX, one of the world's largest diversified financial services groups based in Japan, has been a significant shareholder in IL&FS since 1993. IL&FS sold its 51% stake in seven operating wind power assets, with 874 MW of generation capacity, to ORIX for Rs806 crore.

## HCL Technologies partners with NVIDIA Partner Network

- **HCL Technologies** has joined **NVIDIA Partner Network (NPN),** the US-based technology company's partner program, with plans to pursue expanded opportunities in the **Artificial Intelligence (AI) space**.
- HCL also announced the launch of **NEXT.ai, HCL's AI Lab**, focused on upskilling engineers and architects utilizing AI solutions across hardware and software technology stacks. This will enhance their capabilities to build AI-led solutions for multiple HCL clients across industry verticals.
- The HCL NEXT.ai lab focuses on emerging technologies to develop industry-specific AI solutions for customers pursuing digital transformation. Customers and partners can co-create proofs of concept and full-fledged, scalable and production-ready solutions in the lab.
- NEXT.ai comes equipped with the latest technology products and infrastructure from its partner ecosystem. The areas of focus include computer vision, predictive modeling, failure analysis, optimization, product intelligence, data engineering, data management, and more.

## TPCI announces sectoral committees to tap new markets & investment

- **Trade Promotion Council of India** (TPCI), has constituted **three Committees** focusing on **Food & Beverages, Food Processing Technology and Chemical and Allied Products**.
- TPCI has constituted these committees to handhold the industry, and act as a think tank, submitting suggestions and recommendations to the government for policies to boost exports.
- TPCI governing council has decided to constitute several sector specific committees with varied industry representation.

- **Laxman Singh Rathore**, President – International Business of Ramdev Food Products Pvt. Ltd. was elected the **Chairman of the sectoral committee on food and beverages**. **Vivek Agrawal**, Managing Director of Capital Venture Pvt. Ltd. was selected as the Vice Chair of the Committee.
- This Committee will be promoting Indian F&B products globally and facilitate Indian F&B products to reach the mainstream retail shelves across the world.
- The Second Committee on **Food Processing Technology** will be chaired by **R. Senguttuvan, CEO of ITC Limited (Printing & Packaging Division)** and **Sanjay Grover,** Vice President – International Business of Kirloskar Pneumatic Company Limited was elected as the **Vice Chairman of the Committee.**
- The third Committee on **Chemicals** will be chaired by **Manish Shah**, Managing Director of Tanya Exports. **Kapil Malhotra**, Sr. Vice President – Marketing of Gujarat Fluorochemicals Ltd. was elected as the Vice **Chair of the Committee**, TPCI announced. The objective of the Committee is to explore and develop a niche market strategy and plan for revamping the chemical sector in India.

## Tata Projects wins bid to construct new parliament building

- The **Tata Projects Limited** won the bid to construct a **new Parliament building** at a cost of **Rs.861.90 crore**, officials stated. The L&T Ltd had submitted a bid of **Rs.865 crore**, they stated.
- "The Tata Projects Limited has won the contract to build a new Parliament building," an official stated.
- The new Parliament building will be constructed close to the existing one under the Central Vista redevelopment project, and it is expected to be completed in 21 months.
- According to the **Central Public Works Department (CPWD),** the new building will come up at plot number 118 of the Parliament House Estate.
- The CPWD stated the existing Parliament building would continue to function during the entire period of execution of the project.

## UBS Securities sees GDP contracting 8.6 per cent this fiscal

- **UBS Securities** sees India's real GDP contracting **8.6 per cent** this fiscal, down from the previously estimated contraction level of **5.8 per cent**, its Chief India Economist Tanvee Gupta Jain stated.
- On consumer price inflation, UBS Securities sees inflation remaining above RBI's upper tolerance band of 6 per cent in the September quarter too just as it was higher in the earlier two quarters. They expect RBI breaching the statutory mandate of 2-6 per cent for three consecutive quarters. Their view is that inflation would decelerate to **3.5-4 per cent** by December 2020. Inflation will start to ease largely led by food even as upside risks exists in next two months. CPI inflation will ease post October owing to base effect and softening food prices," she stated.
- In the view of UBS, there are three reasons leading to near term inflationary pressures — spike in food prices on lockdown related supply chain disruptions; cost push pressures due to higher taxes on petroleum products and higher global commodities prices like gold.

## HCL and Google Cloud expand partnership to deliver accelerated business intelligence platform

- **HCL Technologies** and **Google Cloud** announced the expansion of their strategic partnership to bring **HCL's Actian portfolio,** starting with **Actian Avalanche**, to **Google Cloud.**
- Actian Avalanche is a high-performance hybrid cloud data warehouse designed to power an enterprise's most demanding operational analytics workloads.
- Actian Avalanche enables a seamless path to migrate legacy data warehouses, including IBM Netezza and Oracle Exadata, to Google Cloud, through a hybrid-cloud offering leveraging Google Cloud's Anthos application platform.

## Google Pay partners with Visa bringing tap-to-pay for Indian users

- **Google Pay** announced the **rollout of tokenisation** across its platform that will enable users to safely transact with their debit or credit cards.
- Through tokenisation, **Google Pay Android users** can use their **debit or credit card** to make **payments through a secure digital token** attached to their phone without having to physically share their credit or debit card details.
- The feature will also facilitate use of tap-to-pay feature on **near-field communications (NFC)-enabled point of sale (PoS) terminals** and online merchants.
- Working in close **partnership with Visa** and banking partners, this feature is now available to all users of Axis **and SBI Card, with Kotak and more banks** expected **to follow suit very soon.**
- The feature also works with online merchants, delivering more native and seamless OTP experiences without any redirects to 3D secure sites.

## Microsoft buys gaming company ZeniMax for $7.5bn

- **Microsoft** has acquired private gaming company **ZeniMax** for **$7.5bn**, in a deal that underscores how the tech giant sees gaming moving beyond console wars and into a battle for original content and subscription plans.
- ZeniMax is the parent of **Bethesda Softworks**, a 2,300-employee team across eight gaming studios behind major franchises including The Elder Scrolls, Fallout, Wolfenstein, Doom, Quake and Starfield.
- A person familiar with the deal compared it to Disney purchasing Pixar in 2006 for $7.4bn. "This has always been one of the highest quality, if not the highest quality, independent studios that is left," the person stated.
- The all-cash deal is Microsoft's third-largest acquisition behind **LinkedIn** and **Skype**, and matching the $7.5bn it paid for GitHub in 2018, according to Dealogic. It was announced, a week after Microsoft's bid to purchase TikTok fell through, and one day before pre-orders start for two new Xbox consoles.

## KKR to invest Rs 5,550 crore in Reliance Retail Ventures for 1.28% equity

- Global investment firm **KKR** will invest **Rs 5,500 crore** in **Reliance Retail** for **1.28 per cent equity share**, Reliance Industries Limited stated in a BSE filing. This marks the second investment by KKR in a Reliance subsidiary, following a Rs 11,367 crore investment in Jio Platforms announced earlier this year.
- KKR's investment values Reliance Retail at a pre-money equity value of Rs **4.21 trillion**.
- Ambani, raised about $20 billion selling stakes in his technology venture to investors including Facebook Inc. and Google, the tycoon is repeating the same with his retail business. Earlier, Silver Lake had invested Rs 7,500 cr into Reliance Retail Ventures, valuing the business at about Rs 4.2 trillion.
- Silver Lake also put $1.35 billion for a stake in Ambani's Jio Platforms Ltd, while KKR invested $1.5 billion.
- KKR is making its investment from its Asia private equity funds. Founded in 1976, KKR has USD 222 billion in assets under management as of June 30, 2020. It currently has about USD 5.1 billion in private equity investments across more than 15 Indian companies, including Jio Platforms, JB Chemicals, Max Healthcare, Eurokids International and Ramky Enviro Engineers.
- Besides Silver Lake and KKR, the other investors in Jio Platforms include Facebook, Google, private equity groups Vista and General Atlantic and Abu Dhabi's sovereign wealth fund Mubadala. With this, Jio Platforms and Reliance Retail account for over Rs 9 lakh crore of RIL valuation.

## Amazon.in to host 'Handicrafts Mela' from 26 Sep to 10 Oct to support artisans

- **Amazon.in** will host a virtual **'Handicrafts Mela'from September 26-October 10**, showcasing more than 270 art and craft forms from various parts of the country.

- Over eight lakh artisans and weavers associated with 1,500 Amazon Karigar sellers and 17 government emporiums including Tantuja, Harit Khadi, Tribes India and national-level artisan organisations like Craftmark and Dastkari Haat Samiti will benefit from this mela.
- Amazon's Handicrafts Mela - which will showcasing over **55,000 unique products** - will help customers discover and purchase products from artisans and weavers from different parts of the country by visiting specific sections like **handloom zone, handicrafts home décor, kitchen items, handmade toys, handcrafted festive collection and others.**

## Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders unveils IPO

- **Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd**., **a defence PSU**, has introduced opening of its **preliminary public** providing for subscription on September 29, with a value band of Rs.135 – Rs.145 per fairness share.
- Minimum bid lot **is 103 fairness shares** and in multiples thereof.
- The IPO will shut on October 1. The supply is being made by book-building course of. The object is to hold out the disinvestment of 30,599,017 fairness shares by the Government of India, which might be diluting 15.17% of its stake within the firm. On the cheaper price band the problem will fetch Rs.413 crore and on the higher band Rs.444 crore.

## Important State Wise News
### List of Festivals

| Festivals | Place | Inaugurated by /Others |
|---|---|---|
| Pang Lhabsol | Sikkim | 15th day of the 7th month of the Tibetan calendar (late August or early September) |

## Andhra Pradesh

### AP Govt to launch two schemes for pregnant women on September 1

- Andhra Padesh Chief Minister **YS Jagan Mohan Reddy** will launch two new schemes for pregnant women.
- The schemes, **YSR Sampoorna Poshana and YSR Sampoorna Poshana Plus**, to be launched on September 1, 2020 aim at providing nutritious food for pregnant women and lactating mothers along with children.
- While YSR Sampoorna Poshana Plus is intended to **supply nutritious food** exclusively in 77 Tribal areas covering 8 ITDAs, 52 ICDS projects and 8,320 Anganwadi Centres, all the remaining urban and rural areas lying in plain lands will be covered under YSR Sampoorna Poshana.
- In order to address malnutrition and anemia among pregnant and lactating mothers and children aged between 6 months and 72 months, the State government has brought YSR Sampoorna Poshana Plus and YSR Sampoorna Poshana schemes to provide supplementary nutrition through Anganwadi centers.
- The State government will be spending **Rs.1,900 crore** every year to supply nutritious food under this scheme.
- In order to monitor the effective implementation of YSR Sampoorna Poshana, Department of Women Development and Child Welfare has developed a comprehensive mobile application to assess the service delivery and satisfaction levels of the beneficiaries, according to a release.

### AP to set up crop insurance firm

- Andhra Pradesh, which is among the few States that have chosen to have their **own crop insurance schemes**, is in the process of establishing **AP General Insurance Company (APGIC)** to run the scheme.

- "The farmers have been asked to enroll for the scheme by September 5 by paying a nominal premium fee of Rs.1. But we don't have the detailed guidelines though the deadline is fast approaching," Keshava Rao, Secretary of the Andhra Pradesh Rythu Sangham. The State had begun implementing its own scheme from the rabi season.
- The State government has reportedly received the IRDA (Insurance Regulatory Development Authority) nod to form the insurance company.
- The State government had authorised the Director of Insurance, Andhra Pradesh, to take up further steps in connection with the establishment of proposed APGIC.
- The authorised share capital of the company is pegged at **Rs.101 crore** divided into 10.10 crore equity shares of Rs.10 each.
- The government made it mandatory for farmers to register themselves on **e-Karshak app** (real-time crop registration window) in order to be eligible for the scheme. The Department of Agriculture will be the nodal agency for the implementation of the scheme.

## Andhra Pradesh signs MoU with CSIR for a bulk drug pharma park in the state

- **Andhra Pradesh Industrial Infrastructure Corporation Ltd (APIIC)** signed  an MoU with**CSIR-IICT**, a premier R & D institute in the country to to set up a **bulk drug pharma park** in the state of with the Centre's support.
- CSIR has been established to carry out research in chemical sciences leading to innovative processes for a variety of products necessary for human welfare such as food, health, energy and environment and the conduct of R&D work.
- The MoU signing session via virtual mode from Nellore, senior officials from both the sides exchanged documents at the APIIC headquarters in Mangalagiri.


## Andhra Pradesh government signs MoUs with Netherlands, 7 firms on food processing, marketing

- The State government signed **Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs)** with the **Netherlands government** and **seven companies** in **food processing, marketing and technologies**, to benefit the horticulture and aquaculture farmers across the State.
- The government signed an MoU with the Netherlands for interior architecture, design, packaging and containers for the food processing. Ambassador of Netherlands to India Martin Van Den Berg attended the programme through video conference from New Delhi.
- An MoU with **Tiruchirappalli-based ICAR-National Research Centre** for Banana was signed for banana cultivation and processing. The institute promotes micro food processing and is involved in quality testing laboratories.
- An agreement was reached with **Pune-based Futuretech Foods Private Limited** for processing of bananas and other foods along with different vegetables. CEO Ajit Soman, who signed the document, explained the vacuum technology.
- An MoU with **Big Basket** for marketing infrastructure pertaining to food processing of tomato and banana was signed. The MoU with **ITC,** signed by its vice president G Krishna Kumar, was meant for food processing of mango, sweet lime, chillies among others.
- The government also entered into an agreement with **IFB** for technology and marketing of **shrimp and fish** and also signed an MoU with **Empire Company** for export and retail marketing of shrimp and fish.

## Andhra Pradesh to float India' largest solar tender for 10 GW capacity

- In a surprise move, the Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy-led **Andhra Pradesh** government is expediting efforts to float **India's largest solar tender** for setting up **10 gigawatt (GW)**capacity, stated three people aware of the development.

- Interestingly, the mega tender accounting for **14% of India's green energy capacity** to supply electricity to the farmers is in the works, even as **5.2 GW of solar** and wind energy projects are hanging fire, due to the state government's decision to reopen renewable energy contracts inked under the previous N Chandrababu Naidu government.
- State energy secretary N. Srikanth confirmed the mega solar tender development and stated that **Andhra Pradesh Green Energy Corporation Ltd (APGECL)** is the nodal agency for the same.
- Under flak from the Union government and global investors such as Goldman Sachs, Brookfield, SoftBank, Canada Pension Plan Investment Board, Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec, JERA Co. Inc., GIC Holdings Pte Ltd, Global Infrastructure Partners, CDC Group Plc, EverSource Capital and World Bank's International Finance Corp., the government has mandated state-owned APGECL to call for this mega solar bid that will entail a **Rs.35,000 crore** investment.
- Andhra Pradesh has around **7.7 GW** of solar and wind projects and is home to India's second-largest installed capacity of clean energy, accounting for around 10% of the country's green energy capacity, with investments of Rs.60,000 crore. The state has 4,092 MW of installed wind power projects awarded through feed-in tariffs. Also, the resource-rich state has 3,230 MW of solar power projects awarded through competitive bidding.

## UiPath partners with AP skill development corporation

- **UiPath**, an enterprise **Robotic Process Automation (RPA)** software company, has partnered with **Andhra Pradesh State Skill Development Corporation (APSSDC)**, as part of its Academic Alliance Programme.
- The programme is designed to bridge the growing skill requirements and build RPA resiliency in more than 50,000 students, in the next one year.
- Studies by Gartner indicate that RPA continues to grow as the tactical solution to improve operational efficiency, particularly during the pandemic and post recovery.
- In line with this, APSSDC will act as the regional center for all UiPath Academic Alliance activities in the State. To start off, UiPath will onboard 100 APSSDC institutes. The institutions will receive curriculum, content, learning materials, educator enablement sessions and software tools, to provide training to their students.

## CM Jagan Mohan Reddy to launch YSR Jala Kala scheme

- Chief Minister **YS Jagan Mohan Reddy** will launch **YSR Jala Kala**.
- Under the scheme, borewells will be dug free of cost to the needy farmers. The scheme is estimated to bring in five lakh acres under cultivation through groundwater irrigation.
- Around three lakh farmers will be benefited from YSR Jala Kala, which is estimated to cost Rs 2,340 crore in four years.
- The government plans to drill about two lakh borewells to enable groundwater irrigation to the upland farmers and those in arid areas depending on the availability and the level of water table.
- The state government has also developed a software application to monitor the implementation of the scheme. The farmers will get text messages in their registered mobile phone numbers on the status of their applications at every stage.

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

## First newspaper for kids 'The Young Minds' launched in Assam

- Two Guwahati-based women entrepreneurs have launched a newspaper specifically designed for kids, to promote creative thinking among children and inculcate in them the habit to read and write.

- The newspaper named **'The Young Minds'** is the brainchild of **Neelam Sethia** and **Neha Bajaj**, Assam news portal Gplus reported.
- The Young Minds, reportedly, will cater to kids of **4-14 years of age**.
- This weekly newspaper will include content that will help engage children in activities such as games, puzzles, riddles, fun facts and news, vocabulary, science and maths experiments.
- It will also provide kids with a platform to get their arts and write-ups published and win prizes by participating in monthly contests.

## Assam govt re-launches SVAYEM scheme to provide self-employment to around 2 lakh youths
- The **Assam government** re-launched a scheme to provide self-employment to around 2 lakh youths of the state. Known as **Swami Vivekananda Assam Youth Empowerment (SVAYEM),** it would provide 50 thousand rupees each as seed money to selected youths to start business ventures.
- Finance minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said that the government is  launching the redesigned SVAYEM with a budget of **Rs. 1000 crore** which will be spent in the **next three months** without any banking linkage.
- He said that the 2 lakh beneficiaries would have to be part of self-help groups, joint liability groups.
- Those seeking to avail benefits of the scheme will be able to register themselves at a new portal which will be launched on September 16.

## Assam promotes nutritious food through Kitchen Garden as part of Poshan MaahS
- As a part of the **Poshan Maah**, the **Social Welfare Department** in **Assam** has taken steps to promote nutritious food through Kitchen Garden. **Kitchen Garden** or **nutri garden** will be set up at **Anganwadi Centres** and Government Primary Schools across the state.
- The idea of the Kitchen Garden is to plant locally available nutritional food and vegetables. The Health and Nutrition consultant of Poshan Abhiyan in Assam, Dr. Gitali Borah stated that coverage with MGNREGA and the Agriculture Department is also being emphasized to implement the Kitchen garden initiative.

## Assam CM Sarbananda Sonowal launches Mukhyamantrir Grammya Paribahan Achoni
- **Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal** launched the **Mukhyamantrir Grammya Paribahan Achoni** and **distributed vehicles under the scheme** to beneficiaries at a programme held at Assam Administrative Staff College by transport department. The scheme aims to improve **rural connectivity and generate employment in the villages.**
- **Light Motor Vehicle Service** would be launched in the villages of the state and ten thousand villages would be covered in the first phase by the scheme with **financial outlay of Rs 100 crore** whereby one vehicle would be provided to one beneficiary per village.
- Under the scheme, the eligible entrepreneurs will be assisted financially with **25 per cent** of the cost of the vehicle by the State government or **Rs 1 lakh**, whichever is less.

## Assam govt to provide loan to entrepreneurs to revive tourism sector
- **Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal** announced **a new scheme** under which **loan up to ₹20 lakh with interest subsidy** would be provided to entrepreneurs **to revive the tourism industry.**
- Under the **'Paryatan Sanjeevani Scheme'**, **loan between ₹1 lakh and ₹20 lakh** will be extended to interested local youths to take up new initiatives so that the tourism sector gets a fresh lease of life amid the coronavirus crisis.
- As part of the scheme, the advances will be provided for five years, while the state government will give first year's interest.

- Sonowal also inaugurated another scheme -'**Paryatan Sarathi'**, which will provide information about Assam tourism, facilities for bookings, tour packages, hotels along with online payment gateway options.

<h2 style="color:red; text-align:center">Bihar</h2>

## In first-ever digital initiative, Bihar police set up voice recording system to transcribe case diaries

- The police in **Bihar's Arwal district** have started **writing case diaries** through an **automated transcription system** in stations in the district.
- In **9 out of 11 police stations** of **Arwal district**, which was once infested by extremists, case diaries are written by investigation officers (IOs) under the **Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and System (CCTNS).**
- The case diary, written by an IO through the voice recording system, will be available online in the mobile phones of the concerned IOs as well.
- The most important feature of this system is that an IO can paste the statement of evidence along with the case diary and send it to the court online.

## PM Modi inaugurates highway projects, fibre scheme in Bihar

- Days after launching the **Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY)** and other projects related to **agriculture and animal husbandry** worth **Rs 294.53 crore**, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated **nine highway projects** and the '**Ghar Tak Fibre' scheme** via video-conferencing..
- The highway projects inaugurated cover a road length of about **350 kilometres** and will be completed at a cost of Rs **14,258 crore**.
- '**Ghar Tak Fibre' scheme** will connect all **45,945 villages** of Bihar through **optical fibre internet service**, according to a PMO release issued.
- "The fibre internet services programme is a "prestigious project" which will enable a "digital revolution" to reach the state's remotest corner," the release stated.

<h2 style="color:red; text-align:center">Delhi</h2>

## Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal launches e-filing consumer complaint system

- Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal inaugurated the **Delhi government'se-filing consumer complaint system,** which aims to help Delhiites during the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic.
- Delhi is **the first State** to have this system.
- Accessible via **delhistatecommission.nic.in**, the software has been developed by **National Informatic Centre (NIC)** in coordination with **State Bank of India**, which is providing payment gateway for payment of fees digitally.
- The Delhi State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (DSCDRC) decided to launch the portal for the convenience of consumers especially due to the pandemic.

## India's first Coronavirus airport testing facility launched in Delhi

- **Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL)** launched country's **first airport Covid-19 testing facility** at **Indira Gandhi International Airport** in **New Delhi** for arriving international passengers.
- Those who wish to avoid a queue can book a slot via the airport's website. Since the testing process is expected to generate a sample's result in around 6 hours, passengers with connecting flights are advised to keep an 8-10 hour window.

- Those who test negative are exempted from institutional quarantine, but those who test positive will either be moved to a hospital, or home or institutional isolation. The objective of the authorities is to separate infected passengers from the rest to prevent further spread of the disease.
- The Covid-19 testing facility at the Delhi international airport will initially handle up to 2,500 samples per day in mid-September and if required, the capacity can later be ramped up to 15,000 samples per day, a top official of Genestrings Diagnostic Center stated.

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

## Gujarat forms Task Force to study & implement NEP-2020 for school education

- In **Gujarat**, the State Government has formed the **Task Force** to study and implement the **National Education Policy-2020** for school education.
- According to the State Education Department, the State-level Task Force comprises **15 members** from politicians, administrative officials and academicians. This Task Force is expected to study NEP-2020, make changes suggested in the school education format and come up with the best implementation measures.
- The Higher Education Department is expected to declare its Task Force in a few days.

## Gujarat declares its first heritage tourism policy

- Unveiling the first "**heritage tourism policy**", **Gujarat government** allowed opening up of heritage hotels, museums, banquet halls and restaurants inside historic palaces, forts and buildings. This policy is applicable to historic structures that existed before **January 1, 1950** and will allow international and domestic tourists to see and experience historic structures from close quarters.
- Under this policy, a new heritage hotel or an existing one will get financial assistance of **Rs 5-10 crore** for renovation or expansion. The basic heritage structure should not be altered during this process. The government will give a 20 per cent subsidy (maximum of Rs 5 crore) if the investment is up to Rs 25 crore. If the investments are over Rs 25 crore, then the maximum subsidy would be Rs 10 crore.
- Similarly, to begin a **new heritage museum**, banquet hall or resturant or to renovate or restore an existing one, financial assistance of Rs 45 lakh to Rs 1 crore will be provided. This financial aid will be given at 7 percent interest for five years and will not exceed Rs 30 lakh in a year.

## Gujarat signs MoU with SIDBI to help MSMEs amid outbreak downturn

- The **Gujarat government** signed an MoU with the **Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)** to increase **self-reliance and provide capacity building** and market support to the state's **35 lakh micro-small-medium enterprises (MSMEs)**.
- The aim is to "accelerate technology transfer and innovation in state MSMEs through training and capacity building programmes," it stated.
- SIDBI will help the small scale industries in the state to come out of the current COVID-19 situation effectively, and also evaluate the feasibility of infrastructure projects and common facility centres for MSME clusters in the state, the release added.
- SIDBI will handhold the MSME units to create digital platforms to keep pace with world trends, it stated.
- "Under the Centre's Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS), so far, **Rs 10,56,268 lakh loans** have been approved for 2,11,532 MSME units in the state to get over financial difficulties. The state government also announced a package of Rs 768 crore to assist MSMEs in the COVID-19 situation," it stated.

## Gujarat CM Rupani announces subsidy schemes for e-scooters, rickshaws

- Chief Minister Vijay Rupani announced **subsidy schemes** for **electric two-wheelers and e-rickshaws**, during a virtual programme on climate change to commemorate the founding day of the state climate change department.
- The CM announced the subsidy as a **"Panchsheel gift"** of five development schemes in Gujarat to celebrate the 70th birthday of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- The CM declared that **students will get a subsidy of Rs 12,000 each to buy e-scooters.** Under this scheme, the government will provide assistance to students **studying from Class 9 to college** to purchase **battery-powered two-wheelers**. The target is to provide this assistance to 10,000 such vehicles.
- The state government will also provide **assistance of Rs 48,000 for the purchase of 5,000 battery-powered e-rickshaws** for individual and institutional beneficiaries.
- The Climate Change department also signed virtual MoU with 10 organisations to work on mitigating the effects of climate change and increasing the use of renewable energy via the usage of space technology and geo-informatics.
- Another MoU, "Climate Change Risk Assessment of Mitigation", was signed with the **Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (IIM-A) for climate finance and climate policy matter**s and with **the Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar (IITGn)** on capacity building, research and enhancing the public utility of scientific information in the field of climate change and environment.
- An MoU was also signed with the **Gujarat State Road Transport Corporation and Gujarat Gas** to increase the usage of clean fuels like CNG in vehicle transactions and to formulate building codes on energy saving in houses with the chief town planner.

## Goa

### 51st IFFI to be held from 16th to 24th January next year in Goa

- The **51st Edition of the International Film Festival of India, IFFI** will be held from 16th to 24th January, next year in **Goa**. Earlier it was scheduled to be held from 20th November to 28th November, this year.
- The postponement follows discussion between Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar and Goa Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant.
- It has also been jointly decided to hold the festival on new dates as per the International Film Festival guidelines and protocols.
- The festival will be conducted in a Virtual and Physical format. All COVID related protocols will be strictly enforced as per the festivals convened recently in the International Film Festival circuit.

## Haryana

### Haryana CM Manohar Lal Khattar launches online admission platform for UG courses

- Haryana Chief Minister **Manohar Lal Khattar** has launched an **online registration portal** for admissions in **undergraduate (UG) programmes** in government**, aided and self-financed colleges** for the new academic session **2020-21.**
- The platform has been launched so that students can complete their entire admission process from home.
- Khattar has also launched an educational **WhatsApp chatbot "Apka Mitra"** to resolve any admission-related queries. Students are required to send a message on WhatsApp chatbot number 7419444449 to get any information regarding admissions, scholarships etc.,
- Moreover, the minister also launched a new web portal of Higher Education Department and website of 158 government colleges.

## J-K LG Launches SPARROW System For J-K Administrative Service Officers

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

## LG launches SPARROW portal for JKAS officers

- **Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha** launched the **Smart Performance Appraisal Report Recording Online Window (SPARROW) system** for J&K Administrative Service officers, at the Raj Bhavan.
- The Performance Appraisal Reports of AIS officers are submitted on the **SPARROW portal**. On the same analogy, the Government of J&K has decided to switch over from manual to online generation and recording of Annual Performance Reports in respect of members of J&K Administrative Service on this system.
- The technological intervention is going to benefit around 1289 officers and is aimed at bringing more transparency, avoiding loss of appraisal reports during transition, ensuring better monitoring and timely completion of performance appraisals
- The Project is being implemented by J&K e-Governance Agency, Information Technology Department in collaboration with National Informatics Centre and the General Administration Department.
- The Sparrow System will not only overcome the delay in the processing of the manual recording of APRs but will also facilitate the electronic filing through a user-friendly interface – anywhere,  anytime. The system would streamline the APR life-cycle. It would be a major administrative reform. Recording and movement of **e-APR** forms will be seamless, quick, and convenient due to in-built alert mechanisms and online status checks through different modes during the workflow.

## First-ever cannabis medicine project coming up in Jammu

- Union minister Jitendra Singh announced that the **first ever cannabis medicine project** will soon be set up at **Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (IIIM) in Jammu** with **Canadian collaboration.**
- Special permission had to be obtained to produce the pain-relief medicine for patients suffering from cancer, diabetes, etc., using cannabis, which is otherwise restricted for use because of narcotic drug abuse.
- The medicine prepared from this plant can be utilised even for export to other countries.
- Singh also reviewed the progress of the construction of north India's **first biotech industrial park in Kathua** near Jammu.
- A few other projects are also being set up through the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).

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

- Almost all fruits and vegetables in J&K are covered under the **'Operation Green's TOP to TOTAL' scheme**.
- The announcement of new initiative is aimed at to support farmers of Fruits and Vegetables under Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan in order to prevent distress sales, Price stabilization interventions under **Central Sector Scheme- "Operation Greens"** which has been extended from **Tomato, Onion and Potato (TOP)** to all notified fruits and vegetables (TOTAL) for a period of six months on pilot basis.
- The fruits and vegetables notified in J&K are Apple, Almond, Pear, Capsicum, Carrot, Cucumber, Okra, Orange, Kinnow and Lemon.

- Under the scheme Union Food Processing Industries Ministry will provide subsidy of 50% of the cost of transportation of notified crops from production clusters to consumption centres and/or the cost of hiring of appropriate storage facilities for a period of upto 3 months for notified crops, if the price of the crop falls below the average price of last three years or 15% below the last year's price.

## Jammu and Kashmir announces Rs 5 lakh annual health insurance for residents

- **Lieutenant governor Manoj Sinha** has announced **Jammu and Kashmir health scheme** intended to provide **universal health insurance cover** to **all residents** of the Union Territory at the likely annual cost of **Rs 123 crore.**
- It will provide health insurance cover free of cost to all those residents of Jammu and Kashmir, who are presently not covered under AB-PMJAY or Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana.
- It will have the same benefits as available under AB-PMJAY with an annual health insurance cover of **Rs. 5 lakh per family on floater basis.**
- The health department will be launching a beneficiary registration drive to distribute **Golden Cards (e-cards)** amongst the beneficiaries soon.
- The socio-economic caste census (SECC) 2011 data will be used for identification of families for the scheme since the families suffering from any of the deprivations defined under SECC are already covered under AB-PMJAY.

## J&K Horticulture Dept launches "Backyard Horticulture" programme under CAPEX scheme in Jammu district

- In **Jammu and Kashmir**, the **Horticulture Department** has launched the Flagship programme **"Backyard Horticulture"** under **CAPEX scheme** at Panchyat Jaswan in Marh block of **Jammu district**.
- Under the programme, **at least three fruit plantscosting Rs. 200** will be distributed among the farmers **at 90% subsidy** covering 600 households in Zone Marh.
- The main aim of the programme is to promote organic fruit production for home consumption and to fulfill individual requirement.
- A demonstration on the cultural practices to be adopted while planting these fruit plants in the backyard of the houses to keep away the insect and diseases was also given to the farmers and they were advised to plant these fruit plants in the backyard of their house to increase green cover for preservation of the environment.

## J-K LG Launches NGDRS For Online Registration In Sale Or Purchase Of Land

- **Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor (LG)Manoj Sinha** launched the **National Generic Document Registration System (NGDRS),** marking a major shift from the existing manual registration system to online registration for transactions in sale or purchase of land.
- "The NGDRS represents a major shift from the existing manual registration system to online registration of all transactions in sale-purchase/transfer of land and the stamp papers have been replaced by e-stamps which have been incorporated in coordination with Stockholding Corporation of India," an official statement stated.
- The overall intent is to ensure hassle-free service delivery and transparency in the registration process by online uploading of the document, appointment with the registration office, e-stamp and a one-time visit to the registration office.
- "The entire process has been reduced to 15 minutes, which earlier would take several days in view of multiple steps involved. Now, all five steps are under the digital process," the LG remarked.
- Apart from Srinagar district, four other districts -- Jammu, Samba, Kathua and Udhampur have also been included under NGDRS coverage.

- "The Lieutenant Governor directed the officers to launch the system in the rest of the Union Territory before October 31, 2020. He remarked that the launching of NGDRS is a big step towards national integration and a leap towards 'One Nation, One Software'," the statement stated.

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

## Karnataka CM flags off RO-RO train service between Bengaluru and Solapur

- Karnataka Chief Minister **BS Yediyurappa** flagged off **Roll-On/Roll-Off (RO-RO) train between Bengaluru (Nelamangala) to Solapur (Maharashtra)** through video conferencing. CM Yediyurappa flagged off the RO-RO train from Nelamangala station on the outskirts of Bengaluru at 9.15 am.
- Explaining about the RO-RO service, the South Western Railway (SWR) stated it will have open flat wagon on which trucks with goods are loaded. The driver and cleaner of the lorries sit in their vehicles. They are dropped at a particular point from which they drive off.
- The train will take 17 hours to reach its final destination which is at a distance of about 682 kms.As many as 42 trucks with goods can be carried at time in this train.
- The train will run via Dharmavaram, Guntakal, Raichur and Wadi to reach Bale near Solapur in Maharashtra.
- According to SWR, the RO-RO service reduces accidents on the road, improves safety, saves fuel, and foreign exchange. It ensures faster transport of essential goods, perishables, food items and smaller cargo, it stated.
- While it facilitates large-scale movement of goods and reduces pollution, the cost of transport is lesser than transport by road.

## Karnataka clears Rs 600 crore watershed project

- The **Karnataka** Cabinet approved a**Rs 600 cr** project - **Rejuvenating Watersheds for Agriculture Resilience through Innovative Development (REWARD) -** for the benefit of 20 taluks with low groundwater levels in Karnataka.
- While the World Bank will fund 70% of the project (Rs 420 crore), 30% of the expenses (Rs 180 crore) will be borne by the state government.
- The project will benefit farmers to cultivate in 10 lakh hectares of land in taluks such as Shikaripura in Shivamogga district, Kolar in Kolar district, Sira in Tumakuru, Arasikere in Hassan, Hirekerur in Haveri and 15 others.
- The government also sanctioned **Rs 377.46 crore** for two medical colleges being constructed under Centrally-sponsored schemes. While Rs 309 crore was sanctioned for Yadgir Medical College, the remaining amount is for Haveri Medical College.
- A new tender to operate **700 Arogya Kavacha ambulances** in Karnataka was also approved during the Cabinet meeting.  The government also sanctioned **Rs 85 crore** for **Fishing Port** at Maravanthe in Uttara Kannada district.
- The ambitious project worth **Rs 450 crore** for ensuring water falls at Jog perennially was scrapped and Rs 120 crore was sanctioned for constructing rope way, amphitheatre, parking facility .

## Karnataka CM launches first integrated air ambulance service

- **Karnataka Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa** unveiled the **country's first integrated air ambulance service** jointly launched by the **International Critical Air Transfer Team (ICATT)** and the **Kyathi** in the city.
- ICATT, a team comprising emergency medical service experts, and Kyathi, an aviation technology firm, have come together to start the country's first integrated air-ambulance service.
- The fixed wing air ambulance will be stationed at the **HAL airport in Bengaluru**.
- The ambulance is equipped with state-of-the-art **German Isolation Pod**. ICATT-Kyathi will also enable safe transportation for critical Covd-19 patients.

## Hubballi Railway Station renamed after spiritualist

- **Hubballi Railway Station** will now be known as ''Shree Siddharoodha Swamiji Railway Station Hubballi.''
- The proposal for name-change was made by the Karnataka government and the Union Home Ministry has given the green signal.
- The State government to now issue the required gazette notification spelling the new name accordingly in Devnagri (Hindi), Roman (English) and regional languages.

## Karnataka CM launches 'Arthika Spandana' loan disbursal scheme

- **Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa** launched the **"Arthika Spandana"** programme of **disbursing loans** to the tune of **Rs. 39,300 crore** through various **cooperative institutions.**
- Under this scheme, **Rs.15,300 crore** would be disbursed to the **agriculture sector** while a sum of **Rs.24,000 crore** would be earmarked for the **non-agricultural sector**.
- The Centre had granted Rs.4,525 crore to the State to for strengthening farmers' producers' organisations and primary agricultural cooperatives, among others. Under the scheme, the primary agricultural cooperatives would be upgraded as multi-service centres.
- The department had set a target of disbursing crop loans to the tune of Rs.15,300 crore this year. So far, Rs.7,929.30 crore had been disbursed to 12.11 lakh farmers at zero and 3 per cent interest rates.
- The government had recently released **Rs.1,885 crore** as incentive to **dairy farmers** at a rate of Rs.5 per litre. Similarly a new scheme had been taken up to provide loans at zero per cent interest rate to dairy farmers and fishermen.

## NABARD embarking on Sanitation Literacy Campaign in KarnatakaAR

- The **National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development, NABARD** is embarking on a **Sanitation Literacy Campaign** in **Karnataka t**o create awareness on good hygiene and sanitation practices among rural masses. The campaign will commence on Gandhi Jayanti on **October 2nd** and continue until January 26th next year.
- The  bank stated that under Swachh Bharat Mission they supported the construction of 3.29 crore household toilets disbursing 27,298 crore rupees across the country. The country is today Open Defecation Free (ODF) and efforts are on to implement the next phase of ODF by educating the rural population about water, sanitation and hygiene in 2000 villages covering one lakh population.

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

## Thykoodam-Petta stretch of Kochi metro inaugurated in Kerala

- Kerala Chief Minister **Pinarayi Vijayan** inaugurated the final stretch of **the Phase-I construction** of the **Kochi metro'sThykoodam-Petta** stretch via video conferencing. The inauguration was presided by **Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri.**
- Phase-1 of the Kochi Metro is now complete at a cost of **Rs 6218 crores.**
- The proposal for Phase-2 of Kochi Metro is under active consideration of Govt of India and would be approved soon.
- Kochi Metro has dedicated walls at Petta station, which is newly built for the fishermen community who saved thousands during the 2018 Kerala floods.

## Kerala CM launches model project for SC,ST students

- Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan launched **the first phase of a model project** that aims to improve and facilitate the **education of students** belonging to **Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe.**
- The government provides **financial assistance of Rs 2 lakhs** to the **members of SC community** to set up a **study room adjacent to their house.**

- Study materials including computer will be made available when the room is completed.
- The inauguration of the completion of 12,250 study rooms across the state.
- Under the same project, community (public) study rooms are being set up for the students from Scheduled Tribe and 250 community study rooms have already been completed using public facilities such as community halls.
- The most important thing is that breakfast and lunch are arranged for the students studying here.
- An order has been issued to sanction up to Rs 25 lakhs for SC students pursuing PG courses in top universities abroad.

## Govt To Set Up First Medical Device Park MedSpark In Kerala
- **Kerala** will soon house one of the **first medical device parks in the country,** focusing on the high-risk medical device sector to provide a full range of services for the medical devices industry like R&D support, testing, and evaluation.
- **MedSpark**, the medical devices park envisaged as a joint initiative of **Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences & Technology (SCTIMST)**, an autonomous institute of the **Department of Science and Technology (DST),** Govt. of India, and the **Kerala State Industrial Development Corporation Ltd (KSIDC),** the industrial and investment promotion agency of the Government of Kerala is going to be established in the Life Science Park, Thonnakkal, Thiruvananthapuram.
- The Medical Devices Park will create an enabling support system for R&D, testing and evaluation of medical devices, manufacturing support, technology innovation, and knowledge dissemination, all of which are the full range of services that the medical devices industry seeks.
- These services can be utilized by the medical device industries located within the MedSpark as well from other parts of India. This will benefit small and medium-sized medical devices industries, which dominate the medical devices sector.

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

## Madhya Pradesh govt launches campaign 'Gandagi Bharat Chhodo'
- In **Madhya Pradesh**, a massive **'Gandagi Bharat Chhodo'** campaign was launched by the State Government. Urban Development and Housing Minister Bhupendra Singh stated that this campaign has been given the shape of a mass movement.
- The campaign was divided into five themes- **Cleanliness Oath, Continuous reduction in urban waste emissions, Cleanliness in COVID conditions, Separation of waste from sources of houses** and **Launching a special cleanliness campaign for public places**.
- Around 35 lakh citizens took part in the campaign in 378 urban bodies in Madhya Pradesh. Around 10 thousand Corona Warrior sanitation workers have also been honoured. Awareness programmes were organized in seven thousand 178 settlements under the campaign.
- A total of 18 thousand 560 challans were made against polythene carry-bags. Urban Development and Housing Minister informed that ranking of urban bodies will be done on the basis of work under this campaign. Bodies coming in good rankings will be awarded by the Chief Minister.

## Madhya Pradesh reintroduces Deendayal Rasoi Scheme for meals at Rs 10
- **Deendayal Antyodaya Rasoi Scheme** to provide **meals** at a subsidised rate **to underprivileged people** was **re-introduced** in **Madhya Pradesh**. Now the rate per thali has been increased **to Rs 10 from Rs 5.**
- The scheme, which was launched in **2017 in 49 districts** of the state in the name of BJP ideologue Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, had been discontinued by the previous Congress government in May 2019.
- Then chief minister Kamal Nath had announced to introduce Indira Thali scheme to provide food to poor people at a subsidised rate but the scheme couldn't be implemented.

- After coming to power in March this year, chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan made an announcement of reintroducing the scheme.

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

- **Madhya Kshetra Vidyut Vitran Company** (central discom) has become the **first power distribution company** in the country to adopt **e-office system**. It is effectively being run in corporate office, offices of regional chief general manager and circles. The company has been e-filing and doing correspondence through **NIC e-office system** from 27 July. The e-office system has been running for the last one-and-a-half months.
- More than a dozen IT applications are operational in central discom along with the e-office system. In the e-applications created by the company, all the consumers of HT and LT, agricultural consumers, non-domestic consumers and other categories are being provided new connections along with increase/decrease in load through online application.
- Similarly, many options of online bill payment have been made available to consumers, which are being used by about 7 to 8 lakh consumers. Many applications such as bill payment facility, UPAY app, maintenance app, self meter reading facility, enterprise resources planning have been implemented in the company through Common Service Centre in the villages.

## Madhya Pradesh to celebrate 'Anna utsav' on eve of PM Modi's birthday

- **Madhya Pradesh** will celebrate an **'Anna Utsav' (food grains festival)**on September 16, the eve of **PM Narendra Modi's birthday**, during which 37 lakh new **below poverty line (BPL) beneficiaries** will be covered under the government's scheme **to provide food grains to them on highly subsidised rates.**
- Under the scheme, the beneficiaries will get rice, wheat and salt at Re 1 per kg. Every beneficiary will get 5 kg of food grains per month.

## Madhya Pradesh targets household tap connections in all rural areas under Jal Jeevan Mission by 2023ic

- Rural families of **Madhya Pradesh** will be provided with **clean drinking water** through tap connection. Approximately **Rs. 197 crores**have been approved in State government's rural tap water scheme.
- Public Health Engineering Department is constructing water infrastructure so that rural families of Madhya Pradesh can be provided with clean drinking water through tap connection. A target has been set to complete the scheme in the rural areas of the entire state by year **2023** under the **Jal Jeevan Mission**.

## MP celebrates 4th day of 'Gharib Kalyan Week' as ' Vanadhikar Diwas'

- In Madhya Pradesh, **Gharib Kalyan Week** is being organized from **16th to 23rd September** to mark the **Birthday of Prime Minister Narendra Modi**.
- On the **fourth day of the week, 'Vanadhikar Diwas'** was celebrated in the State.
- On the 'Vanadhikar Diwas', **more than23,000 forest rights pattas** were **distributed** in **47 districts of the State**.
- Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan in Bhopal and Ministers as well as public representatives have distributed forest right pattas to the beneficiaries in other districts.

## Mukhymantri Kisan Kalyan Yojana' to be start in Madhya Pradesh

- **Mukhymantri Kisan Kalyan Yojana** is being started in **Madhya Pradesh** on the lines of **Pradhanmantri Kisan Samman Nidhi**.
- Under this scheme, additional financial assistance of **Rs. 4,000** will be given to the eligible beneficiaries of Prime Minister Kisan Samman Nidhi.

- About 80 lakh farmers of Madhya Pradesh will be benefited by the Chief Minister Kisan Kalyan Yojana. Now they will be able to get an annual assistance of **Rs. 10,000**.Apart from this, farmer friendly schemes will be integrated into the state and implemented as a package.
- Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan was addressing the **'Sabko Sakh-Sabka Vikas'** program organized under the Garib Kalyan Week at Minto Hall in Bhopal.
- The Chief Minister deposited an amount of Rs 800 crore in the accounts of cooperative banks and societies along with disbursement of loans and credit cards to farmers.

## Madhya Pradesh CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan launches scheme on lines of PM-Kisan

- **Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhaninaugurated 'Mukhyamantri Kisan Kalyan Yojna'** on the lines of Centre's **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-Kisan) Scheme.**
- The Chief Minister announced that **Rs.4,000 will be transferred** to accounts of 1,75,000 farmers in the state **every year in two instalments under the scheme**.
- Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Scheme under which Rs.6,000 will be transferred to farmers annually. MP government thought to increase Rs.4,000 further so that **farmers can get Rs.10, 000 annually.**
- Chouhan also performed the **Bhoomi Pujan of the Rs.2,400 crore**-**Narmada Irrigation Project** at a function in **Sanwar, Indore district.**

## Maharashtra

## SIDBI, Maharashtra Govt ink pact to develop MSME ecosystem

- **Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)** has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the **Maharashtra Government** to develop the **micro, small and medium enterprise (MSME)** ecosystem in the state.
- Under the agreement, **a Project Management Unit (PMU)** will be deployed by SIDBI with the Government of Maharashtra, SIDBI stated.
- The role of the PMU will be to design schemes/programmes in the areas of equity support, interest subvention, resolution of stressed MSMEs, supporting MSME entrepreneurs and facilitate other need-based intervention based on evaluation of the existing status of MSMEs, it added.

## Mumbai International airport put in place QR code-enabled check-in mechanism

- **Mumbai International airport** has put in place a **QR code-enabled contactless** check-in mechanism for the passengers. Mumbai International Airport Limited stated that the touch less technology solution is a vital step in reducing passenger contact with kiosk surfaces and is in full compliance with the civil aviation ministry's passenger processing guidelines.
- The QR code-enabled contactless check-in facility at Mumbai International Airport allows passengers to use their mobile phones to remotely operate check-in and self-bag drop kiosks for printing boarding passes and bag tags. Even before the pandemic, MIAL had introduced technologies like common use self-service check-in kiosks, self-baggage drop counters, and e-gates that allow passengers to scan their boarding pass to proceed to security check.

## Maharashtra CM announces 'My Family-My Responsibility' campaign to fight Covid-19

- **Maharashtra government** has launched **My family-My Responsibility** campaign.
- This involved a massive effort to reach out to every home in the state to assess the health condition of its residents, and provided medical help and guidance if needed.

## Maharashtra govt accords ambulance status to vehicles carrying medical oxygen for one year

- In **Maharashtra,** the State Government has accorded **ambulance status** to the **vehicles carrying medical oxygen** for **one year**. A notification was issued in this regard.
- The decision was taken in view of the spread of COVID-19 pandemic and the necessity of uninterrupted oxygen supply to various hospitals in the state. State Government has accorded ambulance status to vehicles carrying medical oxygen for one year.
- The notification in this regard says that such vehicles will be considered as vehicles on **emergency and disaster management duties**.

## Govt launches road accident insurance scheme named after Balasaheb Thackeray

- **Maharashtra state government** launched a **new road accident insurance scheme** named **after late Shiv Sena chief Balasaheb Thackeray,** to provide timely treatment to victims that could help to reduce the fatality rate.
- Under the Balasaheb Thackeray Accidental Insurance Scheme, an accident victim will be provided treatment in nearby hospitals in the first 72 hours of the incident.
- Treatment up to **Rs 30,000 will be provided free of charge** from about 74 treatment procedures, including treatment in the intensive care unit (ICU) and ward, fractures as well as meals in the hospital.
- **An accident victim of any state or the country can avail the benefits of the scheme** if he or she meets with a **road accident within Maharashtra.**

## Maharashtra governor launches cancer institute's chemo recovery kits

- **Maharashtra Governor** Bhagat Singh launched the ayurvedic **'chemo recovery kits'** developed by a Pune-based **cancer research institute** and called for joint research by scientists in **Ayurveda** and modern medicine for cancer treatment.
- The **chemo recovery kits**, containing an ayurvedic formulation and developed by the Integrated Cancer Treatment and Research Centre of the **Bharatiya Sanskriti Darshan Trust, Pune** with financial assistance from the Tata Trusts, were launched by Koshyari at the Raj Bhavan.

## Maharashtra bans sale of loose cigarettes, beedis; becomes first state to do so

- **Maharashtra** government has banned the sale of unpackaged "**loose" cigarettes and beedis**, making it the first Indian state to so. The move is aimed at ensuring that customers see the graphic, public health warnings mandated on cigarette packaging.
- As per a notification issued by the state public health department on September 24, the state has imposed "complete ban on the sale of single stick loose cigarette and beedis.
- The decision is in sync with sub-section (2) of section 7 of Cigarette and other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce Production, Supply & Distribution) Act, 2003, the order, signed by principal secretary (health) Dr Pradeep Vyas, stated.
- Maharashtra has the lowest smoking rate in the country, data from the Global Tobacco Youth Survey 2016 showed.

<div align="center" style="color:red">Manipur</div>

## Manipur college receives two National Service Scheme Award 2018-19

- The **National Service Scheme Award 2018-19** were conferred by the President of India to the awardees of different categories. In Manipur, a college located in a remote hill area has received two awards including Best Program Officer Award.
- **Sister Sweta William Parmar, Program Officer** NSS Unit of Don Bosco College Maram Centre of Senapati District Manipur has been conferred the Award in the category of Program Officer. She told that altogether 10 awards to the

officers across the country were conferred in the category and she is the only one from the entire North East Region. Her college also bagged the **Best NSS Unit award** for dedicated service to the community.

## India's Largest Piggery Mission Launched In Meghalaya

- **India's largest piggery mission** worth Rs 209 crores, was launched **in Meghalaya** by the Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, **Kailash Choudhary.**
- The **Co-op lender NCDC organized an event** on the occasion of the hand-over of the first tranche of financial assistance amounting to **Rs 53 crores** at its headquarters in Delhi in which Conrad Sangma, Chief Minister of Meghalaya and Prestone Tynsong, Deputy Chief Minister deputy were present.
- The project envisages setting up of 300 satellite pig breeding farms, small slaughterhouses, product transport small vehicles and pork vending kiosks. It also includes a pig feed storage unit, quality certification facility and pilot facility for processed products, brand promotion and market support for exports.
- The State govt has set up **Meghalaya Livestock Enterprises Advancement Society (M-LEADS)** consisting of Principal Secretary, Animal Husbandry & Veterinary as Chairman and Commissioner & Secretary, Finance & Cooperation Departments as Chief Executive Officer.
- The project is proposed to fulfill objectives like **sustainable livelihood development** through formation of multipurpose cooperatives structure, well channelized backward and forward linkages, production and marketing of clean hygienic pork/pork products and socio-economic upliftment of the weaker sections of society in Meghalaya.

## HIKAI Online academic classes inaugurated at Ramakrishna Mission Sec School in East Khasi Hills district

- The **Ramkrishna Mission Centres** of Sohra and Shillong in a joint venture successfully demonstrated the technological capability of conducting online classes in a no-internet zone by using intra-net. Online academic classes of **HIKAI (Hybrid Interactive Knowledge Assimilation Initiative)** from classes 1 to 12 were inaugurated at Ramakrishna Mission Secondary School, Sohbar of East Khasi Hills district.
- The Ramakrishna Mission launched the online classes for any student studying under the **Meghalaya Board of Secondary Education (MBOSE).** The aim is to provide these services to the remotest corner in Meghalaya where internet availability is a major issue.
- Moreover, these areas suffer from a lack of quality teachers. So the "HIKAI" programme bridges the gap between rural and urban children through technology.

## Nagaland launches Naga Telehealth platform

- The **Nagaland** health and family welfare department launched the **Naga Telehealth platform** in **Kohima.**
- Naga Telehealth is a virtual platform where patients can avail the services of doctors and specialists at the comfort of their home virtually without having to visit any health centres.
- Launched in partnership with **USTATED NISHTHA-Jhpiego**, the platform is aimed at ensuring that even the people living in the most remote places have access to qualified medical practitioners and specialists.
- Naga Telehealth is a very important initiative and vital in providing quality and affordable health care facilities to everyone in the state regardless of where they live.

## Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik Launches First Of Its Kind Garima Scheme For Sanitation Workers

- **Odisha government** launched a **statewide initiative for the safety and dignity** of the **core sanitation workers** in the state.
- The first-of-its-kind **'Garima' scheme** aims at providing **social security and financial benefits to the workers** and **their families.**
- An initial corpus fund of **Rs 50 crore** will be created for which the state government has proposed to set up a state commission for sanitation workers.
- The scheme aims to identify through state wide survey and register core sanitation workers, mandates registration of sanitation service providers, ensures provision of necessary machines and appropriate PPEs to ensure safe working conditions.
- All core sanitation workers will receive skilling and training to improve their skills. Additionally, they will have access to counselling support to acquire new skills and financial support if they choose an alternative livelihood, if they wish so.
- Some of the benefits include introduction of special category of wages for core sanitation work, introduction of Risk& Hardship allowance, financial assistance to the families in the event of accident or injury, financial support in the form of House Grant and purchase of two wheelers to the extent of 90 per cent of the cost.
- The Government of Odisha will also provide welfare benefits like health and life insurance, disability support, periodic health check-ups, housing, educational support, mobility support and mobile support.

## Odisha Govt to launch Radio Pathshala program for students upto class 8

- In view of the prevailing pandemic, **Odisha Government** is launching **Radio Pathshala program** for students upto class 8. The program will be broadcast from All India Radio stations in the state for 15 minutes daily.
- The School and Mass Education department has turned to All India Radio as an effective medium for learning for about 60 lakh students in the government and aided schools across the state.
- More than **ten Akshvani Kendras** in the state will carry the classes between 10 to 1015 hours daily from Monday to Friday.
- The audio of the program will also be made available on the **online DIKSHA platform** for the students for whom schools have been kept out of bounds since March this year.
- The government has already cut the school syllabus down by 30% for 2020-21 academic session.

## Odisha to be slum-free in three years: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik

- The **slum upgradation and de-listing initiative** aims at improving the living conditions of 18 lakh slum dwellers by providing them with piped water supply, paved roads, storm water drains, street lights, sanitation, household electricity, community spaces and recreational areas.
- On the occasion, the Chief Minister initiated the second phase of distribution of **land entitlement certificates (LECs)** from Balasore through video conference. This will benefit 1.05 lakh families in the entire State.
- Distribution of LECs has come ahead of the by-poll to the Balasore Assembly constituency which is likely to be announced by the Election Commission of India (ECI) soon. About 2,054 persons of 41 slums of Balasore were provided LECs.
- An MoU was signed between the Housing and Urban Development department and Delhi-based **Centre for Policy Research (CPR)**. The CPR will be the knowledge partner for the implementation of the project.

<div align="center">Rajasthan</div>

## MSME Minister Nitin Gadkari inaugurates Technology Centre at Bhiwadi in Rajasthan

- Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, MSMEs, Nitin Gadkari inaugurated Technology Centre at Bhiwadi in Alwar District of Rajasthan through video conferencing.
- Mr Gadkari stated, the manufacturing sector contributes around 22 to 24 per cent in the GDP of the country. The Government is establishing 15 new Technology Centres and upgrading existing 18 Centres to create skilled human resources. He added that skilled manpower is must to make India a manufacturing hub.
- Mr Gadkari stated, the Government is thinking of providing loans to the Technology Centres to enable them to buy new machinery and new technology to cater to the needs of local industries. He informed that work on Extension.

## SVP Group inks MoU with Rajasthan govt to invest Rs 4,000 cr in aviation, textile sectors

- The Rajasthan government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with ShriVallabh Pittie (SVP) International Group for development of facilities related to aviation, defence and textile sectors.
- Investment of Rs 4,000 crore is estimated under the projects which would generate employment for more than 4,000 people, an official release stated.
- The MoU was signed between the company representatives and state industry department officials in presence of Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot.
- The company proposed to develop a project for defence and aerospace, including aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) facility, aviation academy and a project related to textile.
- The projects are proposed to be developed at mutually agreed locations in the state.
- The state government also directed to constitute a committee under the chairmanship of Principal Secretary, Industries for speedy implementation of the projects, the release stated

## Rajasthan government signs pact with SIDBI to develop MSME ecosystem

- Rajasthan's Department of Industries and SIDBI will work together to provide financial, technical, marketing and export support to MSMEs in the state.
- The Small Industries Development Bank of India (Sidbi) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Rajasthan government to develop the MSME ecosystem in the state.
- Micro, Small and Medium enterprises (MSMEs) provide maximum employment opportunities and also have an effective share in exports.
- The state government is taking steps to understand and solve the problems of MSMEs. The agreement with Sidbi is also a growing step in this direction.

## Gehlot approves "Moksha Kalash Yojana-2020"

- Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot approved a Rajasthan State Road Transport Corporation's scheme to allow free bus travel to two members of a family to immerse ashes of their loved ones in the Ganga in Haridwar.
- The state road transport corporation would be the nodal agency to run the scheme, named "Moksha Kalash Yojana-2020".
- The work related to online registration of passengers, arrangements for transport to the destination, facilities provided during the journey will be done by the Rajasthan State Road Transport Corporation.
- At the time of registration, complete details will have to be given about the dead person and the copies of related documents, like death certificate, will have to be kept with those carrying the ashes.

<center>Tamil Nadu</center>

## Tamil Nadu Govt constitutes 7- member panel to look into NEP-2020

- The **Tamil Nadu Government** has constituted a **seven member panel** to look into the **National Education Policy-2020.**
- The committee will be headed by the state education department principal secretary **Dheeraj Kumar** with **six former vice chancellors** as the members.
- The higher level committee will go through the policy and make recommendations that are feasible for adoption.

## Virudhunagar district of Tamil Nadu selected as fully Digital Economy district

- **Virudhunagar district of Tamil Nadu**, which houses a large number of small and medium enterprises, especially in the fire crackers and allied sectors, has been selected by the Central Government as the state's **first Fully Digital Economy district**.
- All industrial units and commercial establishments in the district are at present implementing various forms of **cashless transactions.**
- These include widespread use of ATM debit cards, increased usage of internet banking, widespread use of QR codes etc.

## Tamil Nadu govt releases policy for electronics & hardware manufacturing

- **Tamil Nadu government** announced **a new electronics & hardware manufacturing policy** to increase the State's electronics industry output to **$100 billion by 2025.**
- The state hopes to contribute 25 per cent of India's total electronic exports to the world by 2025.
- The policy also undertakes skill training for more than 1,00,000 people (semi-skilled and skilled) by 2024 to meet the incremental human resource requirement projected by NSDC for Tamil Nadu in Electronics and Hardware Manufacturing sector.
- It also targets to increase the level of value addition that is done in Tamil Nadu, especially across focus sectors such as mobile handsets, LED products, chip designs, PCBs, solar photovoltaic cells, medical electronics, and automotive electronics.
- For core investments the policy has identified districts in three categories. For investments worth Rs 200-500 crore capital subsidy in category A district would be 15 per cent, in category B district 20 per cent and in C category district 25 per cent. For investments over Rs 500 crore capital subsidy in A district would be 18 per cent, B district 24 per cent and in C district 30 per cent.
- The state is also planning to set up a **Mega Electropreneur Centre (MEC)** in the form of a Centre of Excellence for Hardware, Products & Ventures to facilitate easy access and to make it practical to build a robust ecosystem for start-ups and entrepreneurs.

## Tamil Nadu CM Edappadi Palaniswami launched portal for Eye Donation

- Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami launched the website **www.hmis.tn.gov.in/eye-donor** designed by the **National Health Mission Tamil Nadu** to help donors.
- He has pledged to donate his eyes during National Eye Donation Fortnight in Tamil Nadu.
- He has initiated the state-led portal for eye donation enabling people who are willing to pledge to donate their eyes.
- The website will be useful in creating a registry for eye donation in Tamil Nadu. Besides, the website will also be useful in creating a registry for eye donation in Tamil Nadu.

## 111th Birth Anniversary of 1st CM of Tamil Nadu C. N. Annadurai being celebrated

- **On Sept 15<sup>th</sup>2020** is the **111th Birth Anniversary** of the **first Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu C. N. Annadurai,** popularly known as **Arignar Anna**.

He was also a Member of Rajya Sabha from 1963 to 1967. Well known for his powerful oratorical skills, Anna was a prolific writer too.

- Several functions are being conducted in various parts of the state in memory of Arignar Anna.
- The Tamil University in Thanjavoor has announced a 50 per cent discount sale of its prestigious publications in connection with Anna Birth Anniversary.

## TN to launch SkillTech varsity for varied courses

- **Tamil Nadu** is taking the lead in imparting students with training on future skills, with plans to launch a **SkillTech University** to offer courses in different sectors, including automotive and power. **SkillTech University** will be an online platform and will be beneficial to all stakeholders, including government, industries and students.
- A blueprint of SkillTech University was launched at CII Connect 2020. SkillTech will be a convergence of skill education, the university format and use technology to implement the same, stated R Narayanan, National Leader, Education and Skill Development, KPMG, which is partnering with the State in this initiative.
- SkillTech University will have a strong industry and academic collaborations to offer highly relevant skill training to target students. The initial funding and patronage will be provided by the State government. It will offer deep industry engagement; technology-led and future skills focussed learning; up-to-date curricula in line with evolving industry requirements and flexible learning experience, he stated.
- There will also be AI-enabled career counselling for learners to formulate multiple and choose optional career paths, he stated. SkillTech will have courses on automotive, power, manufacturing, health care and construction.

## One Nation One Ration card system to be rolled out in Tamil Nadu on Oct 1

- **One Nation One Ration card system** will be rolled out in **Tamil Nadu** on **October 1st** of this year.
- This was announced by the State Food and Civil Supplies Minister Kamaraj.
- The national rollout of a 'One Nation, One Ration Card' system in **all states and Union Territories** by **March 2021.**
- As of now, about 26 states and UTs have come on board to implement the inter-state ration card portability.

## Tamil Nadu becomes first state to unveil ethical AI, blockchain, cybersecurity policies in country

- **Tamil Nadu** becomes the **first state to come out** with **Tamil Nadu Safe and Ethical Artificial Intelligence (AI), Blockchain and Cybersecurity policies in the country**.
- The policies were unveiled by **Chief Minister Edapaddi K Palaniswami** during the valedictory session of the 19th edition of **Connect 2020**.
- The state would soon be rolling out Knowledge Proof Identity Based Services Delivery Project, which will revolutionise the way government services are offered to citizens.
- The project will be implemented by establishing and leveraging the **State Family Data Base (SFDB) and Block-Chain Backbone infrastructure.**
- The platform **'Nambikkai Inaiyam' (Blockchain Backbone)** would help establish a single trusted source that would be used to create an efficient and manipulation resilient system for government services.
- The policy recommends -- six dimensional framework, transparency and audit, accountability and legal challenges, misuse protection, digital divide and data deficit among others.
- Similarly, the **cybersecurity policy**, which was also unveiled, is being framed to protect the information assets of the government (Infrastructure, Software, Citizen Services) and maximize their availability to the government and the citizens.
- The policy will also develop a **Comprehensive Security Risk Reduction Strategy** and establish enterprise approach to security policy and governance.

## Telangana Assembly passes TS-bPASS Bill

- The **Telangana State Building Permission Approval** and **Self Certification System (TS-bPASS) Bill**, was passed in the Assembly enabling a self-certification system to make citizens responsible for compliance with building and layout permission rules
- According to the new law, for constructing building within 75 sq yards land just registering with the urban local body using TS-bPASS is enough. People constructing houses in 75- 600 sq yards can seek instant permission for constructions through self-certification under TS-bPASS and start construction work.
- Like **TS-iPASS**, under **TS-bPASS**, individual residential building permissions are given instantly online based on **self certification**.
- It is proposed to establish a State Level TS-bPASS Chasing Cell to ensure that all the proposals under Single Window System are disposed within the time frame of 21 days and will also coordinate with the line departments for adherence of timelines.

## Telangana Minister Launches Farm Cooperative Society Website

- Telangana IT and Industries Minister KT Rama Rao (KTR) launched the **Primary Agricultural Co-Operative Society** (PACS), **Pothgal web portal**. The minister launched the web portal: www.pacspothgal.com
- This society is located in Pothgal village of Mustabad Mandal in Rajanna Siricilla District.
- PACS Pothgal is the **first PACS** in India to come up with a web portal that has all the details of loans, loan processes, and services offered by the society.
- Information related to the finished and upcoming projects such as petrol bunks, godowns, food processing industries, ATMs, office buildings, are mentioned on the website.
- The website also provides information related to various services including paddy procurement with figures, fixed deposits and lockers.
- The website is available in Telugu and English, and regularly provides the latest news and offers related to the society.
- An easy to use dashboard is underway to help farmers understand the loan processing and use services provided by the society.
- The farmers can also utilise the feedback section to write their complaints and suggestions.

## Tripura receives first ever inland shipping cargo from Bangladesh

- The Daukandi (Bangladesh) - Sonamura (Tripura) Inland Waterway Protocol route was operationalised marking a milestone in India-Bangladesh relations.
- "Bangladeshi vessel, MB Premier carrying cement started from Daukandi on September 3, 2020, and will reach Sonamura on September 5, 2020, traversing 93 km along the river Gumti. This would be the first-ever export consignment from Bangladesh to Tripura through the inland waterways," the government stated in a release.
- The Protocol for Inland Water Trade & Transit (PIWTT) was signed between India and Bangladesh in 1972 to provide inland waterways connectivity between the two countries, particularly with the North Eastern Region of India and also to enhance bilateral trade.

- In the last year, approx. 3.5 MMT of cargo was transported between India and Bangladesh on the protocol routes. The scope of PIWTT has been further expanded by the signing of the second addendum to PIWTT on May 20, 2020, with the inclusion of additional routes and ports of calls.
- The inclusion of Sonamura - Daudkhandi stretch of the Gumti river (93 km) as a new route in the Protocol will improve the connectivity of Tripura and the adjoining States with Indian and Bangladesh's economic centers and will help the hinterland of both the countries.

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

## UP govt decides to set up exclusive anti-electricity theft police stations in every district

- **Uttar Pradesh** government has decided to set up **exclusive anti-electricity theft police stations** in every district of state to address the problem of frequent cases of power theft. An order issued by home department stated that one police station dedicated to deal with the issue of power theft will be opened in all 75 districts out of which 63 has already started functioning.
- The government has also raised the number of enforcement teams from 33 to 88 to launch a crackdown against those involved in power pilferage. As many as 53 teams are already functioning.
- The release says that this year, 20,401 cases of power theft were registered and a compounded fine of Rs 2.75 crore was realised from the offenders.

## Uttar Pradesh to create Udyog Bandhu-like body for farmers

- **Uttar Pradesh (UP)** is all set to create a dedicated body, on the lines of **Udyog Bandhu**, to assist enterprising **farmer producer organisations (FPOs)** in investing in projects for post-harvest infrastructure management and community farming assets with the help of the **Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF)** that the Centre had announced in August, sources revealed.
- The UP cabinet is likely to clear the FPOs policy, 2020 soon in the wake of the Central government's decision to form 10,000 such units in the country by **2023-24**.
- The Central government plans to make **Rs 1 lakh crore AIF** available to banks that will finance these projects.
- "The new body will be headed by an official to be designated as the chief executive officer (CEO), who will be assisted by officials to be drawn from other departments such as agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry, dairy development on deputation," they added.
- The proposed policy also makes it mandatory for all government departments to chalk out action plans that are aligned to FPOs.
- The UP government will also coordinate with the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) to help FPOs get loans from banks either as working capital or to set up food processing units, cold stores, branding and packaging units, warehouses among others. Each FPO will be entitled to a maximum loan of Rs 2 crore.
- The FPOs can operate at district, state and national level for the product identified as per their requirement of processing, branding and marketing. One district, one product policy will get a thrust under this initiative.

## UP govt to allocate outlets under Public Distribution System to women SHGs

- In a major step towards self-reliance of the women in the state, **Uttar Pradesh** Government has decided to allocate outlets under **Public Distribution System** to **women self-help groups**. These are the outlets which are lying unattended in state. The move will expedite the food distribution to the needy hit by the pandemic.

- The State Government has decided to give women self-help groups priority during reallocation of PDS shops in rural and urban areas. Currently, there are more than **2,000 PDS shops** ready for reallocation in the state whose licences have been cancelled earlier due to different reasons.
- Rural Development Ministry has been asked to provide the details of those self-help groups who are functioning effectively and are able to run the PDS outlets.
- A letter in this regard has been sent to the concerned officials to complete the reallocation process as early as possible. During reallocation, first priority will be given to the self-help groups among others and if there happens to be more than one applicant for an outlet then the group with the highest number of active members will be given the preference. Government will also help these self help groups in running the shops properly.

## UP government signs pact with UN for take-home-ration scheme— move to benefit nearly 200 women self help groups

- The **Uttar Pradesh** government signed a **Memorandum of Understanding** with **United Nation World Food Programme** for manufacturing and distribution of **take-home ration** with the help of **Self Help Groups**.
- As per the MoU, take-home ration for child nutrition will be distributed through self-help groups in UP. In the first phase, the work of distributing about 30 percent of take-home ration will be done. The Self Help Groups will provide its products to the Uttar Pradesh Child Nutrition Department.
- Funds will be distributed to small scale industries after getting profit of about **160 crore rupees**. These small scale industries will supply their products to the government departments of the state. Most of these products will go to the Department of Child Development and Nutrition. Along with this, one big unit will also be set up in this MoU of UP World Food Program in Fatehpur and Unnao districts.

## UP govt to constitute special force

- **Uttar Pradesh government** has decided to constitute a **special force**. It will provide security to the high court, district courts, administrative offices and buildings, Metro rail, airports, banks, financial institutions, educational institutions and industrial units.
- In all, there will be 9,919 personnel in the force. Five battalions will be constituted in the first phase and it will be headed by an ADG-ranked officer. Expenses incurred in the first phase will be around 1,747 crore rupees.

## UP govt decides to give cows to families with malnourished children

- **Uttar Pradesh government** has decided to give **cows** to the families with **malnourished children**, which will ensure availability of milk for them. The step taken under the**'Poshan Abhiyan'campaign** will help in bringing down the level of malnourishment among children and women in the state.
- The State Government has decided to give cattle from its cow shelters in the state under the Chief Minister **DestituteCow Participation Scheme** to the families which have malnourished children or women as cow milk will be extremely useful in removing malnutrition.
- The cows will be given to the families who are willing to keep them and also have available space for them. If the family wishes so, it will also be given an opportunity to choose a cow at the cow shelter. An amount of 30 rupees per day will also be given through DBT to the family for taking care of the cow.

## UP govt launches unified portal 'U-Rise' to guide students in learning, career counselling, employment

- The Uttar Pradesh government has launched a unified portal called **'U-Rise'** to guide students in learning, career counselling, and getting employment in the state.
- Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath launched the portal in **Lucknow** . He termed it historic and stated it is the biggest reform programme in the education sector after the **National Education Policy (NEP)-2020.** He stated that the

programme would connect students with practical and technical knowledge. He added that Uttar Pradesh was the first state to launch a unified portal along with the implementation of NEP.

- About 20 lakh students, getting vocational and technical education, and technical experts will benefit from this portal. The e-content, e-library, and online courses available on this portal will be accessible by students even in the most interior areas of the state.
- This portal would benefit students and empower them by providing every possible information -- from online exams, digital content, digital assessment, digital examination papers, webinars, internship, e-library, recorded video content

## UP's First Conservation Centre For Vultures To Come Up In Gorakhpur Forest Division

- **Uttar Pradesh's first vulture conservation** and breeding centre is set to be established at **Bhari Baisi village** in Farenda range of **Gorakhpur forest division**, an official stated
- This vulture breeding and conservation centre will be the first in India which will be dedicated to king vulture and also the first vulture conservation and breeding centre in Uttar Pradesh, Kumar stated. the centre will be established on the lines of **Haryana's Pinjore vulture conservation and breeding centre**.

## West Bengal

## Kolkata's first library on tram unveiled, with free Wi-Fi and book events as add-ons

- Bibliophiles in Kolkata have a unique new place for reading that is an amalgamation of heritage and literature.
- In a first, the **West Bengal Transport Corporation (WBTC)** introduced a **tram library** in the city's iconic College street area. It will run on the **Shyambazar-Esplanade route**.
- The library will have books, magazines and special editions of various competitive examination books to attract readers from various educational institutions along its route. Officials stated books would be updated regularly. Commuters will also have access to free Wi-Fi, and authorities also plan to host events such as book launches and book reading sessions.
- The launch of the tram library came on a day when services resumed on the Shyambazar-Esplanade route. This is the fifth of the six tram routes, which had been damaged in Cyclone Amphan in May, currently functioning.
- Recently, the WBTC installed art in some trams, depicting how the services began in 1873, and were electrified in 1900. Electric tram cars have been a feature of the city since 1902.

## 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 | Bhagat Singh Koshyari (Additional Charge) |
| Gujarat | Gandhi Nagar | Vijaybhai R. Rupani | Acharya Dev Vrat |

| Haryana | Chandigarh | Manohar Lal Khattar | Satyadeo Narain Arya |
|---|---|---|---|
| Himachal Pradesh | Shimla | Jai Ram Thakur | BandaruDattatraya |
| Jharkhand | Ranchi | Hemant Soren | Droupadi 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 | Najma Heptulla |
| Meghalaya | Shillong | Conrad Sangma | Satya Pal Malik |
| 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

### PM Modi inaugurates college, administration buildings of Rani Lakshmi Bai Central Agricultural University in Jhansi

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** inaugurated college and administration buildings of the **Rani Lakshmi Bai (RLB) Central Agricultural University in Uttar Pradesh's Jhansi** through video conferencing.
- The RLB Central Agriculture University is located in Jhansi and is a prominent institute in the Bundelkhand region.
- This would improve the education infrastructure and contribute to cutting edge research in agriculture as well as further farmer welfare.

### Rs 601.12 crore annual action plan approved for PMKSY in J&K

- An amount of Rs 601,12 crore annual plan has been approved for Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) for the year 2020-21, an official spokesman stated .
- The Committee approved Rs. **601.12 crore** annual action plan of PMKSY for the year 2020-21. The annual plan lays emphasis on various components under the schemes **Per Drop More Crop (PDMC), Har Khet Ko Paani (HKKP), Integrated Watershed Management Plan (IWMP) and Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP).**

- It was informed that as a result of previous interventions, area irrigated by bore wells, community WHT and farm ponds has increased by 6798 Ha, whereas, area under micro-irrigation- drip, sprinkler and rain guns, has gone up by 6766 Ha. These measures have increased crop production by 30 per cent, saved water by 70 per cent and benefitted 7,000 agro-dependent families, besides, reducing water runoff and recharging ground water reservoirs.
- In the current financial year, the Department has proposed bringing 12,000 Ha additional areas under irrigation and reducing the gap between ultimate irrigation potential and irrigation potential by converging 144 existing schemes.
- The State Level Sanctioning Committee also approved top up subsidy amounting to Rs. 10.26 crore including 55 per cent central assistance, as **Micro Irrigation Fund** from NABARD, which will provide financial assistance to farmers adopting micro irrigation techniques as a part of sustainable agricultural activities.
- Earlier, while chairing a meeting of State Level Executive Committee of National Livestock Mission (NLM), Chief Secretary approved Rs 32.24 crore action plan of centrally sponsored scheme for the year 2020-21. NLM is an umbrella scheme comprising sub-missions on livestock development, feed & fodder development and skill development, technology & extension.

## DEA holds Sustainable Finance Collaborative consultation with UNDP

- **Department of Economic Affairs (DEA), Ministry of Finance, Government of India, in collaboration with the United Nations Development** Programme India launched the Sustainable Finance Collaborative on 26th August 2020. The consultation was held on 26th, 27th and 28th August over virtual platform which brought forth thematic discussions around some key aspects of Sustainable Finance.
- The Collaborative saw a host of thematic discussions centred around the broad scope of Sustainable Finance architecture in India. It included dialogues on critical elements such as the barriers to deploying new and innovative financing such as impact investing, role of blended finance instruments, green finance instruments for sustainable development, need for taxonomy of environmentally sustainable activities, sustainability related disclosures by corporates, and preparing the financial sector for the risks posed by climate change and other environmental and social issues.
- Around 220 delegates representing different ministries and departments of Government of India, Indian financial sector regulators, Multilateral Development Banks, bilateral partner agencies, UN entities, financial institutions, impact and commercial investors, corporates, industry associations, Civil Society Organizations and academia participated in the dialogue.
- The Collaborative provided valuable insights and tangible recommendations that would be helpful in developing a Sustainable Finance framework/roadmap for India


## Coal India to invest over Rs 1.22 lakh crore on 500 projects by 2023-24

- **Coal India Ltd (CIL)** will invest over **1.22 lakh crore rupees** on development of nearly **500 projects** related to coal evacuation, infrastructure, project development, exploration and clean coal technologies in the country. The investment aims at making India self-reliant in terms of coal and achieve the production target of **1 billion tonnes** by **2023-2024**.
- Coal and Mines Minister Pralhad Joshi stated involvement of all concerned stakeholders in company's affairs will reduce and uncover the project risks. He informed that the national miner, CIL, will be investing around **14 thousand 200 crore rupees** over the next 3 to 4 years, in two phases for its 49 First Mile Connectivity projects. First Mile Connectivity is the transportation of coal from pitheads to dispatch points. Computer-aided loading technology of coal is being developed to replace the existing methodology of transportation via road.

- Coal India has also identified **15 greenfield projects** which will be operated under the **Mine Developer and Operator (MDO) model**. Overall nearly 34 thousand 600 crore rupees will be invested through this route. In the meeting, Coal India also announced an array of measures for relaxations and exemptions for greater participation of its stakeholders. The experience criteria has been brought down from 65 per cent to 50 per cent for mining tenders, while work experience criteria are relaxed by 50 per cent in turnkey contracts.

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

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

## Dept. of Fertilizers to observe Swachhta Pakhwada from 1st to 15th September

- The **Department of Fertilizers** is observing **Swachhta Pakhwada** from **1st to 15th September**. All Public Sector Undertakings and other Organisations under the Department are participating in the **Swachhta Abhiyan**.
- Chemicals and Fertilizers Minister D V Sadananda Gowda stated that Swachhta Pakhwada has gained even greater importance this year in view of the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic.
- He stated that the efforts of the entire fertilizer industry, dealers and traders will yield visible positive results in the country's endeavour for cleanliness.

## MoD sets up a committee to review the AFHQ CS cadre

- To enhance the **military's combat potential** and **rebalancing the defence expenditure**, a three **member committee** has been set up by the **Ministry of Defence.**
- This is in line with the recommendation of the **Lt Gen DB Shekatkar (retd)** committee and its main task is to review the **utilisation of the Armed Forces Headquarters Civil Services (AFHQ CS) cadre**.
- The other two members include **R Chandrashekhar**, a retired AFHQ cadre officer and **AN Das** from the MoD finance wing.
- It is expected to conduct a study and identify appointments in Service HQs and Inter-Service Organisations (ISO) which could be falling within the domains of AFHQ CS officers. And which have been recognized in the report by the committee of experts due to their longer tenures and expertise.
- This three member committee is expected to interact with other branches, directorates of the service Headquarters and ISOs for their study. The report of the study carried out is expected to be submitted in November.

## Cabinet Approves Mission Karmayogi - National Programme For Civil Services Capacity Building

- The Union Cabinet approved Centre's **Mission Karmayogi** for Civil Servants aimed **at bringing post-recruitment reforms in government**.
- The mission seeks to reincarnate the civil servants as an ideal servant to the nation.
- Mission Karmayogi which is the National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building will lay the foundation for **capacity building for Civil Servants** so they remain entrenched in Indian culture while they learn from best practices across the world.

- It aims to prepare Indian Civil Servants for future by making them more creative, constructive, imaginative, innovative, proactive, professional, progressive, energetic, enabling, transparent and technology-enabled.

**The key highlights of the programme are:**
- Prescribe annual capacity building plan for all departments and services
- Monitor the implementation of the capacity building plan
- Massive capacity building initiative to ensure efficient service delivery
- Promotes technology driven learning pedagogy
- Strengthen common foundations and remove departmental silos
- Set benchmark for learning in public servants
- Democratization of learning to cover all categories

## Ladakh, Lakshadweep join Centre's ration card portability scheme
- **Ladakh and Lakshadweep** have the joined the Centre's ration card portability scheme **'OneNation-One Ration Card'**, taking **the total number of states and Union territories** linked with the scheme to **26.**
- Under the scheme, eligible beneficiaries under the **National Food Security Act (NFSA)** will be able to avail their entitled foodgrains from any Fair Price Shop (FPS), also called ration shops, in the country using the same ration card.
- The integration of Ladakh and Lakshadweep with the national portability network was approved recently in a review meeting chaired by **Union Food Minister Ram Vilas Paswan.**
- Remaining states are targeted to be integrated in the scheme by **March 2021.**
- The other 24 states/UTs which have joined the ration card portability network are — Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Telangana, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

## Qutub Minar illuminated in red and white to mark Poland's Solidarity movement
- **Embassy of Poland** and **Polish Institute in Delhi** illuminated **Qutub Minar** in Poland's national colours, **white and red**, to commemorate the 4**0th anniversary of the creation of Poland's Solidarity movement.**
- This year, 2020, marks the 40th anniversary of the creation of Solidarity.
- The Solidarity movement of Poland is a trade union based on Gandhian principles of non-violence that fought for civil rights in the country during the communist rule.
- Solidarity was originated in Gdańsk, Poland on 31 August 1980 and in a short time gathered 10 million members.
- The **Chief Guest** at the Qutub Minar function is **Dinesh K Patnaik who is the Director General of the Indian Council of International Relations.**

## Cabinet approves signing of MoU between India and Japan for improving quality of Indian textiles for Japanese market
- **Cabinet** has approved the signing of a **Memorandum of Understanding** between **India** and **Japan** for improving quality and testing of **Indian textiles** and clothing for the Japanese market.
- The MoU would enable M/s Nissenken Quality Evaluation Centre, Japan in assigning Textile Committee as their cooperative Testing and Inspection service providers in India for Textiles and Apparel products.
- Government has also approved an MoU between **India** and **Finland** for **cooperation** in the field of **Geology** and **Mineral Resources**.
- The MoU facilitates cooperation in the field of geology, training, mineral prognostication and suitability analysis with the intent of reinforcing and strengthening scientific links.

## Govt. gives nod to 27 integrated cold chain development projects under PM Kisan SAMPADA Yojana

- Government gave its nod to **27 projects** under the **Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana** for development of integrated cold chains and value addition infrastructure in the country.
- The new **integrated cold chain projects** will generate direct and indirect employment for over 16,000 people and benefit nearly 2,57,000 farmers. Union Minister of Food Processing Industries Harsimrat Kaur Badal stated, saving the perishable produce, by provisioning adequate infrastructure, will help in augmenting farmers' incomes and will also act towards making India self-reliant in the fruits and vegetables sector.
- These 27 new projects will leverage a total investment of **Rs 743 crore** for the creation of modern, innovative infrastructure and effective cold chain facilities for the food processing sector across various states including Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh.
- **85 Cold Chain Projects** have also been considered for financial assistance under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana.

## In 2019, a person died by suicide every four minutes: NCRB data
- Last year, **139,123 people** died by suicide and **421,104** were killed in accidents in India, according to the Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India report for 2019 released by the **National Crime Records Bureau**. Between 2018 and 2019, the number of people dying in accidents increased by 2.3% while for suicides, this number was 3.4%.
- Traffic accidents were the single-biggest contributor to accidental deaths in India, amounting to 43% of all such fatalities. Sudden deaths, drowning and poisoning were other major causes of accidental deaths. These together led to **24%** of accidental deaths. Forces of nature, such as natural disasters, killed 8,000 people, or 2% of all accidental deaths.
- Eighty-five percent of deaths caused in traffic accidents were reported in road accidents while railway accidents and accidents at railway crossings caused the remaining 15% of these deaths.
- The report is prepared with the data and information on deaths due to accidents and suicides which were collected by the **State Crime Records Bureaux (SCRBx)** from the **District Crime Records Bureaux (DCRBx)** and sent to the NCRB.

## India received 4th highest rainfall in 120 yrs in August 2020: IMD
- India recorded **27% more rainfall** than normal in **August 2020**, the **fourth-highest amount** in the **last 120 years,** the **India Meteorological Department (IMD)** stated. Rainfall in August 2020 was the highest in 44 years, stated RK Jenamani, scientist with IMD's national weather forecasting centre. August 1926 recorded 33% rainfall, which is the highest precipitation so far in the month.
- In its forecast for August last month, the IMD had predicted rainfall of 97 per cent of the Long Period Average (LPA) with an error margin of plus or minus 9 per cent. Monsoon in the range of 96-104 per cent of the LPA is considered normal.
- This is also one of the rainiest months of August recorded. The August of 1926 saw 33 per cent more rainfall than normal, the highest precipitation recorded so far in the month; 1976 recorded 28.4 per cent more rainfall than normal, while the August of 1973 recorded 27.8 per cent than normal. This year saw 27 per cent rainfall.

## Shri Arjun Munda inaugurates '2 Days' National Tribal Research Conclave' being held virtually
- Union Minister for Tribal Affairs Shri Arjun Munda has stated that the Ministry of Tribal affairs is funding 26 Tribal Research Institutes (TRIs) for research under Grant to TRIs and is engaged in quality research in collaboration with reputed Government and Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) spread over the country. National Institute for Tribal research is being set up in partnership with IIPA at the IIPA premises in Delhi, the Minister stated.

- These partner organizations are designated as Centres of Excellence. Addressing at the inaugural session of "National Tribal Research Conclave" organized by Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Tribal Affairs, (M/o Tribal Affairs), Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), New Delhi, he stated that his Ministry along with such partner organisations design workable models which provide end to end solution, like problem identification, finding solution and execution of the project as part of Action research which can be implemented by policy initiatives.

## Cabinet Approves Bill To Include Kashmiri, Dogri, Hindi As Official Languages In J&K

- The **Union Cabinet** approved a bill under which **Kashmiri, Dogri and Hindi**, apart from the **existing Urduand English**, will be the **official languages** in the **union territory of Jammu and Kashmir**.
- The Bill received the Cabinet nod at a meeting presided by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- Union Minister and Udhampur MP Jitendra Singh stated the government has accepted the long-pending demand of the region for the inclusion of Dogri, Hindi and Kashmiri as official languages in J-K.
- "It is not only a fulfilment of a long-pending public demand of the region but also in keeping with the spirit of equality which was ushered in after August 5 last year (when provisions of Article 370 were repealed)," he stated.
- It was an anomaly that the three languages -- Dogri, Hindi and Kashmiri -- which are spoken by nearly 70 per cent of the population of Jammu and Kashmir were not approved for use in official business, he stated.

## Thaawarchand Gehlot to launch 24x7 Toll-Free Mental Health Rehabilitation Helpline 'KIRAN'

- Social Justice and Empowerment Minister **Thaawarchand Gehlot** will launch the **24x7 Toll-Free Mental Health Rehabilitation Helpline** "KIRAN". The helpline number is 1800-500-0019. This Helpline has been developed by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities to provide relief and support to persons with Mental Illness.
- This helpline will offer mental health rehabilitation services with the objective of early screening, first-aid, psychological support, mental well-being and psychological crisis management. It will function as a lifeline to provide 1st stage advice, counseling and reference to individuals, families, NGOs, Parent Associations, Professional Associations, Rehabilitation Institutes, Hospitals or anyone in need of support across the country.
- This assumes great significance in view of the growing incidence of Mental Illness, particularly in the wake of COVID-19 Pandemic.

## 3rd Rashtriya Poshan Maah being celebrated this month to address malnutrition among young children and women

- The **3rd Rashtriya Poshan Maah** is being celebrated this month to address malnutrition among young children and women. The objective of the Poshan Maah is to encourage **Jan Bhagidaari** to ensure health and nutrition for everyone. Women and Child Development Ministry stated the Poshan Maah is celebrated every year under POSHAN Abhiyaan, which was launched in **2018**. Considering the prevalent COVID situation in the Country, the Ministry is encouraging all stakeholders to use digital platforms for celebrating **Poshan Maah**.
- The Prime Minister drew attention towards the role played by nutrition in helping children and students to attain their optimum potential. He also noted the efforts made during the past few years especially in villages where public participation in nutrition week and nutrition month is converting nutrition awareness into a mass movement.

## Prakash Javadekar to chair a webinar on first ever International Day of Clean Air For Blue Skies

- Environment Minister **Prakash Javadekar** will chair a **webinar** on the first-ever **International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies**. Mr Javadekar will also review the progress of activities under the **National Clean Air programme (NCAP)** during the course of the webinar.
- The webinar will be joined by Principal Secretaries of the Urban Development Departments and Environment Departments of 28 states and 8 Union Territories. Commissioners of 122 cities as identified in the NCAP programme

will also participate. Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his address from the Red Fort on this year's Independence Day, had highlighted the need of holistic improvement in air quality in 100 cities.

- The General Assembly of the United Nations on 19th December last year had adopted a resolution to observe the International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies on 7th September every year starting from this year.

## NITI Aayog constitutes Multidimensional Poverty Index Coordination Committee (MPICC)

- **NITI Aayog** has constituted a **Multidimensional Poverty Index Coordination Committee (MPICC)**.
- The MPICC, chaired by **Ms Sanyukta Samaddar,** Adviser (SDG) has members from relevant Line Ministries and Departments, namely Ministry/ Department of Power, WCD, Telecommunication, MoSPI, Rural Development, Petroleum & Natural Gas, Food & Public Distribution, Drinking Water & Sanitation, Education, Housing & Urban Affairs, Health & Family Welfare, and Financial Services.
- Preparation of a MPI Parameter Dashboard to rank States and UTs, and a State Reform Action Plan (SRAP) are at an advanced stage of development.
- Global MPI is an international measure of multidimensional poverty covering 107 developing countries and was first developed in 2010 by Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for UNDP's Human Development Reports.
- According to Global MPI 2020, **India is 62$^{nd}$** among **107 countries** with an MPI score of 0.123 and 27.91% headcount ratio, based on the NFHS 4 (2015/16) data.
- Neighbouring countries like Sri Lanka (25$^{th}$), Bhutan (68$^{th}$), Nepal (65$^{th}$), Bangladesh (58$^{th}$), China (30$^{th}$), Myanmar (69$^{th}$) and Pakistan (73$^{rd}$) are also ranked in this index

## PM Modi inaugurates Patrika Gate in Jaipur

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated** the **Patrika Gate in Jaipur** through video conference.
- The Iconic Gate is built by the Patrika Group of Newspapers on the **Jawaharlal Nehru Marg** in the Pink City.
- Patrika Gate has been built as a unique memorial showcasing the architectural and cultural heritage of all the regions of Rajasthan.
- The gate engraves the architecture, culture, and lifestyle of every corner of Rajasthan
- On this occasion, the Prime Minister will also launch two books - **Samvad Upanishad and Akshar Yatra -** authored by Editor-in-Chief of Rajasthan Patrika Group **Gulab Kothari.**

## Shri Dharmendra Pradhan announces that Five Petroleum and Gas sector PSUs will join International Solar Alliance

- Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas **Shri Dharmendra Pradhan** inaugurated **First World Solar Technology Summit** organized by **ISA.**
- Five Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) under Petroleum & Natural Gas Ministry will be joining International Solar Alliance (ISA)'s Coalition for Sustainable Climate Action (ISA-CSCA) as Corporate Partners.
- Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC), Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) and GAIL (India) Limited will be contributing to ISA's Corpus Fund.

## Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Shri Narendra Singh Tomar launches 22 bamboo clusters in 9 States; Logo for National Bamboo Mission also released

- Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj **Shri Narendra Singh Tomar** inaugurated by virtual mode **22 bamboo clusters** in **9 States**(Gujarat, MP, Maharashtra, Odisha, Assam, Nagaland, Tripura, Uttarakhand and Karnataka).
- A **logo for the National Bamboo Mission** was also released.

- The Government's goal in the bamboo sector is being achieved with the concerted efforts of all stakeholders of the Bamboo Mission.
- The **winner of the logo contest**, **Shri Sai Ram Goudi Edigiof Telengana** was selected from 2033 entries received on MyGov platform from across the country.
- The logo portrays a bamboo culm in the center of a circle composed of half an industrial wheel and half farmers, depicting the objectives of NBM appropriately. The green and yellow colour of the logo symbolise bamboo often termed as green gold.

## PM Modi to hold Swanidhi Samvaad with street vendors from Madhya Pradesh

- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** will hold **Svanidhi Samvaad** with**street vendors** from **Madhya Pradesh**. Government of India had launched PM Svanidhi scheme on 1st June this year to help poor street vendors, impacted by COVID-19, resume livelihood activities. **4.5 lakh street vendors** were registered in Madhya Pradesh, with more than 4 lakh vendors having been given identification and vendor certification.
- The applications of 2.45 lakh eligible beneficiaries have been presented through the portal to Banks, out of which acceptance has been granted to around 1.4 lakh street vendors of amount worth 140 crore rupees.
- The state of **Madhya Pradesh** stands first in the number of total applications accepted, with 47 per cent of these coming from the state alone. Arrangements for beneficiaries of the scheme in the state to watch the program in public places have been made through LED screens in 378 municipal bodies. The program will be telecast through webcast, for which pre-registration is being done on **MyGov's link https://pmevents.ncog.gov.in**.

## Cabinet approves asset monetization of subsidiaries of PGCIL through Infrastructure Trust

- The **Cabinet Committee** on **Economic Affairs** has approved **Asset Monetization of subsidiaries of Power Grid Corporation of India Limited- POWERGRID** through Infrastructure Investment Trust. It has given approval to POWERGRID to undertake monetization of its Tariff Based Competitive Bidding (TBCB) assets, held in existing Special Purpose Vehicle (SPVs), through Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvIT).
- The approval would facilitate POWERGRID, to undertake asset monetization of its identified TBCB transmission assets through InvIT, so that the proceeds from the asset monetization could be utilized for fresh investment in the transmission network expansion and other capital schemes of the company.
- In the first block, POWERGRID would be able to monetize 5 TBCB assets of gross block of 7164 crore rupees. Based on the experience gained, further monetization shall be carried out in future.
- Asset recycling is a key strategy of the Government to release the capital invested in operational assets and the proposed InvIT of POWERGRID would attract both domestic as well as global investors including Sovereign Wealth Funds. Sale of assets to InvIT is a way of accessing long term relatively cheap finance required to fund infrastructure projects in Transmission Sector.
- The CAPEX Plan of POWERGRID for next two years 2020-21 and 2021-22 is 20 thousand 500 crore rupees. The government has enacted an enabling regulatory and taxation framework for **InvITs** and the proposed InvIT by POWERGRID would deepen this market.

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

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

- Over the past 30 years, health services to prevent or treat causes of child death such as pre-term, low birth weight, complications during birth, neonatal sepsis, pneumonia, diarrhoea and malaria, as well as vaccination, have played a large role in saving millions of lives.
- According to the new mortality estimates released by UNICEF, the World Health Organization (WHO), the Population Division of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the World Bank Group, the under-five mortality rate (deaths per 1,000 live births) in India declined to 34 in 2019 from 126 in 1990.
- The infant mortality rate (deaths per 1,000 live births) in India declined from 89 in 1990 to 28 last year, with the country registering 679000 infant deaths last year, a significant decline from 2.4 million infant deaths in 1990.
- The country also witnessed a decrease in neonatal mortality rate between 1990 and 2019 from 57 to 22 - 1.5 million **neonatal deaths** in 1990 to 522,000 deaths in 2019.
- Further, the probability of dying among children aged 5—14 years declined from 21 in 1990 to 5 in 2019 (447,000 deaths in 1990 to 136,000 deaths in 2019) and the probability of dying among youth aged 15—24 years dipped from 24 to 10 (407,000 deaths to 246,000 deaths) between the period under review.
- The sex-specific under-five mortality rate (deaths per 1,000 live births) in India in 1990 stood at 122 males and 131 females and this declined to 34 males and 35 females in 2019.

## EPFO decides to pay 8.5% interest during 2019-20

- The Labour and Employment Minister **Santosh Kumar Gangwar** chaired the **227th Meeting** of the **Central Board of Trustees of Employees' Provident Fund.**
- In view of the exceptional circumstances arising out of Covid-19, the Central Board has recommended the same interest rate at **8.50 per cent** to the Central Government.
- It would comprise of 8.15 per cent from debt income and balance 0.35 per cent capital gain from the sale of Exchange Traded Funds, ETFs subject to their redemption by 31st December this year.
- It further recommended to account such capital gains in the income of the financial year 2019-20 as being an exceptional case.
- The Central Board accorded approval for an Amendment to Employees' Deposit Linked Insurance Scheme, 1976 to enhance the maximum assurance benefit to 7 lakh rupees from the present maximum assurance benefit of 6 lakh rupees.

## Indian agri-tech sector can grow to $24.1 billion in five years: Report

- India's **agriculture technology sector** has the potential to grow manifold to **$24.1 billion** in the **next five years**, according to a new report.
- With a turnover of **$204 million**, India's agri-tech sector is at under 1% of its market potential. A big chunk of the gains will likely be made by companies addressing supply chain and financial services solutions, driven by the availability of affordable high-speed internet and maturing of India's digital content ecosystem, the EY report on India's agri-tech potential said.
- The report has also forecast consolidation in the agri-tech space along with startups expanding horizontally to service the end-to-end needs of farmers within the next few years.
- EY estimates that **five key categories** of agritech will control the lion's share of the sector's turnover, with the agritech market for supplying farm inputs being as big as $1.7 billion by 2025, the market for precision agriculture and farm management growing to $3.4 billion in that time, while the market for quality management and traceability could be worth $3 billion.

- The market for tech enabled supply chain and output market linkages will be the largest segment, which could be worth $12 billion by 2025, according to EY. The second largest segment in the overall agritech market could be for financial services, with a market potential of $4.1 billion in the next five years.

## Govt forms three-member expert panel to assist in assessment of relief to bank borrowers

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

## Railways launch India's second Kisan Rail from Andhra to Delhi

- The **Indian Railways** flagged off its **second and South India's first Kisan Rail**, from **Anantapur in the state of Andhra Pradesh to Adarsh Nagar in Delhi.**
- Union Minister Narendra Singh Tomar and Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy via a video conference jointly flagged off the Kisan Rail train.
- The rail carried 322 tonnes of fruits and vegetables which consist of papaya, sweet lime, mangoes, banana, musk melon, and tomatoes in 13 bogies. One Three-Tier AC carried horticulture farmers, officials from Marketing, Agriculture, and Horticulture Department, and two SLR bogies of Railway Staff.
- The very **first Kisan Rail train service** introduced by the Indian Railways network was launched on 7 August 2020. The train that runs between **Devlali in Maharashtra and Danapur in the state of Bihar** operates **on a weekly basis.**

## Narendra Singh Tomar inaugurates webinar on Enhancing Water Use Efficiency and Coverage of Micro Irrigation in Indian agriculture

- Agriculture Minister **Narendra Singh Tomar** inaugurated a **webina**r on **Enhancing Water Use Efficiency and Coverage of Micro Irrigation** in Indian agriculture.
- The Minister stated the Government has set the target of covering **100 lakh hectares** in five years under micro-irrigation. He stated about 11 lakh farmers have benefitted by the adoption of drip and sprinkler irrigation systems.
- During the last five years, an area of 47.92 lakh hectares has been covered under micro irrigation in the country which includes 11.72 lakh hectares for the year 2019-20 which is a significant achievement.

## Atal Innovation Mission Launches Aatmanirbhar Bharat ARISE-ANIC Initiative

- **Atal Innovation Mission (AIM),NITI Aayog**, launched one of its most awaited programmes,**the Aatmanirbhar Bharat ARISE-Atal New India Challenges**, to spur applied research and innovation in Indian MSMEs and startups.
- The programme will be driven by **Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO),** four ministries—**Ministry of Defence; Ministry of Food Processing Industries; Ministry of Health and Family Welfare; and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs**—and associated industries to facilitate innovative solutions to sectoral problems.
- The Aatmanirbhar Bharat ARISE–ANIC programme will support deserving applied research–based innovations by providing funding support of up to Rs 50 lakh for speedy development of the proposed technology solution and/or product.
- AIM Mission Director Shri R. Ramanan added that MSMEs are a vibrant and one of the fastest-growing sectors that will undisputedly play a crucial role in attaining the PM's vision of an Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

- "The **fifteen Aatmanirbhar Bharat ARISE challenges** are a pioneering initiative to stimulate Make-in-India innovations in the associated MSME startups' sector and a unique opportunity to make advanced research and development ideas market viable, and field deployable MSME products that can be procured by the government," he concluded.

## Housing Ministry launches Climate Smart Cities Assessment Framework 2.0

- The **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)** launched the **Climate Smart Cities Assessment Framework (CSCAF) 2.0**, along with **the 'Streets for People Challenge'** in a virtual event organised by the **Smart Cities Mission.**
- The objective of CSCAF is to provide a roadmap for cities for combating Climate Change while planning and implementing their actions, including investments.
- The framework has 28 indicators across five categories: **(i) Energy and Green Buildings, (ii) Urban Planning, Green Cover and Biodiversity, (iii) Mobility and Air Quality, (iv) Water Management and (v) Waste Management.**
- The Climate Centre for Cities under National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) is supporting MoHUA in implementation of CSCAF.
- Meanwhile, the Streets for People Challenge is the response to the need for making our cities more pedestrian friendly.
- It aims to inspire cities to create walking-friendly and vibrant streets through quick, innovative, and low-cost measures.

## Govt Sets up Empowered Group of Ministers Headed by Rajnath Singh to Oversee OFB's Corporatisation

- The government has constituted an **Empowered Group of Ministers (EGoM)** under the **chairmanship of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh** to oversee the **process of corporatisation of the Ordnance Factory Board (OFB).**
- The ministry stated that the EGoM will oversee and guide the entire process (of corporatisation), including transition support and redeployment plan of employees while safeguarding their wages and retirement benefits.
- Others in the EGoM are Home Minister Amit Shah, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad and Labour Minister Santosh Kumar Gangwar.

## Govt enhances scholarship for students of J&K under Pragati, Saksham Scholarship Schemes to Rs 50,000

- The **Center government** has enhanced **scholarship amount for the students** of J&K under **"Pragati and SakshamScholarship Schemes"from Rs. 5000 per annum to Rs.50,000 per annum** from current academic year **2020-2021.**
- Pertinently, the Ministry of Human Resource Development had launched the "Pragati and Saksham Scholarship Schemes" being implemented and **offered by All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)** to provide financial assistance for advancement of girls pursuing technical education besides supporting specially abled students for technical education respectively.
- Under Pragati scheme, **all girls of J&K belonging to families** having annual income of Rs. 8 lakh who shall be admitted in the AICTE approved institutions for the session 2020-21 will be eligible for scholarship.
- Under Saksham scheme, **all specially abled students with 40 per cent disability** pursuing technical education at Degree or diploma level belonging to families with annual income less than Rs. 8.00 lakh would be eligible for the scholarship.
- These two schemes are aimed at to provide scholarship to the students of the UT of Jammu and Kashmir studying within Jammu and Kashmir. The application for availing these scholarships shall be invited for registration once in a year through National e-Scholarship Portal (NSP) of Government of India.

## PM Modi addresses the 'Grih Pravesham' event in Madhya Pradesh

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** addressed the **'Grih Pravesham'** event in **Madhya Pradesh** through **video conferencing,** where **1.75 Lakh Families** were delivered **pucca houses** under the **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana- Grameen (PMAY-G).**

- The work of 18 lakh houses has been completed throughout the country under the Prime Minister Awas Yojana-Gramin and among that 1.75 lakh houses completed in Madhya Pradesh itself.

## PM Modi inaugurates 3 petroleum projects worth Rs 900cr in Bihar

- **Bihar** is set to receive **three key petroleum projects** ahead of the Legislative Assembly polls, scheduled in October 2020.
- Modi devoted to the nation three petroleum sector initiatives value about **Rs 900 crorethrough video conferencing.**
- These projects that will help meet the demand for domestic cooking gas in the state include state-run **Indian Oil Corporation's 193-km long Durgapur-Banka section** of the **Paradip-Haldia-Durgapur liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) pipeline** that will supply **cooking gas** for bottling at the new Banka plant in the state.
- Apart from the pipeline and the **bottling plant at Banka**, PM Modi also dedicated state-run **Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd' LPG bottling plant** at Harsidhi in **East Champaran district** through video conferencing.

## Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh lays foundation stone online of Arun Jaitley Memorial Sports Complex

- The Union Minister of State, Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), **Dr Jitendra Singh** laid foundation stone for the construction of **Arun Jaitley Memorial Sports Complex at Hiranagar, Jammu** in presence of Unions Sports Minister Kiren Rejiju, Lt. Governor of J&K, Manoj Sinha and the wife and daughter of late Arun Jaitley.
- Arun Jaitley Memorial Sports Complex at Hiranagar would be **first of its kind in the Northern Region**, will be among the best sports complexes' all over India and will fulfill the much cherished dream of having a multipurpose sports complex in Jammu.
- The mega-sports complex -- to be spread over 270 kanals of land at Hiranagar in Jammu region at an estimated cost of **Rs.58.23 crore** -- is being undertaken under the **Prime Minister's Development Package (PMDP).**
- The Sports Minister informed that a world class **'Winter Sports Academy'** will be built **in Gulmarg** and other long pending sports projects in the UT will be taken care of and will be completed in due course.

## MoRTH moves ahead with Orientation and Training Programme of iRAD App

- The **2-days Orientation and Training programme** on **iRAD App** was conducted by the **Ministry of Road Transport & Highways** on 7th & 8th September 2020 for the selected districts of Karnataka, and on 10th & 11th September 2020 for some districts of Uttar Pradesh.
- Based on the feedback and other suggestions received, the App will be customised for the State.
- The basic **iRAD app** has been **developed and will be customized/integrated**as per the requirements of concerned States/UTs.
- Mobile app of iRAD is available for Android platform, and for other platforms like iOS will be available shortly.
- The **Ministry of Road Transport & Highways** is in the process of implementing **'Integrated Road Accident Database Project (iRAD)'** which will be applicable across the country.
- The development and implementation of iRAD has been entrusted to **IIT Madras and National Informatics Centre Services Inc.**
- This project is proposed on IT based system for capturing the spot accident data using mobile app configured for this purpose.
- This data can then be utilized for various purposes like finding the causes of the accidents and remedial measures to improve the road infrastructure, to record the accidents data for the use of police, health services and other concerned departments.

## PM to inaugurate, launch 7 urban infra projects worth Rs 541 crore in Bihar

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated and laid the foundation of seven urban infrastructure projects worth Rs 541 crore in Bihar.
- The seven projects include four related to water supply, two to sewerage treatment and one to riverfront development.
- The Bihar Urban Infrastructure Development Corporation (BUIDCO) under the urban development and housing department of the state will undertake these projects.
- The Prime Minister inaugurated the sewerage treatment plants built under Namami Gange, at Beur and Karmalichak, in Patna Municipal Corporation. He also inaugurated the water supply projects built under AMRUT Mission in Siwan Municipal Council and Chapra Municipal Corporation that will help local residents get pure drinking water through the day.
- He also laid the foundation stone of Munger and Jamalpur water supply schemes under the AMRUT Mission to enable locals to avail clean water through pipelines.

## Govt launches Postage Stamp commemorating Mission Shakti's success
- A customized My Stamp on India's First Anti Satellite Missile (A-SAT) was launched on the occasion of Engineers Day on September 15 in the presence of Ajit Doval, National Security Advisor (NSA). The stamp was released by Department of Posts.
- On the direction of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully conducted an Anti-Satellite (A-SAT) missile test 'Mission Shakti' from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island in Odisha on 27th March 2019.
- DRDO developed A-SAT Missile successfully engaged an Indian orbiting target satellite in Low Earth Orbit (LEO) in a 'Hit to Kill' mode. The interceptor missile was a three-stage missile with two solid rocket boosters.
- Tracking data from range sensors had confirmed that the mission met all its objectives. The entire effort was indigenous which demonstrated the Nation's capability to develop such complex and critical missions. A number of industries also participated in the mission. With this success, India became fourth nation in the world to possess such capability.

## Cabinet approves establishment of new All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) at Darbhanga, Bihar
- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has approved establishment of a new All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) at Darbhanga, Bihar. This will be established under the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY).
- The total cost will be Rs.1264 crore and is likely to be completed within a period of 48 months from the date of the approval of Government of India.
- The premier medical institute will add 100 undergraduate (MBBS) seats, 60 B.Sc. (Nursing) seats and will have 15-20 Super Specialty Departments and 750 hospital beds.
- The new hospital is expected to bridge the gaps between tertiary health-care infrastructure and facilities for quality medical education in the state and adjoining areas.

## Haryana Orbital Rail Corridor gets nod from cabinet
- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the 121-km Haryana Orbital Rail Corridor, which will connectPalwal and Sonipat, and decongest the national capital region.
- The project will provide rail connectivity to all routesoriginating from Delhi and passing through Haryana, while bypassing the national capital. It will make train travel faster from Gurugram and industrial regions in Haryana, including Manesar, Sohna, Farukhnagar, Kharkhauda and Sonipat.

- The project will be implemented by **Haryana Rail Infrastructure Development Corp. Ltd**, a joint venture between the railway ministry and the Haryana government, and is expected to be complete in **five years** at an estimated cost of **Rs.5,617 crore.**
- This rail line will start from Palwal and end at Harsana Kalan station (on Delhi-Ambala section). This will give connectivity en route to Patli station (on Delhi-Rewari line), Sultanpur station (on Garhi Harsaru-Farukhnagar Line) and Asaudha Station (on Delhi Rohtak line).

## PM Garib Kalyan Package Insurance Scheme for Health Workers Fighting COVID-19' extended for another 6 months

- The **'Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package Insurance Scheme for Health WorkersFighting COVID-19'** was announced on 30 March 2020 for a period of 90 days. This was extended for a further period of 90 days i.e. up to 25th Sept, 2020.
- The scheme has now been **extended** for **another 180 days i.e. 6 months.**
- This Central Sector Scheme provides **an insurance cover of Rs. 50 lakh to healthcare providers**, including community health workers, who may have to be in direct contact and care of COVID-19 patients and therefore at risk of being infected. It also includes **accidental loss of life** on account of contracting COVID-19.
- The scheme also covers private hospital staff/ retired/volunteer/ local urban bodies/contract/daily wage/ ad-hoc/outsourced staff requisitioned by States/ Central hospitals/autonomous hospitals of Central/States/UTs, AIIMS & INIs/ hospitals of Central Ministries drafted for COVID-19 related responsibilities.
- There is **no age limit for this scheme** and **individual enrolment is not required**. The entire amount of premium for this scheme is being borne by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India.
- **Ministry of Health and Family welfare** has collaborated with the **New India Assurance (NIA) Company Limited** for providing the insurance amount based on the guidelines prepared for the scheme.

## Lok Sabha passes bill to cut salaries of MPs by 30%

- The Lok Sabha passed a bill to cut salaries of all MPs by **30 per cent** for a year, to meet the exigencies arising out COVID-19 pandemic. The Salary, **Allowances and Pension of Members of Parliament (Amendment) Bill, 2020** was unanimously passed by the members of the Lower House.
- The bill was introduced in the Lower House on September 14 .Earlier this year, the government had brought the Salaries and Allowances of Ministers (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020, which provided a 30 per cent cut in sumptuary allowance payable to each minister for a period of one year commencing from April 1, 2020.
- On April 5, the Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi had approved an ordinance to amend salaries of parliamentarians and ministers, reducing allowances and pension by 30 per cent. The Cabinet had also decided to suspend the MP Local Area Development (MPLAD) scheme for two years and transfer the amount into the government's consolidated fund.

## Lok Sabha passes Banking Regulation (Amendment) Bill

- Bill seeks to strengthen regulatory framework around **cooperatives** undertaking banking activities
- The Lok Sabha passed the **Banking Regulation (amendment) Bill 2020** that seeks to protect the depositors of **cooperative banks** and empower the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** to regulate the banking activities of cooperative societies.
- Sitharaman highlighted that in the last two decades as many as 430 cooperative societies have been de-licensed and liquidated. However, not a single commercial bank under RBI supervision under the Banking Regulation Act had gone into liquidation in the last two decades, she added.
- Sitharaman also made it clear that the Centre was not encroaching into the terrain of the States and was only using its powers under Items 43 and 45 in the Union List of the Constitution to enact this law.

- This Bill also empowers RBI to effectively handle mishaps in private banks without any loss of public confidence or disruption to the financial system.

## PM Modi to dedicate historic Kosi Rail Mahasetu to the Nation

- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** shall dedicate to the nation the historic **Kosi Rail Mahasetu** (mega bridge) to the Nation through video-conference.
- Apart from this the Prime Minister shall also inaugurate **12 rail projects** related to passenger facilities for the benefit of the Bihar State. These include a new railway bridge on the Kiul River, two new railway lines, 5 Electrification projects, one Electric Locomotive Shed and 3rd Line Project between Barh-Bakhtiyarpur.
- In **1887**, a meter gauge link was built in between Nirmali and Bhaptiahi (Saraigarh). During the heavy flood and severe Indo Nepal earthquake in 1934, the rail link was washed away and thereafter due to meandering nature of river Kosi no attempt was made to restore this Rail link for long period.
- **The Kosi Mega Bridge line project** was sanctioned by Government of India during 2003-04. The Kosi Rail Mahasetu is 1.9 KM long and its construction cost is **Rs. 516 Crore**. This bridge is of strategic importance along the India-Nepal border. The project was completed during the COVID-Pandemic where the migrant labour also participated in its completion.

## Parliament passes Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda Bill 2020

- The Bill was earlier passed in Lok Sabha on 19th March, 2020. This paves the way to establish a state-of-the-art Ayurvedic institution called the **Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda (ITRA)** at **Jamnagar, Gujarat,** and to confer the status of **Institution of National Importance (INI)** to it.
- The ITRA is sought to be established by conglomerating the presently existing Ayurveda institutes at Gujarat Ayurved University campus Jamnagar. This is a cluster of highly reputed institutions, namely, (a) Institute for Post Graduate Teaching and Research in Ayurveda, (b) Shree GulabKunverba Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya, and (c) Institute of Ayurvedic Pharmaceutical sciences, (d) MaharshiPatanjali Institute for Yoga Naturopathy Education & Research (to be made part of the Department of Swasthvritta of the proposed ITRA). These institutions had come up over the past many decades, and together made a unique family of Ayurveda institutions existing in close proximity.
- ITRA will be the first institution with INI status in the AYUSH Sector, and this will enable the institution to be independent and innovative in the matter deciding course content and pedagogy. The decision comes at a time when global interest in health solutions based on traditional wisdom is at an unprecedentedly high level and ITRA is poised to take Ayurveda education to new vistas.

## India seeks Blue Flag eco-label for its eight beaches, launches its own tag 'BEAMS' for clean beach

- A national jury, composed of environmentalists and scientists, has recommended **India's eight beaches for consideration** by **international jury** for the coveted International eco-label, the **Blue Flag certification.**
- The Blue Flag beaches are considered the cleanest beaches of the world.
- The eight beaches are Shivrajpur in Gujarat, Ghoghla in Daman & Diu, Kasarkod and Padubidri beach in Karnataka, Kappad in Kerala, Rushikonda in Andhra Pradesh, Golden beach of Odisha and Radhanagar beach of Andaman & Nicobar Islands.
- **Total 4664 beaches, marinas and boats from 46 countries** have, so far, **got the Blue Flag certification** by international jury. **Spain has the highest number of Blue Flag tagged sites**. There is **none from India.**
- On the eve of **International Coastal Clean-Up Day** which is celebrated across 100 countries since 1986, India launched its own eco-label **"BEAMS"** (Beach Environment & Aesthetics Management Services) under its **Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) project.**

- The objective of BEAMS program is to abate pollution in coastal waters, promote sustainable development of beach facilities, protect & conserve coastal ecosystems & natural resources, and seriously challenge local authorities & stakeholders to strive and maintain high standards of cleanliness, hygiene & safety for beachgoers in accordance with coastal environment & regulations. This program promotes beach recreation in absolute harmony with nature.

## Delhi's IGI airport gets India's first terminal for chartered planes, can handle 150 jets per day

- **Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL)**, a GMR Group-led consortium launched **India's first General Aviation Terminal facilityfor private jets** at **Indira Gandhi International Airport**.
- The event was organised while taking all social distancing protocols into consideration, given the pandemic.
- It was inaugurated by Union civil aviation minister **Hardeep Singh Puri**
- Equipped with 57 parking bays, this new terminal can cater to over 150 private jets per day. The newly-developed flight line or apron is spread over an area of 8 lakh square feet with 24/7 personal concierge services.
- The new General Aviation Terminal has been built to support the movement and processing of passengers flying through chartered flights from IGI Airport.

## About MoCA

- Civil Aviation Minister of India and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs : Hardeep Singh Puri
- Constituency: Uttar Pradesh

## Lok Sabha passes several bills including National Forensic Science University Bill 2020

- **Lok Sabha** has passed **The National Forensic Science University Bill 2020**. The Bill establishes National Forensic Science University as an institute of national importance. The proposed university would facilitate and promote studies and research and help achieve excellence in the field of forensic science in conjunction with applied behavioural science studies, law, criminology and other allied areas.
- The Lok Sabha also passed the **Rashtriya Raksha University Bill**. The Bill seeks to provide for the establishment of the **Rashtriya Raksha University, Gujarat**. The key objectives of the University include providing dynamic and high standards of learning and research, and providing a working environment dedicated to advancing research, education and training in the domain of policing.
- The **Bilateral Netting of Qualified Financial Contracts Bill** was also passed. The Bill seeks to provide a legal framework for bilateral netting of qualified financial contracts which are over the counter derivatives contracts.
- The Lok Sabha also passed **The Salaries and Allowances of Ministers (Amendment) Bill, 2020**.

## Govt launches Nasha Mukt Bharat Abhiyaan in 272 most affected districts

- **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** has formulated and is implementing a **National Action Plan** for **Drug Demand Reduction (NAPDDR) for 2018-2025**. The Plan aims at reduction of adverse consequences of drug abuse through a multi-pronged strategy.
- The activities under the NAPDDR include awareness generation programmes in schools, colleges, Universities, workshop and provisioning of treatment facilities and capacity building of service providers.
- The  Lok Sabha Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment Rattan Lal Kataria stated that the Ministry has also initiated focused intervention programmes in vulnerable districts across the country with an aim to increase community participation and public cooperation in the reduction of demand for dependence-producing substances.
- He stated, the Ministry has also launched **Nasha Mukt Bharat Abhiyaan** in 272 most affected districts with focus on institutional support, community outreach and awareness generation.

## DPIIT extends date of implementation of Toys (Quality Control) Order, 2020 to 1st January 2021

- The **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade** issued notification extending the date of implementation of Toys (Quality Control) Order, 2020 as **1st January 2021** in place of **1st September 2020**.
- This decision allows domestic manufacturers four months of extra time to make necessary arrangements for compliance of standards in view of difficulties arising out of COVID-19 pandemic.

About DPIIT:

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) is a central government department under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. It is responsible for formulation and implementation of promotional and developmental measures for growth of the industrial sector, keeping in view the national priorities and socio-economic objectives.

## Govt sets up group under cyber security head to probe China Watching, will report in 30 days

- The Government set up an expert committee under the **National Cyber Security Coordinator** to study the revelations in China Watching, an investigation, that a **Shenzen-based company**, with links to the Chinese government, is monitoring over 10,000 Indian individuals and entities.
- The expert committee, led by **Lt Gen (retd) Rajesh Pant**, India's chief coordinator on **cyber security**, will evaluate the "implications" of the digital surveillance by Data Information Technology Co. Limited and "assess any violations of law and submit its recommendations within thirty days."

## FSSAI constitutes task force on vegan food

- The **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)** constituted a task force to look into guidelines/ provisions for vegan foods in the country. The task force comprises **seven members** including **Shankar Narayan**, founder-president, Satvik Vegan Society (formerly Indian Vegan Society), Bengaluru-Byndoor.
- Mr. Narayan founded the society in **2004** as a registered charitable trust. The society is a member of the **International Vegetarian Union** and **Federation of Indian Animal Protection Organisation**.
- ICAR's retired principal scientist (food and nutrition) Sumedha S. Deshpande, Sangeeta Pandey, Head of Nutrition and Dietetics, Mount Carmel College, Bengaluru, Lalitha Appukkutan, NIMS Medicity, Thiruvananthapuram, Palak Mehta, Founder and CEO, Vegan First, Pune, a representative each from the Ministry of Commerce and the Industry and Quality Council of India are the other members of the task force.
- The terms of reference for the task force include a look into the definition of vegan foods available across the globe and to formulate a guideline/advisory/ provisions for assessing/ certifying vegan food in India.

## ICT challenge for developing smart supply measurement and monitoring system under Jal Jeevan Mission

- The government has launched an **information and communications technology (ICT)** contest to create innovative, modular and cost-effective solution to develop a smart water supply measurement and monitoring system to be deployed at the village level, according to an official statement.
- **Jal Jeevan Mission**, in partnership with the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology**, has launched the challenge and will be inviting proposals from Indian firms, including start-ups and micro, small and medium enterprises.
- **Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)** aims at providing tap water connection to every rural household by **2024**.
- This necessitates the use of modern technology in systematic monitoring of the programme and to capture service delivery data automatically for ensuring the quality of services. Digitalisation of water supply infrastructure has the potential to solve some of the biggest societal problems facing the nation. More importantly, it will help anticipate and address future challenges, the statement stated.
- The challenge will provide support at ideation, prototype development and deployment stage.

## Govt forms expert panels for inspection of covid hospitals

- The Centre has formed expert committees for inspection of government and other COVID facilities following directions of the Supreme Court.
- The **expert committees constituted by the Ministry of Health** have been tasked to inspect, supervise and guide government and other hospitals dedicated to COVID-19.
- The Ministry of Health has written to all the states and union territories with regard to prescribing **reasonable rates for testing and treatment of COVID-19**.
- Hospital infrastructure in the country for managing COVID-19 cases is being continuously monitored by the central government.
- States have been supported in terms of logistic and financial requirements for setting up COVID treatment facilities.

## Hyderabad International Airport gets ACI health accreditation for safe travel of passengers

- GMR-led **Hyderabad International Airport** has managed to get the **Airport Council International's (ACI) Airport Health Accreditation (AHA)**.
- Hyderabad is among the first airports in the Asia Pacific region to have received this accreditation.
- The ACI assessment covered the health and safety measures undertaken by GMR Hyderabad International Airport for passengers and staff in all the terminal areas including departures, arrivals and transfers, transportation services, food and beverage services, escalators and elevators, lounges, facilities and baggage claim area.
- The assessment also captured the initiatives that the airport took for the safety and well-being of employees and stakeholders.

## Govt has launched National Conservation Strategy for Indian One-Horned Rhino

- Union Minister Prakash Javadekar stated **India** is home to the largest number of **Greater One-Horned Rhinoceros** in the world with population in the range of 3000 animals in Assam, West Bengal and UP.
- Mr Javadekar stated Environment Ministry has launched a **National Conservation Strategy** for **Indian One-Horned Rhino**. He added that the conservation initiatives for rhino has also enriched the grassland management which help in reducing the negative impacts of climate change through carbon sequestration.

## Parliament passes Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 2020

- Parliament has passed the **Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 2020** with Rajya Sabha approving it. The Bill allows the central government to regulate the supply of certain food items only under extraordinary circumstances such as war and famine. It will replace the **Essential Commodities (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020** which was promulgated in June this year.
- Minister of State for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Danve Raosaheb Dadarao stated that this is important legislation which will promote local for vocal initiative. He stated, this legislation has been brought for the farmers due to the Covid-19 pandemic situation and subsequent lockdown, which created problems in the demand and supply chain.
- It will provide freedom to farmers to sell their produce as per their choice and create balance in demand and supply chain. He stated, this Bill will provide assistance in the food production and create a storage system.

## Centre sanctions Rs. 108 crore under UDAN scheme for three Airports in Chhattisgarh

- The Central Government has sanctioned **Rs. 108 crore** under **UDAN scheme** for upgradation of **three Chhattisgarh Airports**.
- Out of the total amount, **Rs. 48 crore** have been sanctioned for Jagdalpur, Rs. 27 crore for Ambikapur and Rs. 33 crore for Bilaspur under UDAN scheme for up-gradation and development of these Airports.

- The inauguration of flight operations by Alliance Air from Jagdalpur to Raipur and Hyderabad under UDAN scheme, Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri stated that this air connectivity will fulfil the aspirations of people of the region and provide impetus to the local economy.
- Mr Puri also informed that the Airports Authority of India has planned for the investment of about **900 crore rupees** to develop and expand Raipur airport which includes expansion of the terminal building.

## Niti Aayog, ISPP join hands for capacity building

- The **Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO)** of the Aayog has signed a statement of intent with the **ISPP** to build a collaboration for faster intermediation of knowledge and use within the public system, the statement stated.
- While under communications and outreach, evidence building exercises, organising joint conferences and podcast series will be conducted wherein ISPP scholars will interact and interview the DMEO and Niti Aayog's experts on current policy issues, evaluations and perspectives, the ISPP stated.
- **Niti Aayog** and the **Indian School of Public Policy (ISPP)** have joined hands for training, mentoring, and capacity building of government officials as well as public policy scholars, a statement stated.

## Government gives one-year extension to Company Law Committee

- **The ministry of corporate affairs** has **extended the tenure** of the **Company Law Committee** by **one year to September 2021**.
- The committee, constituted is now chaired by corporate affairs secretary **Rajesh Verma.**
- It was set up to suggest measures to de-clog and improve functioning of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) and make recommendations on various issues pertaining to implementation of the **Companies Act** as well as the **Limited Liability Partnership Act.**
- The committee, which has a **total of 11 members**, has the mandate to submit recommendations in phases and subject-wise to the government from time to time as may be decided by the chairperson.

## PM Modi lays foundation stone of 9 highway projects, launches 'Ghar tak fibre' scheme in poll-bound Bihar

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** laid the foundation stone of **nine highway projects** in Bihar through video conference.
- He also inaugurated the *'Ghar Tak Fibre'* project wherein all the 45,945 villages of **Bihar will be connected** throughoptical fibre internet Service.

## Highway Projects worth Rs 14,000 crore

- These nine highway projects involve a road length of about 350 kilometers at a cost of **Rs 14,258 crore.**
- These roads will enhance better connectivity, convenience and economic growth in and around the State.
- Movement of people and goods will also improve substantially, especially with the neighbouring States of Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand.
- The Prime Minister had declared a **special package for significant infrastructure developmentof Bihar** in the year 2015. This included 75 projects worth Rs 54,700 crore, of which 13 projects have been completed, work is undergoing at 38 and others are in DPR/Bidding/Sanction stage.

## Ghar Tak Fibre

- The **"Ghar Tak Fibre"** is a prestigious project covering all 45,945 villages of Bihar which will enable a digital revolution to reach the farthest corner of the State.
- This project will be executed by combined efforts of **Department of Telecom, Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology and Common Service Centres (CSC).**

## Centre approved Outlay for PM Svanidhi Scheme is Rs.600 Crore

- Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has launched Prime Minister Street Vendor's Amta Nirbhar Nidhi Scheme (PM SVANidhi).
- It aims at facilitating collateral free working capital loans upto Rs 10,000 of 1 year tenure, to about 50 lakhstreet vendors across the country.
- It also provides for incentives in the form of interest subsidy @ 7% per annum on regular repayment of loan and cash-back upto Rs. 100 per month on undertaking prescribed digital transactions.
- For the purpose of scheme administration, an end-to-end solution through an IT platform has been developed in collaboration with Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI).
- The approved outlay for PM SVANidhi scheme is Rs.600 crore.

## Lok Sabha passes Jammu and Kashmir Official Languages Bill, 2020
- Lok Sabha passed the Jammu and Kashmir Official Languages Bill, 2020.
- The bill aims to make Kashmiri,Dogri, Hindi, English and Urdu as the official languages of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.
- Union Minister of State for Home Ministry G. Kishan Reddy stated that the legislation will fulfill the long awaited demand of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.
- The minister informed that earlier the official language for the Union territory was only Urdu.
- He stated the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir had informed the Centre that people across the Union Territory had been demanding to include the languages they speak and understand as their official language.

## Government has launched YuWaah – a multi-stakeholder platform to make young people career ready
- Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports and United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) have signed a "Statement of Intent" to establish YuWaah, Generation Unlimited (GenU), a global multi-stakeholder platform in India.
- Support young people by providing entrepreneurship classes (online and offline) with successful entrepreneurs and experts, towards establishing entrepreneurial mindset among young people.
- Upskilling of young people on 21st century skills, life skills, digital skills through online and offline channels and support them through self-learning, for their productive lives and the future of work.
- Create linkages with aspirational economic opportunities to connect young people with employment opportunities, including building pathways to connect them with jobs or self-employment. For this, innovative solutions and technology platforms will be engages to take maximize the scale and reach.·
- Providing career guidance support to young people through career portal as well as through job-readiness and self-exploration sessions to make young people career-ready.·
- The role of Department of Youth Affairs in this project is to provide relevant experts to participate on the YuWaah Technical Working Groups/ Task Forces.

## India aims to end tuberculosis by 2025: Health Minister at UN
- Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan has stated that India has accorded high priority for ending tuberculosis by 2025, five years ahead of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Dr Harsh Vardhan stated this while addressing Ministers of Member Nations of WHO, Heads and Representatives of UN Agencies through virtual interaction. He spoke on India's role and contribution towards strengthening multisectoral action and progress towards ending TB, especially in context of the COVID-19 crisis.
- The Minister added that Tuberculosis has been in existence since time immemorial and continues to remain a major global public health problem. Despite the progress made over the last decade, TB remains the leading infectious killer disease worldwide. He stated, India has taken several critical steps towards ending TB.

## Railways target to complete 100% electrification of broad gauge routes by 2023

- **Railways** has planned for **100 per cent electrification** of its **broad gauge routes** by **2023**. This was stated by the Railway Minister Piyush Goyal.
- The Minister informed that around 63 per cent broad gauge lines have already been electrified out of a total 63,631 route kilometers as on 1st of April this year.
- He stated, a total of 23,765 route kilometre lines are yet to be electrified in the country.
- In another question, the Railway Minister stated, the vacant land of Railways which is not required for its immediate operational needs is utilized in the interim period for commercial development to mobilize additional financial resources.
- He stated, station redevelopment is planned by leveraging real estate potential of spareable land and air spaces in and around the station by inviting private participation.

## CII-IGBC launches Green Logistics Parks, Warehouses Rating System

- **CII-Indian Green Building Council** has launched the **IGBC Green Logistics Parks & Warehouses Rating System** during the inaugural session of CII Institute of Logistics Conference on Building Warehousing Competitiveness 2020.
- The rating system is the **27th rating** of the Indian Green Building Council.
- CII Indian Green Building Council formed an exclusive Committee under the leadership of **Visvanathan** on Green Logistics Parks, Warehouses & Cold Storages with the industry leaders and experts from the logistics sector to take views and suggestions, on driving the green logistics movement in the country.
- The rating system is designed to address a variety of storage facilities for both new and existing typologies such as logistics parks, warehouses, cold storages and other storage spaces. The rating system addresses the National Priorities and is developed in congruent with National & several State policies. Further, the rating system is developed aligning the requirements with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- By adopting the rating tool, the projects would achieve various tangible and intangible benefits including energy and water savings and health and well-being of occupants.

## PM Narendra Modi launches 'Fit India' protocols on first anniversary of 'Fit India Movement'

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** on (September 24, 2020) interacted with fitness experts and influencers from across the country to mark the **one-year anniversary** of the **'Fit India Movement.'**
- The PM also launched the **'Fit India Age Appropriate Fitness Protocols'** during the **online Fit India Dialogue 2020.**
- **Cricketer Virat Kohli**, model-actor and runner **Milind Soman** and **nutritionist Rujuta Diwekar** were among the fitness influencers who **participated in the event**.
- **Paralympic javelin** gold medallist **Devendra Jhajharia** and **footballer** from Jammu and Kashmir **Afshan Ashiq** were the first ones to **speak at the event**.
- Since its launch last year, various events had been organised under the aegis of the Fit India Movement like the Fit India Freedom Run, Plog Run, Cyclothon, Fit India Week, Fit India School Certificate and various other programmes.
- These events witnessed the enthusiastic participation of people from all walks of life and from across the country.

## Govt raises limit for use of SDRF funds by states from 35 per cent to 50 per cent to tackle COVID situation

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** has announced that the limit of using the **State Disaster Response Fund** for COVID specific infrastructure has been increased **from 35 per cent to 50 per cent.**
- He interacted with Chief Ministers of six states and one Union Territory through video conference.
- These States and UTs are **Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi.**

- More than 63 per cent of the active cases of the country are concentrated in these six States and a Union Territory.
- Mr Modi stressed on the need to increase focus on effective testing, tracing, treatment, surveillance and clear messaging.

## Country's apex regulator of medical education 'National Medical Commission' comes into existence

- The **National Medical Commission (NMC),** in place of the **Medical Council of India (MCI),** as the country's apex regulator of medical education and profession has come into existence. With the NMC coming into being, the Board of Governors (BoG) which superseded the MCI on September 26th, 2018, to perform its functions, has been dissolved and the nearly **64-year-old Indian Medical Council Act abolished**.
- **Dr Suresh Chandra Sharma**, former head of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences ENT department, Delhi, has been appointed **as chairman** for a period of three years.
- The NMC Act, which seeks to usher in mega reforms in the medical education sector, received the assent of the president on August 8th last year. The NMC comprises a chairman, 10 ex-officio members and 22 part-time members.

## Govt forms five task forces to make Indian MSMEs future-ready

- The government has constituted **five task forces** to make India's micro, small and medium enterprises future-ready and formulate a concrete strategy towards making the country a leading exporter, a top government official stated.
- One of the five areas identified is **Industry 4.0**, including elements like artificial intelligence, 3D and virtual reality, and this task force has been formed with the objective of making India a global leader in Industry 4.0.
- The second area is **export promotion and import reduction**, including how to focus in the key manufacturing areas, how to improve our quality standards, designs and technology, packaging.
- The third is how to re-engineer vertically and horizontally our existing cluster schemes so that they are able to assist the grass-root and the micro-level enterprises as well as the high-end enterprises.
- The fourth task force will focus on **how to integrate our technology centres**.
- The fifth task force will explore interventions to align various modernisation schemes like **ZED (zero defect and zero effect) and LEAN (for manufacturing competitiveness),** as well as other schemes related to design, intellectual property rights and marketing scheme.

## IEA and NITI Aayog hold India launch of IEA Special Report on Sustainable Recovery

- In collaboration with **NITI Aayog, the International Energy Agency** held the India launch of the **Special Report on Sustainable Recovery** from the IEA's flagship **World Energy Outlook series** on 18 September.
- To help countries rebuild better from the Covid-19 crisis, the report sets out a series of actions that can be taken over **the next three years** to revitalise economies and boost employment while making energy systems cleaner and more resilient.
- As governments around the world respond to Covid-19, the IEA's report, which was prepared in cooperation with the **International Monetary Fund**, details which energy-focused policies and investments could help boost economic growth, create jobs and put emissions into structural decline while making energy systems more cost-effective, secure and resilient.
- The report brings out key areas for creating jobs in the sectors like electricity, transportation, buildings, industry and sustainable biofuels and innovations. A combination of policy actions and targeted investments will offer huge benefits to the economy and lead to job creation. However, the measures highlighted in the report remain the sovereign choice of the country.

## 'Saubhagya' scheme completes three years since its inception

- **Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana -"Saubhagya"** has completed **three years** since its inception.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi had launched this scheme on **the 25th of September, 2017** to ensure **electrification of all willing households** in the country in **rural as well as urban areas.**
- The scheme was launched with an aim to achieve universal household electrification by providing last mile connectivity and electricity connections to all households in rural areas and all poor households in urban areas across the country.
- The scheme was started with an outlay of 16,320 crore rupees. Out of the total amount, the outlay for the rural households is over 14 thousand crore rupees while for the urban households the outlay is 2,295 crore rupees. As many as over 2 crore 62 lakh households have been provided electricity connection so far under the Saubhagya scheme.

## Income Tax Department launches Faceless Income tax appeals

- The **Income Tax Department** launched **Faceless Income tax Appeals**. In a statement, CBDT stated, under it, all income tax appeals will be finalised in a faceless manner with the exception of appeals relating to serious frauds, major tax evasion, sensitive and search matters, International tax and Black Money Act. while launching the Faceless Assessment and Taxpayers' Charter, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced to launch the faceless appeals on the birth anniversary of **Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhayay.**
- CBDT stated, now there will be no physical interface between the taxpayers or their counsel and the Income Tax Department. The taxpayers can make submissions from the comfort of their home and save their time and resources. The Faceless Appeal system will include allocation of cases through Data Analytics and Artificial Intelligence under the dynamic jurisdiction with central issuance of notices which would be having Document Identification Number.
- As part of dynamic jurisdiction, the draft appellate order will be prepared in one city and will be reviewed in some other city resulting in an objective, fair and just order. The faceless appeal will provide great convenience to the taxpayers. The new system will also be instrumental in imparting greater efficiency, transparency and accountability in the functioning of the Income Tax Department.

## First-ever annual 'India Happiness Report' released; Mizoram, Punjab, Andaman and Nicobar Islands top index

- The first-ever annual '**India Happiness Report'**, which is India specific and studies happiness in the thirty-six states and union territories of India, has been released.
- In the happiness rankings of states and union territories, **Mizoram, Punjab, Andaman and Nicobar Islands** are the top three. Among the big states, **Punjab, Gujarat,** and **Telangana** are among the top three states whereas, among smaller states, **Mizoram, Sikkim,** and **Arunachal Pradesh** are the top three states in happiness rankings. Among union territories, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Puducherry, and Lakshadweep are the top three union territories in happiness rankings.
- "The spirit of India is quite resilient and the impact of COVID-19 varies across states and union territories. It varies from the worst possible to the best possible among individuals in the study. **Maharashtra, Delhi**, and **Haryana** have shown the worst possible impact of COVID-19 on happiness, whereas Puducherry and Jammu and Kashmir are neutral and Manipur, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and Lakshadweep have shown the best possible impact of COVID-19 on happiness," says the report.

## Railways extends pact with IIT Kanpur for infrastructure modernisation research

- **The Indian Railways** has extended **the memorandum of understanding** signed with the **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur** for encouraging a state of the art collaborative research for **modernisation of railway infrastructure and efficient utilisation** of its scientific assets through the centre for railway research (CRR).

- The MoU would facilitate research in the core areas of electrical locomotive, locomotive control and communication systems, traction installation, condition-based monitoring, train and track safety using signal processing, power and vehicle control electronics, driver interface systems, train level sensor networks and IoT, electrical safety, network control and staff training in related technical areas through the CRR at IIT-Kanpur, Prof Karandikar stated.
- Currently, CRR, which has its administrative unit in the department of electrical engineering in IIT-Kanpur, has been assigned the broad research domain of loco research and propulsion technologies, traction installation/OHE and associated electronics.

## India's first RRTS train with design speed of 180 kmph unveiled
- The Centre unveiled the **first look of the Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) train** that can attain a **top speed of 180 kilometres per hour** on the **Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut corridor**.
- The design is inspired by **Delhi's iconic Lotus Temple** and is aligned with PM Narendra Modi's 'Make in India' policy.
- The entire rolling stock of RRTS will be manufactured at **Bombardier's Savli plant in Gujarat** and it is sustainable and energy-efficient green train. With radiating stainless steel outer body, these aerodynamic RRTS trains will be lightweight and fully air-conditioned.
- **Innovative Train Control Monitoring System (TCMS) technology**, as well as its predictive and condition-based monitoring features, which will enhance the fleet's performance by providing extensive train-to-ground diagnostics.
- The other two Phase-I RRTS corridors are Delhi-Gurugram-SNB and Delhi-Panipat.
- The first look of RRTS train was unveiled by **Durga Shanker Mishra**, Secretary, Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA) & Chairman, National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC) in presence of **Vinay Kumar Singh**, Managing Director, NCRTC, all the members of Board of Directors of NCRTC and other senior officials of MoHUA, NCRTC and Bombardier India.

## MoRTH notifies amendments in Central Motor Vehicle Rules
- **Ministry of Road Transport and Highways** has notified amendments in **Central Motor Vehicle Rules** facilitating implementation of Electronic enforcement, Maintenance of Vehicular Documents through Information Technology portal with effect from 1st of next month.
- The Ministry stated, use of IT services and electronic monitoring will result in better enforcement of Traffic Rules in the country and will lead to removing harassment of drivers and would facilitate the citizen. The amendment inter-alia provides for the definition for Challan, Portal ed as requirement for providing the services through IT and further the enforcement of electronic monitoring and enforcement.
- It stated, details of driving licences disqualified or revoked by the licensing authority shall be recorded chronologically in the portal and such record shall be reflected on a regular basis on the portal has been provided for. Thus, the record shall be maintained electronically and further the driver behaviour would be monitored.
- The Ministry stated, provisions have been made for the procedure for Production and Obtaining Certificates in physical as well as electronic form, the validity, issuance of such documents and further the date and time stamping of inspection and identity of the Officer to be recorded.
- It has been provided that if the details of the documents are found validated through the electronic means by the enforcement officer then physical forms of such documents will not be demanded for inspection, including in cases where there is an offence made out necessitating seizure of any such documents.

## Union Home Minister Amit Shah virtually inaugurates 'Destination North East-2020'
- **Union Home Minister Amit Shah** virtually inaugurated **'Destination North East-2020'**, a four-day event to highlight the Northeast region's various potentials like eco-tourism, culture, heritage and business.

- Union Minister for Development of North Eastern Region Jitendra Singh and Chief Ministers of North Eastern States participated in the event via video conferencing.
- An array of cultural music and dance was showcased at the inaugural function for the four daylong online events held with the theme 'The Emerging Delightful Destinations'.
- The programme will also feature audio-visual presentation of the tourist spots of the States and the region, messages from State icons and achievers, introduction to prominent local entrepreneurs and virtual exhibition of handicraft, traditional fashion and local products.
- The 'Destination North East-2020' is a calendar event of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region conceptualised with the objective of taking the northeastern region to other parts of the country and bringing them closer together in order to strengthen national integration.

## KVIC opens outlet in SPG complex to promote 'Swadeshi'

- **Khadi and Village Industries Commission** has taken another step towards promoting '**Swadeshi**' by roping in the Special Protection Group with the drive.
- KVIC inaugurated a **new Khadi India Sales Outlet** within the premises of SPG Residential Complex at Dwarka in Delhi. This outlet will benefit nearly 4,000 families of SPG officers and staff residing in two adjacent residential complexes in the area. SPG is the agency responsible for security of the Prime Minister.
- The decision to open Khadi sales outlet was taken in order to provide pure and handmade 'Swadeshi' goods to the SPG members and their families.

## ICAR Announces KRITAGYA Hackathon Under National Agricultural Higher Education Project

- The **Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)** has announced **KRITAGYA (Krishi-Taknik-Gyan) hackathon** under the **National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP).**
- It aim to promote potential technology solutions for enhancing farm mechanization with special emphasis on **women-friendly equipment.**
- Students, faculties, and innovators or entrepreneurs from universities and technical institutions can apply and participate in the event in the form of a group.
- Participating students can collaborate with local start-ups, students from technology institutes, and can win Rs 5 lakh, Rs 3 lakh, and Rs 1 lakh as first, second, and third prize.
- The online application form is available on the official website, **nahep.icar.gov.in.**
- KRITAGYA hackathon will give an opportunity to the students, faculties, entrepreneurs, innovators, and other stakeholders to showcase their innovative approaches and technology solutions to promote farm mechanization in India.

## Govt committed to increase public healthcare spending from existing 1.15% of GDP to 2.5 % by 2025: Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan

- **Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan** stated that government is committed to increase the public healthcare spending from the existing 1.**15 per cent of the GDP** to **2.5 per cent by 2025**.
- He added that the 15th Finance Commission's high-level group on health has concurred that healthcare spending must be raised substantially in the next five years in view of the present pandemic.
- Regarding wide usage of investigational therapies such as Remdesivir and  Plasma Therapies, the  Health Minister stated that the Government has issued regular advisories regarding their rational usage.

- On the emerging evidence that the disease not only impacts our lungs but other organ systems too, especially cardiovascular and renal, the Minister stated that his Ministry has already set up committees of experts to look into these facets of COVID-19.

## Railway rolls out User Depot Module to completely digitize its supply chain

- **Indian Railway** has rolled out **User Depot Module (UDM).** The UDM developed by Centre for Railway Information Systems was rolled out digitally across all User Depots of Western Railway by P. C. Sharma, Member (T&RS) Railway Board. This system will be implemented shortly across all Zones of Indian Railways.
- The implementation of this system will bring in changes from manual working to digital working with real time transactions and online information exchange among all stakeholders.
- This will ensure digitization of complete supply chain, including user depots. The system will facilitate economy, efficiency and transparency besides improved asset management. It also will ensure improved service level and satisfaction to customers.

## Centre releases first instalment of over Rs. 19,000 Crore for Paddy procurement in three states under MSP Scheme

- **National Cooperative Development Corporation, NCDC** has sanctioned the first installment funds of **Rs. 19, 444 crore** to three states for Kharif paddy procurement under Minimum Support Price operations.These states are **Chhattisgarh, Haryana** and **Telangana.**
- Agriculture Ministry stated, these amounts have been sanctioned to assist the States and State Marketing Federations in undertaking paddy procurement operations in a timely manner through their respective cooperative organizations.
- Chhattisgarh gets the highest amount to the tune of Rs. 9,000 crore.Telangana has been sanctioned Rs. 5,500 crores and Haryana Rs. 5,444 crore.
- The Ministry stated, this proactive step by NCDC during the COVID pandemic will give the much needed financial support to farmers of these three states who account for nearly 75 per cent of production of paddy in the country.

## PM Modi to inaugurate 6 mega projects in Uttarakhand under Namami Gange

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** inaugurated **six mega projects in Uttarakhand** under the **Namami Gange Mission**.
- The projects include construction of a 68 MLD sewage treatment plant (STP), up-gradation of the existing 27 MLD plant at Jagjeetpur in Haridwar and construction of an 18 MLD STP at Sarai in Haridwar. The inauguration of 68 MLD Jagjeetpur project also marks the completion of the first sewerage project taken up on hybrid annuity mode of public-private partnership (PPP) mode.
- **'Ganga Avalokan'** was also inaugurated by PM Modi, which is the **first museum on Ganga** aimed at showcasing the biodiversity, culture, and rejuvenation activities done in the river.
- **The museum, Ganga Avalokan** is situated at **Chandi Ghat, Haridwar**.
- PM Modi also unveiled **the logo of 'Jal Jeevan Mission' and 'Margdarshika'** under the Namami Gange mission for village panchayats and 'Paani Samitis'.
- A book titled, **'Rowing down the Ganges',** co-published by National Mission for Clean Ganga & Wildlife Institute of India.

## Defence Minister Rajnath Singh unveils Defence Acquisition Procedure

- **Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh** unveiled the **Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP)--2020** in the national capital. The DAP 2020 will be applicable with effect from October 1.
- The DAP 2020 has been aligned with the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat and empowering the Indian domestic industry through Make in India initiative with the ultimate aim of turning India into a global manufacturing hub.

- The categories of Buy(Indian-IDDM), Make I, Make II, Production Agency in Design & Development, OFB/DPSU and SP model will be exclusively reserved for Indian Vendors meeting the criteria of Ownership and Control by resident Indian citizens.
- **The first Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP) was promulgated in the year 2002** and has since been revised periodically to provide impetus to the growing domestic industry and achieve enhanced self reliance in defence manufacturing.
- Singh had approved constitution of Main Review Committee under Chairmanship of DG (Acquisition) **Apurva Chandra** in August 2019 for preparation of DAP-2020.

## Rajnath Singh launches Defence India Startup Challenge-4, releases PMA guidelines for iDEX

- Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** launched **the Defence India Startup Challenge (DISC 4)** during the **iDEX event,** featuring the initiatives aimed at expanding the horizons of **Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX)** ecosystem in New Delhi. Mr Singh also launched the iDEX4Fauji initiative and Product Management Approach (PMA) guidelines during the event.
- iDEX4Fauji is a first of its kind initiative, launched to support innovations identified by members of the Indian Armed Forces and will bolster frugal innovation ideas from soldiers and field formations.

## DPIIT shares list of 24 key sectors with ministries to boost manufacturing

- The **DPIIT** has shared a list of **24 key sectors** including food processing, toys, furniture, agro chemicals and textiles with respective ministries asking them to work on an action plan with a view to boost domestic manufacturing and make India a self-reliant country, an official stated.
- The other sectors include organic farming, iron, aluminium and copper, electronics, industrial machinery, furniture, leather and shoes, and auto parts.
- The government wants to make India a self-reliant country in these segments, boost exports and become a global supplier.
- The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) is working actively on promoting domestic manufacturing of toys and furniture.
- Promoting manufacturing would help create more jobs and push India's dwindling exports.
- The manufacturing sector contributes about 15 per cent to the country's economy and the government is aiming to increase it significantly.
- The **Index of Industrial Production (IIP)** for April-July contracted by 29.2 per cent. The manufacturing sector constitutes about 78 per cent of the IIP.

## Revision Points

| 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 (Maharashtra) |
| 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 | Narendra Singh Tomar (Additional charge) | Morena |
| 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 (Maharashtra) |
| Ministry of Railways & Ministry of Commerce and Industry | Piyush Goyal | Rajya Sabha (Maharashtra) |
| 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 | Pralhad Joshi | Dharwad |
| Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship | Dr Mahendra Nath Pandey | Chandauli |
| Ministry of Animal Husbandry, dairying | Giriraj Singh | Begusarai |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| and fisheries | | |

### New e-market platform launched to bridge gap between Indian farmers and UAE food industry

- **The UAE** has launched **Agriota**, a new technology-driven a**gri-commodity trading and sourcing e-market platform** that will bridge the gap between millions of **rural farmers in India and the Gulf nation's food industry.**
- Launched by the Dubai's free-zone Dubai Multi Commodities Centre (DMCC) and the government of Dubai's authority on commodities trade and enterprise.
- The marketplace allows the farmers to bypass intermediaries, optimising the supply chain and ensuring traceability to create value for all stakeholders.
- The online marketplace also provides end-to-end traceability and transparency through last-mile verification and extension infrastructure in a blockchain environment.
- Initially, the platform will offer cereals, pulses, oil seeds, fruits, vegetables, spices and condiments.

### Israeli Airliner Completes First Direct Flight to Arab Emirates

- **A chartered El Al airliner** carrying Israeli and American diplomats landed in the United Arab Emirates, completing a symbolic **first direct flight from Tel Aviv to Abu Dhabi**.
- This would pave the way for formal diplomatic and commercial ties and might inspire other Arab nations to follow suit in normalizing relations with the Jewish state.

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

- Japan has committed an official Development Assistance loan of 3 thousand 500 crore rupees for the COVID-19 Crisis Emergency Response Support. The Notes were exchanged between the Additional Secretary in the Department of Economic Affairs Dr C.S. Mohapatra and Ambassador of Japan to India Suzuki Satoshi for a Health sector programme loan to fight the COVID-19 crisis.
- Japan International Cooperation Agency, JICA is a governmental agency that coordinates Official Development Assistance for the Government of Japan.
- This programme loan aims to support India's efforts in fighting COVID-19 and to prepare the health system to manage future epidemics and also to improve the resilience of India's health systems against infectious diseases.
- This Grant-in-aid from the Government of Japan is for providing medical equipment to strengthen the public health and medical system in India. It will strengthen the health care facilities for managing critical and serious patients suffering from COVID-19 infection.

### Togo first in Africa to end sleeping sickness

- **Togo** has become **the first country** in **Africa to eliminate human African Trypanosomiasis or sleeping sickness**, a disease caused by parasites transmitted through infected tsetse flies. The World Health Organization (WHO) August 27, 2020 certified so, after the country applied for it in 2018.
- Sleeping sickness is currently found in 36 sub-Saharan African countries, according to the WHO. If untreated, it can become fatal.
- Togo did not report any cases in the past 10 years. The west African country managed to achieve this after more than two decades of sustained political commitment, surveillance and screening of cases, according to the WHO.
- The country's public health officials started implementing control measures from 2000. In 2011, it established surveillance sites at hospitals in Mango and Tchamba cities, covering the main areas at risk from the disease.

- Five more countries — Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana — have applied for WHO certification as well. Benin and Burkina Faso have not reported any sleeping sickness cases since 2001. Except for one case in 2013, Ghana did not report any more cases since 2001.
- WHO and its partners aim to eliminate the disease from all endemic countries by 2030. Eliminating sleeping sickness, however, will require a serious commitment of endemic countries, donors and integrating control and surveillance activities into their regular health systems, the WHO stated.

## China to unveil statue of Dr Dwarkanath Kotnis, the most celebrated Indian doctor in China

- **China** is set to **unveil a bronze statue** of Indian doctor **Dwarkanath Kotnis**, one of five Indian physicians dispatched to China for medical assistance during the second **Sino-Japanese war in 1938**.
- Solapur-born Dr Kotnis, who also lived in Vengurla, is revered by the Chinese. His status and memorials were also set in some of the Chinese cities in recognition of his services.
- Late Chinese leader Mao Zedong had praised his medical assistance during the difficult days of the Chinese revolution.

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

- **India, Australia and Japan** agreed to launch an **initiative to ensure the resilience of supplychains in the Indo-Pacific**, with the move coming against the backdrop of tensions created by China's aggressive actions across the region.
- During their first virtual meeting on the issue, commerce minister **Piyush Goyal** and his Australian and Japanese counterparts, **Simon Birmingham and Kajiyama Hiroshi**, outlined their intention to work for the launch of the new initiative because of the **"pressing need for regional cooperation on supply chain resilience in the Indo- Pacific"**.
- The supply chain initiative was a natural follow on to the security cooperation between the three countries, both bilaterally and through platforms such as the **Quadrilateral Dialogue Mechanism or Quad, which also includes the US**.
- The three countries will now work with regional partners, including members of the **Association of South East Asian Nations (Asean),** to build stronger supply and manufacturing chains that are protected from external shocks and influences.
- The three nations see countries such as **Vietnam, Indonesia and New Zealand** among the players who can have a key role in the initiative.

## Google partners with Bangladesh for flood forecasting

- **Google** has partnered with **Bangladesh Water Development Board** to bring the **flood warning services** to the country. Google stated that it currently covers more than 40 million people in Bangladesh and it is working to expand its coverage to the whole of the country.
- Quoting a study conducted in collaboration with Yale, it stated that more than 65 per cent of people who receive advance flood warnings take action to protect themselves and their assets. It stated Google is working to launch a new forecasting model to double the lead time so that people have an extra day or so to prepare in case of impending floods. It stated that  this is available in Hindi, Bengali and seven other local languages.
- The company is also partnering with the **International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies** to build to deliver alerts to people who don't have smart phones to receive the alerts directly.
- The company uses Artificial Intelligence (AI) to analyse  historical data to predict flood in the river basins. Google launched its flood forecasting pilot programme in Patna in 2018.

## Donald Trump announces Wilmington as first World War II Heritage City

- US President Donald Trump announced **Wilmington in southern US state North Carolina** as the **first World War II Heritage City** at a ceremony held to mark the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II.

- During the war, Wilmington was the site of the North Carolina Shipbuilding Company, which built 243 ships in five years as part of the federal government's emergency shipbuilding program.

## G20 Foreign Ministers' Extraordinary Meeting (Virtual) on Strengthening International Cooperation Across Borders

- The G20 Foreign Ministers' Extraordinary Meeting was convened by the current G20 Chair, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, His Highness Prince Faisal Bin Farhan Al-Saud, chaired the meeting. EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar represented India.
- This virtual meeting was convened in the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. The discussions centred on strengthening international cooperation across borders in wake of COVID-19 crisis. The Ministers also exchanged national experiences and lessons learned from the cross-border management measures taken in response to the COVID-19 pandemics.
- In his remarks, EAM commended Saudi Arabia for its proactive approach in bringing G20 countries together for dealing with this COVID-19 pandemic.
- EAM called on Governments around the world to ensure that interests of foreign students are protected and movement of stranded seafarers back to their home country is facilitated.
- EAM also proposed development of voluntary 'G20 Principles on Coordinated Cross-Border Movement of People' with three elements: a) Standardisation of testing procedures and universal acceptability of test results; b) Standardisation of 'Quarantine procedures'; c) Standardisation of 'movement and transit' protocols.

## UNEP launches "Green Nudges" programme for universities

- The **UN Environment Programme (UNEP)** launched a new publication, "**The Little Book of Green Nudges"**, which aims to inspire up to 200 million students around the globe to adopt environmentally friendly habits and greener lifestyles.
- The book is UNEP's first on behavioural science and nudge theory, which focuses on human actions and how to change them, and was drafted with **The Behavioural Insights Team** and **GRID-Arendal.**
- It contains 40 ready-made nudges - simple measures that make it easier to make green choices – which university campuses can deploy to encourage students and staff to embrace more sustainable behaviours.
- The Little Book of Green Nudges contains evidence-based guidance on implementing nudges, centered around techniques such as resetting default options, changing the framing of choices, and harnessing social influence.
- It also includes case studies of nudging interventions rolled out at universities from Thailand to Kenya, Finland and Colombia.
- UNEP is collaborating with higher education institutions around the world to pilot nudging on campuses. Already 20 universities have joined the programme – including the University of Chile, the University of Nairobi, the University of Tsukuba in Japan and the University of California at Berkeley

## Rajnath Singh to represent India at Shanghai Cooperation Organisation meeting in Moscow

- **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh**, who is on a three-day visit to **Russia**, visited the Main Cathedral of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation and the Museum Complex in Moscow.
- The Defence Minister will attend the combined meeting of **Defence Ministers of Shanghai Cooperation Organization**, SCO, Collective Security Treaty Organization, CSTO and Commonwealth of Independent States, CIS Member States in commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of victory in the World War-II.

## Germany launches Indo-Pacific strategy with 'key role' for India

- Germany, current EU president and Europe's biggest economy, has launched its Indo-Pacific strategy with India that is expected to play a key role in **Berlin's outreach in the region where China's aggressive foreign policy** has rattled countries.

- The strategy released by German Foreign Ministry has several indirect references to Chinese behaviour that challenged rules-based world order. Berlin's strategy also suggested opening dialogue with institutions where India plays a key role -- Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation and Indian Ocean Rim Association -- in the areas of business and maritime safety, as well as disaster risk management.
- The German government also announced that it will work to maintain rules-based order together with partners in the Indo-Pacific region. To this end, it will cooperate with India and Japan for UN Security reforms.

## India-Bangladesh to hold Joint Consultative Commission meeting
- **India** and **B**angladesh have agreed to hold the **6th meeting of the Joint Consultative Commission (JCC)** later this month. The  High Commission of India in Bangladesh stated that the ministerial level meeting will be held on the virtual platform.
- The 5th meeting of the JCC was held in **New Delhi** in February last year between Dr. A.K.Abdul Momen and the then Minister of External Affairs Sushma Swaraj.
- During the 5th JCC last year, three MoUs/Agreements were signed to further strengthen the existing multifaceted cooperation between the two countries.
- These included the MoUs on mid-career training of Bangladesh civil servants, cooperation  between AYUSH and the Ministry of Health of Bangladesh in the field of medicinal plants, and an MoU between Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) of Bangladesh and CBI.
- Another MoU was signed between **Hiranandani Group** and **Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA)** to facilitate investments in the **Indian Economic Zone** in **Mongla**.

## First India-France-Australia Trilateral Dialogue held virtually
- The **first India-France-Australia Trilateral Dialogue** was held virtually. The meeting was co-chaired by Foreign Secretary **Harsh Vardhan Shringla**, Secretary-General, French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs François Delattre, and Secretary, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Frances Adamson. The focus of the dialogue was on enhancing cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.
- The outcome oriented meeting was held with the objective of building on the strong bilateral relations that the three countries share with each other. The three sides agreed to hold the dialogue on an annual basis.
- During the dialogue, the three sides discussed economic and geostrategic challenges and cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and domestic responses to it. Cooperation on Marine Global Commons and potential areas for practical cooperation at the trilateral and regional level were also discussed, including through regional organisations such as ASEAN, IORA and the Indian Ocean Commission.
- The three countries also had an exchange on the priorities, challenges and trends in regional and global multilateral institutions, including the best ways to strengthen and reform multilateralism.

## India, Japan sign pact for reciprocal supplies between armed forces
- **India** and **Japan** have signed an agreement for **reciprocal provision** of supplies and services between the **Armed Forces of India** and **The Self-Defense Forces** of Japan.
- "This agreement establishes the enabling framework for closer cooperation between the Armed Forces of India and Japan in reciprocal provision of supplies and services while engaged in bilateral training activities, United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, Humanitarian International Relief and other mutually agreed activities," the statement stated.

- The agreement will also enhance the interoperability between the Armed Force of India and Japan. This will be increasing the bilateral defence engagements under the Special Strategic and Global Partnership between the two countries, the statement added.

## Bangladesh launches campaign against fake information and rumours

- The **government of Bangladesh** has launched a campaign named **'Asol Chini' or 'real-sugar'** to fight **fake information and rumour** spreading **on social media**.
- The campaign aims to create digital literacy to stop fake information and rumours.
- The Digital Security Agency (DSA) of the **Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Department and the LICT project** of the Bangladesh Computer Council (BCC) will jointly run the campaign to create awareness among people in the country in a three-month campaign.
- A digital platform **Durbar21.org** has been created for this purpose. Ambassadors will be appointed in districts and sub-divisions to create awareness about fighting rumours and fake information.

## ADB provides 50 million dollar loan to Bangladesh for PPP infrastructure projects

- The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** and government of **Bangladesh** signed a **50 million dollar loan** agreement to **promote, fund and implementpublic-private partnership (PPP)** infrastructure projects in the country.
- The project will help Bangladesh to mobilise private investment, develop infrastructure projects and create jobs which will help accelerate the economic recovery process in the aftermath of the Corona pandemic.
- ADB has also assisted the government to develop the PPP Act, set up the PPP office, and an institutional framework for PPPs in addition to supporting priority sectors of Bangladesh as a transaction advisor.

## Bahrain will be fourth Arab country to recognize Israel

- The island kingdom of **Bahrain** became the **fourth Arab country** to normalize **diplomatic relations with Israel** — and the **second as** part of a Trump administration **peace initiative.**
- **Bahrain follows theUnited Arab Emirates'** decision to recognize Israel's statehood.
- Trump will host Bahrain foreign minister Abdullatif bin Rashid al Zayani, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Emirati foreign affairs minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan at the White House.
- **Egypt** was the **first Arab country** to recognize **Israel, in 1979,** followed by **Jordan in 1994.**

## Liberia declares rape a national emergency after spike in cases

- **Liberian PresidentGeorge Weah** has declared **rape** a **national emergency** and ordered new measures to tackle the problem after a recent spike of cases in the West African state.
- The move comes after thousands of Liberians protested against rising incidents of rape in the capital Monrovia last month in a bid to draw attention to the country's alarming rate of sexual assault.
- The government will also establish a so-called "**national security task force**" on sexual and gender-based violence. The high rates of rape in Liberia have been a long-standing concern.
- A United Nations report in 2016 recorded **803 rape cases** the previous year in the country of 4.5 million, and found only 2 percent of sexual violence cases led to a conviction.
- It was the resulting sense of impunity and legacy of the 14-year civil war between 1989 and 2003, when rape was commonplace, that had created the current problem, it stated. Incidents of rape appear to have risen sharply this year.

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

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

- India, Afghanistan and China had contested the elections to the Commission on Status of Women. While India and Afghanistan won the ballot among the 54 members, China failed to cross the half-way mark.
- The **CSW** is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.
- A functional commission of the E**COSOC**, it was established by ECOSOC resolution 11(II) of 21 June 1946.
- It promotes women's rights, highlights the reality of women's lives throughout the world and helps in shaping global standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women
- 45 member states of the United Nations serve as members of the Commission at any one time

## World's first sovereign bond linked to UN goals hits market
- The bond, from Mexico, reflects a trend of fund-raising to tackle social and environmental issues.
- **Mexico** issued what it described as the **world's first sovereign bond** linked to the sustainability development goals set by the **United Nations**, raising **750 million euros ($**889.73 million).
- Deputy Finance Minister Gabriel Yorio stated reducing inequality, financial inclusion and the gender gap were among the UN goals.
- The government did not specify how it would spend the money raised. The bond's preliminary investment prospectus cautioned that there was no guarantee Mexico would make disbursements for projects that meet the UN characteristics.
- The bond is part of an emerging trend of debt issuance aimed at raising funds that attempt to tackle social, environmental and other issues. It was more than six times oversubscribed.

## India walks out of SCO meet after Pakistan projects fictitious map
- **India walked out** of a meeting of the **National Security Advisors** of **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)** member countries in protest after the Pakistani representative used a **"fictitious" map showing Indian territories as part of Pakistan**.
- Hosted by the chair of the **SCO (Russia).**
- India issued its strong objection to the use of this illegal map by Pakistan. Indian counterpart **Ajit Doval** attended the SCO Summit.
- The political map was released by Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan during a meeting in Islamabad that was attended by his cabinet and senior officials, including his special assistant on national security affairs, **Moeed Yusuf.**

## India joins Djibouti Code of Conduct/ Jeddah Amendment as Observer
- India has joined the **Djibouti Code of Conduct/ Jeddah Amendment, DCOC/JA**, as Observer. The move came following the high level meeting of the Djibouti Code of Conduct/ Jeddah Amendment held virtually on 26th of August.
- DCOC/JA is a grouping on maritime matters comprising **18 member states** adjoining the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, the East Coast of Africa and Island countries in the Indian Ocean Region. India has joined Japan, Norway, the UK and the US as Observers to the DCOC/JA.
- The DCOC, established in **January 2009**, is aimed at repression of piracy and armed robbery against ships in the Western Indian Ocean Region, the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea.
- As an observer at the DCOC/JA, India is looking forward to working together with DCOC/JA member states towards coordinating and contributing to enhanced maritime security in the Indian Ocean Region.

## Global Preparedness Monitoring Board (GPMB) releases report 'A WORLD IN DISORDER'
- It would take **500 years** to spend as much on preparedness as the world is currently losing due to COVID-19. The world cannot afford this cycle of panic and neglect.

- This will not be the last global health emergency. The world simply cannot afford to be unprepared again, warns the **Global Preparedness Monitoring Board (GPMB)** in its second report 'A World in Disorder', released.
- Last year, the GPMB warned that the world was unprepared for the very real likelihood of a deadly pandemic spreading around the globe, killing millions of people, disrupting economies, and destabilizing national security.
- In its new report, the GPMB provides a harsh assessment of the global COVID-19 response, calling it "**a collective failure to take pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response seriously and prioritize it accordingly.**" This lack of accountability by leaders has led to a profound and deepening deficit in trust that is hampering response efforts.
- Responsible leadership and good citizenship have been key determinants of COVID-19's impact, the report finds-- systems are only as effective as the people who use them.
- The report highlights how the devastating social and economic impact of pandemics, especially for the vulnerable and disadvantaged, is often underestimated and ignored. COVID-19's long-term socioeconomic impacts are predicted to last for decades, with the World Bank's conservative scenario estimating a US$ 10 trillion earning loss over time for the younger generation as a result of pandemic-related educational deficits.
- '**A World in Disorder**' identifies the specific commitments and actions leaders and citizens must take -- boldly, decisively, and immediately. These include sustainable and predictable financing for global and national health security, and a call to hold a UN Summit on Global Health Security to develop an international framework for health emergency preparedness and response.

## Israel, U.A.E. and Bahrain Sign Accords, With an Eager Trump Playing Host

- **Israel** and **two Arab nations** signed agreements at the **White House** to normalize their relations, a step toward a realignment of the Middle East but one that failed to address the future of the Palestinians.
- President Trump presided over a South Lawn ceremony where Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel and the foreign ministers of Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates signed a general declaration of principles the White House has named the **Abraham Accords**, after the biblical father of three monotheistic religions, as well individual agreements between Israel and the two Arab states.
- The texts of the agreements detail how the three countries will open embassies and establish other new diplomatic and economic ties, including tourism, technology and energy. **Israel** and the Emirates are beginning commercial air travel between their countries for the first time, and Bahrain has opened its airspace for those flights.

## India extends 250 million dollars support to Maldives to overcome economic impact of Covid-19

- **India** has provided financial assistance of **250 million dollars** as budgetary support to the **Maldives government** to mitigate the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. A handover ceremony was held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Maldives government to mark the occasion.
- The 250 million dollar budgetary support was a response to the request made by Maldives President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for financial assistance to overcome the difficult economic situation in the Maldives. India has provided substantial and continued assistance to the Maldives during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The budgetary support of 250 million dollars has been extended without conditions. Maldives government is at liberty to use the money in repairing the domestic economic situation in line with its own priorities. The financial assistance is being routed through **SBI, Male** so that it does not reflect in the external borrowings of the Maldives. Indian government has provided a sovereign guarantee to SBI for this financial assistance.

- The **soft loan** has a comfortable tenor of **10 years** and a **very low interest rate**. Since the principal payment is due only at the end of 10 years, it will not put any immediate debt servicing liability other than bi-annual interest payment. Maldives is the only country to which India has provided such assistance.

## Direct cargo ferry service between India & Maldives jointly e- launched

- Shipping Minister **Mansukh Mandaviya** and Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation of Maldives, Ms Aishath Nahula jointly **e- launched** a **direct cargo ferry service** between **India** and **Maldives**.
- During its maiden voyage, a vessel with a capacity of **200 TEU** and **3000 MT** of break bulk cargo will sail from Tuticorin to Kochi, from where it will proceed to **Kulhudhuffushi port** in North Maldives and then to Male port.
- It is scheduled to reach Kulhudhuffushi and Male on 29th of this month. This ferry service being operated by the Shipping Corporation of India will run twice a month and will provide a cost effective direct and alternate means of transportation of goods between India and Maldives.

## World's richest 1% cause double CO2 emissions of poorest half, says Oxfam

- The **wealthiest 1%** of the world's population were responsible for the emission of more than twice as much carbon dioxide as the poorer half of the world from **1990 to 2015**, according to new research.
- Carbon dioxide emissions rose by **60% over the 25-year period**, but the increase in emissions from the richest 1% was three times greater than the increase in emissions from the poorest half.
- The report, compiled by **Oxfam** and **the Stockholm Environment Institute**, warned that rampant overconsumption and the rich world's addiction to high-carbon transport are exhausting the world's "carbon budget".
- Such a concentration of carbon emissions in the hands of the rich means that despite taking the world to the brink of climate catastrophe, through burning fossil fuels, we have still failed to improve the lives of billions, stated Tim Gore, head of policy, advocacy and research at Oxfam International.
- The richest **10% of the global population**, comprising about **630 million people**, were responsible for about 52% of global emissions over the **25-year period**, the study showed.
- Carbon dioxide emissions accumulate in the atmosphere, causing heating, and temperature rises of more than 1.5C above pre-industrial levels would cause widespread harm to natural systems. That accumulation gives the world a finite carbon budget of how much carbon dioxide it is safe to produce, which scientists warn will be exhausted within a decade at current rates.
- If left unchecked, in the next decade the carbon emissions of the world's richest 10% would be enough to raise levels above the point likely to increase temperatures by 1.5C, even if the whole of the rest of the world cut their emissions to zero immediately.

## Arctic sea ice hits second-lowest level on record

- This year, **Arctic sea** ice shrank to its **second-lowest extent** in more than 40 years of satellite measurements. On 15 September, ice covered just **3.74 million square kilometres** of Arctic waters at its annual summer minimum. In only one other year — 2012 — has the annual minimum Arctic sea-ice cover dropped below 4 million square kilometres (see 'Thin ice').
- As global temperatures rise, the minimum Arctic sea-ice extent has shrunk by an average of 13.4% per decade since 1979. The ice that remains is often thinner and more fragile than before, making it more vulnerable to melting the following year.
- This year's near-record low — reported by the **US National Snow and Ice Data Center (NSIDC)** in Boulder, Colorado on 21 September — got its start last winter, when winds blowing offshore along Russia's northern coast allowed only thin sea ice to form there; much of this ice melted away when spring came.

- And from May to August, Siberian heatwaves caused strong melting in the Kara and Laptev seas. The ambitious **MOSAiC** research expedition, which is examining the Arctic climate from the German icebreaker Polarstern, reached the North Pole on 19 August, in lighter-than-usual ice conditions.
- The final blow came near the end of the melting season, in early September, when air temperatures over north-central Siberia soared as much as 6 °C above normal. Some of this warm air leaked north, leading to further ice loss. For six days starting on 31 August, nearly 80,000 square kilometres of sea ice melted each day, a record loss rate for this period.
- Shrinking sea ice marks part of an overall transition to a new Arctic climate, researchers reported this month1. Warmer air temperatures are already causing a greater proportion of Arctic precipitation to fall as rain rather than snow — meaning a warmer and slushier environment than Arctic ecosystems are used to.

## India, Nepal launch website on post-earthquake reconstruction

- Indian Ambassador to Nepal Vinay M Kwatra and Sushil Gyewali, CEO of Nepal's National Reconstruction Authority, launched a dedicated **website** for **post-earthquake reconstruction** of **education sector projects** in **Nepal**.
- "In a virtual launch ceremony, Ambassador Kwatra and Sushil Gyewali, CEO NRA jointly unveiled a dedicated website on GOI assisted post-earthquake reconstruction projects in the education sector in Nepal," Indian Embassy stated.
- The Embassy further stated both countries -- India and Nepal -- are partners in development.
- The devastating earthquake of **2015** that shook the Himalayan nation of Nepal had claimed nearly 10,000 lives, injuring thousands and displaced over half-a-million people. Gorkha, Sindhupalchowk and Dolakha were the epicentres of the earthquake. Hundreds of families were forced to sleep under the open sky or in the temporary settlement.
- Post the earthquake, the Indian Government had committed **USD 1 billion** for the **reconstruction** of Nepal in form of **grant and Line of Credit**. Around USD 150 million was allocated for reconstruction in the housing sector, USD 100 million as grant and USD 50 million to be drawn from Line of Credit.

## Tel Aviv to become first city with electric roads that charge public buses

- The city of **Tel Aviv** is working on creating **wireless electric roads** to charge and power public transportation in the city.
- The electric roads are part of a pilot program led by the Tel Aviv-Yafo Municipality in collaboration with **ElectReon**, a company developing a system that can charge electric vehicles while they are moving, and Dan Bus Company.
- The roads will span from Tel Aviv University Railway station to Klatzkin Terminal in Ramat Aviv, a route of about 1.2 miles. The electric road itself will be about 37 miles long, a little less than half a mile.
- Electric infrastructure under the road will charge specially-equipped buses. The system consists of a set of copper coils that are placed under the asphalt of the street, according to ElectReon. "Energy is transferred from the electricity grid to the road infrastructure and manages communication with the approaching vehicles," according to the company's website.
- As for the vehicles, receivers are installed on the floor of the vehicle to transmit energy directly to the battery while driving.

## G4 countries call for decisive push for UN Security Council reforms

- Foreign Ministers of the **G4 countries - India, Brazil, Japan, and Germany** have highlighted the urgency of reforming the **United Nations** and updating its main decision-making bodies, in order to better reflect contemporary realities.
- They expressed disappointment at attempts to derail this process and committed to addressing the issue in a meaningful way and with increased urgency at this 75th anniversary of the UN.

- External Affairs Minister **Dr S Jaishankar**, and his counterparts from Brazil, Japan and Germany met virtually during the 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly.
- The G4 Ministers stated, only **reforms** in **UN Security Council** can save it from becoming obsolete. Broader membership of the Security Council will allow it to preserve its credibility and create the political backing needed for the peaceful resolution of today's international crises.
- The G4 Ministers expressed their concern at the lack of any meaningful movement forward in the Intergovernmental Negotiations on Security Council reform.

## Merchant Navy union collaborates with UN to help stranded Indian seafarers

- India's oldest union of **merchant navy officers MUI** has collaborated with the **United Nations** to assist these sailors.
- The **Seafarers Crisis Action Team (SCAT)** has been established by the **International Maritime Organisation (IMO)**, a specialised UN agency and a global standard-setting authority of safety, security and environmental performance of international shipping.

## India, Denmark ink pact to increase cooperation on IPRs

- **India** and **Denmark** inked a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** to increase cooperation in the area of **intellectual property rights (IPRs)** by exchanging best practices and collaborating in training programmes.
- The two sides will draw up a biennial work plan to implement the MoU which will include detailed planning for carrying out cooperation activities, including scope of action, the Commerce and Industry Ministry stated in a statement.
- The MoU aims to increase IP cooperation between the two countries by way of exchange of best practices, experiences and knowledge on IP awareness among authorities, businesses and research and educational institutions, and collaboration in training programmes, exchange of experts, technical exchanges and outreach activities.
- Both the sides would also exchange information and best practices on processes for disposal of applications for patents, trademarks, industrial designs and Geographical Indications, as also for protection, enforcement and use of IP rights.

## India Extends USD 15 Mn Grant Assistance To Sri Lanka For Promoting Buddhist Ties

- **Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)** stated that India has announced **USD 15 million** grant assistance to **Sri Lanka** for the promotion of **Buddhist ties** between the two countries.
- "Testifying the long and civilization links and cultural heritage between the two countries, Prime Minister Modi announced grant assistance of USD 15 million for the promotion of Buddhist ties between the two countries," Amt Narang, the Joint Secretary for Indian Ocean Region Division (IOR) of the MEA stated on India-Sri Lanka virtual Bilateral Summit.
- "This grant will help deepen people to people linkage between the two countries in the sphere of Buddhism," he added.
- "India will facilitate the visit of a delegation of Buddhist pilgrims from Sri Lanka in the first inaugural flight to Kushinagar in Uttar Pradesh," the MEA official stated.
- MEA official further stated that External Affairs Ministers S Jaishankar and National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval and Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla also took part in the meeting.

## India, US, Japan, Australia hold meet on Indo-Pacific under Quad framework

- Senior officials of India, the **US, Japan** and **Australia** held a virtual meeting under the framework of **Quadrilateral coalition or "Quad",** focusing on ways to promote peace, security, stability and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region. The meeting took place in the backdrop of China's growing military assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific region.

- The foreign ministers of the four member nations of the "Quad" are set to hold talks in Tokyo next month to further boost their cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.
- Ten-nation regional grouping **Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)** is a major stakeholder in the Indo-Pacific region.
- A statement by the US stated the four countries explored ways to work together in the Mekong sub-region, in the South China Sea, and across the Indo-Pacific to support international law, pluralism, regional stability, and post-pandemic recovery efforts.
- In November 2017, the four countries gave shape to the long-pending proposal of setting up the "Quadrilateral" coalition or "Quad" to develop a new strategy to keep the critical sea routes in the Indo-Pacific free of any influence.
- India is also expanding bilateral cooperation with Japan, the US and Australia in the Indo-Pacific region.

## Amnesty International suspends India operations after accounts are frozen

- **Amnesty International** has **halted its operations in India** after the **"complete freezing"** of its bank accounts by the **Indian government,** the **not-for-profit human rights organization.**
- Staff have been laid off, and campaign and research work in the region paused.
- Amnesty has been critical of the Indian government in recent years, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi's move to revoke the special status of Jammu and Kashmir last year.

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

| Country | Capital | Currency | Head |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bangladesh | Dhaka | Taka | Abdul Hamid |
| Lebanon | Beirut | Pound | Michel Naim Aoun |
| Maldives | Male | Rufiyaa | Ibrahim Mohamed Solih |
| Sri Lanka | Colombo | Rupee | Gotabaya Rajapaksa |
| UK | London | Pound Sterling | Boris Johnson |
| UAE | Abu Dhabi | Dirham | Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan |
| USA | Washington D.C | Dollar | Donald Trump |
| Denmark | Copenhagen | Krone | Mette Frederiksen |
| Nepal | Kathmandu | Rupee | K. P. Sharma Oli |
| China | Beijing | Renminbi | Xi Jinping |
| Australia | Canberra | Dollar | Scott Morrison |
| Japan | Tokyo | Yen | Yoshihide Suga |
| Russia | Moscow | Ruble | Vladimir Putin |
| Bahrain | Manama | Dinar | Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa |
| Israel | Jerusalem | Shekel | Reuven Rivlin |
| Mali | Bamako | CFA franc | Moctar Ouane |
| Liberia | Monrovia | Dollar | George Weah |
| Bahrain | Manama | Dinar | Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa |
| Mexico | Mexico City | Peso | Andrés Manuel López Obrador |

| Italy | Rome | Euro | Giuseppe Conte |
| Croatia | Zagreb | Kuna | Andrej Plenković |
| Jamaica | Kingston | Dollar | Andrew Holness |
| Bougainville | Buka Island | PNG kina | Ishmael Toroama |
| Somalia | Mogadishu | Shilling | Mohamed Hussein Roble |
| Belarus | Minsk | Ruble | Alexander Lukashenko |
| Togo | Lome | CFA franc | Faure Gnassingbé |

## Important Appointments
### National Appointments

| Name of the Person | Designation | Predecessor/Others |
|---|---|---|
| Kiara Advani | Brand Ambassador For Myntra | |
| Disha Patani | Ambassador of Myntra for Beauty Segment | |
| Csaba Laszlo (Romania) | Head coach for the 2020-21, Chennaiyin FC | Chennaiyin FC - Two-time Indian Super League champions |
| Utpal Kumar Singh | Secretary in Lok Sabha | Appointmented by LS Speaker Om Birla |
| Hemant Khatri | Chairman and Managing Director, Hindustan Shipyard Ltd | He was in-charge of the refit of INS Sindhuvir & spearheaded the refit of INS Astradharani |
| S R Sarma | Chief of Materiel of the Indian Navy | |
| Rajiv Kumar | Election commissioner (5-year tenure) | Ashok Lavasa (Asian Development Bank- vice president) |
| M Veeralakshmi | 1st woman ambulance driver | Tamil Nadu govt |
| Aveek Sarkar | Chairman, Press Trust of India | Vijay Kumar Chopra |
| Pramod Chandra Mody | Chairman, Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT). | |
| K Padmakar | Chairman and Managing Director, Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd | D Rajkumar and R Ramachandran (MD and director refineries, respectively) |
| L C Goyal | Chairman and Managing Director, India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO) | |
| Charu Sinha | First woman commander (Inspector General (IG) of CRPF's Srinagar sector) | Head the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) formation in the Kashmir Valley |
| M V Raja Sekhar | Director (R&D), Bharat Electronics | |

| | Ltd | |
|---|---|---|
| Murali Ramakrishnan | MD and CEO, South Indian Bank | V G Mathew |
| S Krishnan | Managing Director and CEO, Punjab & Sind Bank | S Harishankar |
| Vinod Kumar Yadav | Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Railway Board | |
| Kshatrapati Shivaji | Secretary, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation | |
| Ayushmann Khurrana | Brand ambassador, Bajaj Allianz Life | |
| Kenichi Ayukawa | President, Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers | Rajan Wadhera |
| Vipin Sondhi | Vice President of SIAM | |
| Manoj Kumar | Executive Director, International Finance Services Centres Authority (IFSCA – regulates GIFT City) | Chief General Manager at SEBI |
| Vinkesh Gulati | 35th President, The Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations(FADA) | For the period 2020-22 |
| Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Smriti Mandhana | Brand ambassadors, Playerzpot | |
| Anil Jain | President, All India Tennis Association | |
| Anil Dhupar | Secretary general, All India Tennis Association | |
| Rohit Rajpal | Treasurer, All India Tennis Association | |
| Justice Rohinton Fali Nariman | Chairperson of SC legal services committee | |
| Ayushmann Khurrana | Celebrity advocate for children's rights campaign – 'For Every Child' | UNICEF India |
| Paresh Rawal | Chairman, National School of Drama | |
| Subhash Kamath (Chief Executive Officer at BBH & Publicis Worldwide) | ASCI's new Chairman | Rohit Gupta |
| NS Rajan | Vice-chairman, ASCI | Managing director at public relations firm Ketchum Sampark P. Ltd |
| Shashidhar Sinha | Honorary treasurer. | Chief executive, Mediabrands India Pvt. Ltd |

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|---|---|---|
| Harivansh | Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha | Manoj Kumar Jha |
| Sachin Tendulkar | Brand ambassador,  Paytm First Games | |
| Virat Kohli | Brand ambassador,  Great Learning | He will lead the brand's latest 'Power Ahead' campaign |
| Amitabh Bachchan | Alexa voice assistant, Amazon.com | First used celebrity voice (Amazon) -  Samuel L Jackson |
| Suresh Raina | Brand ambassador,  Online poker platform 9stacks | |
| Sandeep Batra | Whole-time director (designated as Executive Director), ICICI Bank. | Seeking approval from RBI |
| Narendra Singh Tomar | Additional charge of the Ministry of Food Processing Industries | Harsimrat Kaur Badal |
| Anil Dhasmana (Former Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW) chief) | Chief of National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO). | Satish Jha (former Intelligence Bureau (IB) officer) |
| H D Deve Gowda | Member of the Rajya Sabha | At first time, JD(S) leader has become a member of the Upper House since 1996. |
| Simanchala Dash | Advisor to Executive Director, International Monetary Fund | |
| Raghvendra Singh (Chief Executive Officer, Development of Museums and Cultural Spaces.) | Secretary, Ministry of Culture | Kumar |
| Kumar | Secretary, National Commission for Backward Classes, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. | Ajoy Kumar |
| S Aparna | Secretary, Department of Pharmaceuticals | P O Vaghela |
| Apurva Chandra | Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Employment | |
| Dr Girija Shanker Mungali | Member, Asian Football Confederation's task force | Chairman of the Club Licensing Committee of the All India Football Federation |
| AK Dixit (Former Union Bank of India general manager) | New administrator, Punjab and Maharashtra Co-operative (PMC) Bank | Surinderpal Singh Ram Singh - Chief Executive Officer(CEO) of PMC bank limited. |
| Khushi Chindaliya from | Regional Ambassador for India | By the United Nations Environment |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Surat | | Programme (UNEP) – Tunza Eco-Generation |
| Sonu Sood | Brand ambassador, Acer India | |
| Uday Kotak | Board Member, IL&FS | 1 year extension |
| Rajat Sud | Managing director, Energy Efficiency Services Ltd | S Gopal |
| Aamir Khan | Brand ambassador,Ceat Tyres | |
| Yuvraj Singh | Brand ambassador,Aakash Educational Services Limited | |
| Neetu David | Chairman, Women's selection committee | Hemalata Kala |
| Sunil Sethi | Advisor, Khadi and Village Industries Commission | He is the Chairman of the Fashion Design Council of India |
| Amitabh Bachchan | Brand ambassador, Reserve Bank | For the customer awareness campaign |
| Rajasthan Royals cricketer Robin Uthappa | Brand ambassador, Entri | |
| Dr P. D. Vaghela | TRAI chairman | R.S. Sharma |
| Aamir Khan | Brand ambassador, Vedantu | |
| Shekhar Kapur | President, Film and Television Institute of India, FTII | |
| Rinki Sethi | Chief information security officer,Twitter Inc | |
| DK Kashyap | Additional Director, Dhanlaxmi Bank board | In February 2020, G Jagan Mohan, was appointed as Additional Director on the board of the bank |
| Anil Kumar Chaudhary (nominated) | Chairman of CII's PSE Council | He is the Chairman of SAIL |

## International Appointments

| Name of the Person | Designation | Predeccesor/Others |
|---|---|---|
| Mustapha Adib | Prime Minister, Lebanon | Lebanon's ambassador to Germany |
| Dr Neena Malhotra | Ambassador of India to Italy | |
| Raj Kumar Srivastava | Ambassador of India to the Republic of Croatia. | Deputy Chief of Mission in the Embassy of India, Tokyo |
| Dwayne Bravo | Brand ambassador, Sbotop | |
| Matthew Hayden, Lisa Singh | Trade envoys to India | Australian government |
| R. Masakui | High Commissioner of India to | He is the Ambassador of India to |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Jamaica | the Republic of Zimbabwe |
| Manisha Kapoor | Secretary-General, Advertising Standards Council of India | |
| Preeti Sudan | One of its 11 panellists, World Health Organisation's independent panel for pandemic preparedness | |
| Jane Fraser | CEO, Citi group | Michael Corbat |
| Rajesh Khullar | Executive Director, World Bank | |
| Sameer Kumar Khare | Executive Director - Asian Development Bank (ADB), Manila. | |
| Yoshihide Suga | Japan's Prime Minister | Shinzo Abe |
| Arun Srinivas | Director of Global Business Group, Facebook | |
| Takeo Konishi | New Country Director for India | Kenichi Yokoyama |
| Bah Ndaw (Former Mali defense minister) | Interim President, Mali | Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta |
| Ishmael Toroama | President, Bougainville | |
| Mohamed Hussein Roble | Prime Minister, Somalia | |
| Alexander Lukashenko | President, Belarus (6th term) | |
| Moctar Ouane | Prime Minister, Mali | |

<div align="center">Resignation/Retirement</div>

| Name of the Person | Designation |
|---|---|
| Arun Kumar Mishra | Supreme Court judge |
| Rajiv B Lall | Non-executive chairman of IDFC First Bank |
| Harsimrat Kaur Badal | Minister of Food Processing Industries |
| Mustapha Adib | Lebanon's prime minister |

## Australia appoints cricket icon Matthew Hayden as trade envoy to India

• The Australian government has appointed former cricketer Matthew Hayden and Indian-origin politician Lisa Singh as trade envoys for advancing business ties with India.

• Three new appointments to the board of the Australia-India Council were announced. Foreign Affairs Minister Marise Payne stated, "Ashok Jacob has been reappointed as chair, and will be joined by three new board members."

• Lisa Singh, former Labor Party Senator from Tasmania, would be the Deputy Chair. Former Victoria Premier Ted Baillieu and former cricketer Hayden are the other new members.

• Hayden, 48, is a former international cricketer, who played 103 Tests and 161 One Day Internationals for Australia. He has scored 40 international centuries. He was made Member of the Order of Australia in 2010 for his sporting excellence.

• Hayden has served as board member in the Institute for Australia India Engagement since 2018.

• Singh has represented Tasmania in the Federal Senate from 2010 to 2019. She is a recipient of the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award from the government of India for her service as a person of Indian heritage in fostering friendly relations between India and Australia.

## FADA appoints Vinkesh Gulati as its new President for 2020-22

- Auto dealer's body **The Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations(FADA)** has announced the appointment of **Vinkesh Gulati** as its **35th President** for the period **2020-22.**
- Gulati is the Director of United Automobiles, based out of Allahabad and Faridabad.
- The appointment was made at the Governing Council Meeting of FADA that held immediately after the 56th Annual General Meeting of the Federation.
- FADA also appointed Manish Raj Singhania, Managing Partner – Ralas Motors, Raipur (dealer for Mahindra & Mahindra) as the Vice President and Chittur Selvakumar Vigneshwar, Deputy Managing Director – Anaamalais Toyota, Coimbatore (dealer for Toyota, VECV and Benelli) as the Secretary.
- Sai Giridhar - Director, Saisha Motors - Jaipur (dealer for Skoda Auto) will be treasurer for the year 2020-22.

## Important Awards and Honours

| Winner | Prize | Awarded By/Theme/Purpose |
|---|---|---|
| Hyderabad International Airport | CII - GBC 'National Energy Leader' and 'Excellent Energy Efficient Unit' award | Carbon Neutral Airport having Level 3 + "Neutrality" Accreditation from Airports Council International |
| Roohi Sultana | National Teachers Award 2020 | 'Play way method' to teach her students |
| Air Force Sports Control Board | Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar 2020 | Air Marshal MSG Menon received the award |
| NTPC Vallur from Tamil Nadu | AIMA Chanakya (Business Simulation Game)National Management Games(NMG)2020 | |
| IIT Madras-incubated Agnikul Cosmos | TiE50 award | |
| Manmohan Singh | Indira Gandhi Peace Prize | On British broadcaster David Attenborough |
| Chaitanya Tamhane's The Disciple | Best Screenplay award at Venice International Film Festival | Earlier, it was honoured with the International Critics' Prize awarded by FIPRESCI. |
| Chloe Zhao's Nomadland | Golden Lion award at Venice International Film Festival | |
| Aditya Puri (MD, HDFC Bank) | Lifetime Achievement Award | Euromoney Awards of Excellence 2020. |
| Margaret Atwood (Canadian writer) | Dayton Literary Peace Prize's lifetime achievement award 2020 | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Rome's Fiumicino Airport (Leonardo Da Vinci International Airport) | First airport in the world to earn "the COVID-19 5-Star Airport Rating" | Skytrax |
| Miichelin-star chef Vikas Khanna | 2020 Asia Game Changer Award | Feeding millions across India amid the COVID-19 pandemic through a massive food distribution drive |
| Udit Singhal | 2020 cohort of 17 young leaders for the Sustainable Development Goals | United Nations |
| Prime Minister Narendra Modi (Second Indian Prime Minister to be awarded the Ig Nobel Prize) | Ig Nobel Prize 2020 for Medical Education (using the COVID-19 pandemic to teach the world that politicians can have a more immediate effect on life and death than scientists and doctors can) | Jointly awarded to Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil, Boris Johnson of the United Kingdom, Andrés Manuel López Obrador of Mexico, Alexander Lukashenko of Belarus, Donald Trump of the USA, Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey, Vladimir Putin of Russia, and Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow of Turkmenistan. |
| Miranda Giacomin of Canada and Nicholas Rule from the USA | Ig Psychology Prize 2020 | Devising a method to identify narcissists by examining their eyebrows |
| Jineth Bedoya Lima (Colombian journalist) | Golden Pen of Freedom Award | Awarded by World Association of News Publishers (WAN-IFRA) |
| Shashank Nimkar from the National Institute of Design (Ahmedabad) | James Dyson India Award 2020 | For his invention- 'Earth Tatva' |
| GAIL (India) Limited | Leaders Award in the Mega Large Business, Process Sector category | 11th edition of Frost & Sullivan - MEASA and TERI - The Energy and Resources Institute's Sustainability 4.0 Awards 2020. |
| Kerala | United Nations award | For its "outstanding contribution" towards the non-communicable diseases-related sustainable development goals |
| Usha Mangeshkar | Gan Samragni Lata Mangeshkar award for the year 2020-21 | Maharashtra government |

| Sonu Sood | SDG Special Humanitarian Action Award | Awarded by the United Nations Development Programme |
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## ABB India's Factory to Be Awarded Green Factory Building Certification By IGBC

- ABB India has won a gold certification by the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) for its environmentally-friendly smart factory, becoming the first to be certified as a green building within the Nashik industrial area which houses about 10,000 factories across various industries.
- IGBC is a consensus-driven not-for-profit council formed with the aim of enabling an environmentally cohesive ecosystem. The IGBC green factory buildings is the first rating programme developed in India for industrial sector. This is based on globally accepted energy and environmental principles and strikes a balance between known established practices and emerging concepts.
- ABB India stated it has taken various initiatives at its facility to reduce their carbon footprint through in-house solar panel installation, energy efficiency improvement projects and tree plantation drives. In addition, the company has also taken up various waste management initiatives to eliminate the usage of stretch film and reduce use of single-use plastic for packing purposes.

## National Teachers' Awards 2020: President Kovind confers awards to 47 teachers across India

- The **national level awards** are given on **Teachers' Day** to celebrate the unique **contribution of some of the finest teachers in the country** and to honour those teachers who through their commitment have not only improved the quality of school education but also enriched the lives of their students.
- For infusing joyful learning to making maths easy and developing innovative methods of teaching **47 teachers from across the country** were conferred the National Teachers' Awards **by President Ram Nath Kovind**.
- This year, the candidates appeared before the jury through video conference and made presentations.

## Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank presents first ever AICTE Visvesvaraya Best Teacher Awards 2020

- Education Minister **Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank** presented the first ever **AICTE Visvesvaraya Best Teacher Awards 2020** to **12 faculty members** of AICTE approved institutes on the occasion of **Engineers Day**. The event was organised in virtual mode and the faculty members were felicitated by the Minister through online interaction.
- The Minister stated, Sir M Visvesvaraya was a pioneer of Engineering in India. Visvesvaraya was one of the most eminent Engineers and Statesmen of India, whose contribution to the advancement of the country is unforgettable. He was awarded the highest civilian award '**Bharat Ratna' in** 1955 for his indispensable contribution to nation-building.
- Highlighting the AICTE Visvesvaraya Best Teacher Awards 2020, the Minister stated that the Awards has been introduced for the first time to identify extraordinary teachers and recognize their excellence, best practice and innovativeness in the field of higher technical education at national level for Degree and Diploma institutions.
- This scheme is aimed to recognize the meritorious faculties on the Engineer's Day every year at National level and encourage them to themselves to the ever changing needs of higher education at global level and thereby becoming an effective contributor towards the society.

## 'Dasa Sutras' nominated for SKOCH Award 2020

- **'Dasa Sutras'**, a project initiated by **Prakasam SP Siddharth Kaushal** as a precautionary measure to protect the police and public from Covid-19, **has been nominated** for the **prestigious "SKOCH Award 2020".**
- The SKOCH Award 2020 is conferred on the country's extremely talented persons from various fields for their outstanding contribution to the society.

## Emmy Awards 2020

- The Emmy Awards 2020 marks the beginning of Hollywood's first major show in the times of Covid. The event was hosted by Jimmy Kimmel at an empty theatre in Los Angeles with cutouts of the nominees placed in the audience. This year shows like Schitt's Creek, Succession and Watchman were major winners. While Schitt's Creek created a record of most number of wins in a single season by taking home 7 trophies, Succession and Watchman both won 4 trophies each. Here's the full list of winners

Drama Series: Succession

- Supporting Actress in a Drama Series: Julia Garner, Ozark
- Supporting Actor in a Drama Series: Billy Crudup, The Morning Sho
- Outstanding Directing for a Drama Series: Succession
- Outstanding Writing for a Drama Series: Succession
- Lead Actress in a Drama Series: Zendaya, Euphoria
- Lead Actor in a Drama Series: Jeremy Strong, Succession
- Limited Series: Watchmen
- Supporting Actress in a Limited Series or Movie: Uzo Aduba, Mrs. America
- Supporting Actor in a Limited Series or Movie: Yahya Abdul-Mateen II, Watchmen
- Outstanding Directing for a Limited Series, Movie or Dramatic Special: Unorthodox
- Outstanding Writing for a Limited Series: Watchmen
- Lead Actor in a Limited Series or Movie: Mark Ruffalo, I Know This Much Is True
- Lead Actress in a Limited Series or Movie: Regina King, Watchmen
- Comedy Series: Schitt's Creek
- Supporting Actress in a Comedy Series: Annie Murphy, Schitt's Creek
- Supporting Actor in a Comedy Series: Daniel Levy, Schitt's Creek
- Outstanding Directing for a Comedy Series: Schitt's Creek
- Outstanding Writing for a Comedy Series: Schitt's Creek
- Lead Actor in a Comedy Series: Eugene Levy, Schitt's Creek
- Lead Actress in a Comedy Series: Catherine O'Hara, Schitt's Creek
- Competition Program: RuPaul's Drag Race
- Variety Talk Series: Last Week Tonight with John Oliver
- Outstanding Television Movie: Bad Education

## President Ram Nath Kovind confers NSS Awards for 2018-19

- **President Ram Nath Kovind** conferred the **National Service Scheme Awards** for the year 2018-19 through virtual mode.
- The NSS Award for the year 2018-19 was presented to **42 awardees** in three different categories like University, NSS Units and their Programme Officers and NSS Volunteers. Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju attended the ceremony from Vigyan Bhavan in New Delhi.
- **Department of Youth Affairs** confers the National Service Scheme Award every year to recognize and reward outstanding contributions towards voluntary community service.
- **NSS** is a **Central Sector Scheme** which was launched in the year **1969** with the primary objective of developing the personality and character of the student youth through voluntary community service. The ideological orientation of the NSS is inspired by the ideals of **Mahatma Gandhi.**

- The NSS volunteers work on issues of social relevance, which keep evolving in response to the needs of the community, through regular and special camping activities. Such issues include literacy and education, health, family welfare and nutrition, environment conservation, social service programmes, rescue and relief during calamities.

## Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize 2020: 12 researchers receive India's highest science award

- The names **of 12 scientists** who received the country's **highest science award Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize** for **2020** were announced during the foundation day of the **Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).**
- The prize is given to Indian scientists below the age of 45 for outstanding research in seven fields—Biology, Chemistry, Environment Science, Engineering, Mathematics, Medicine and Physics.
- **Feluda** was developed by one of the CSIR institutes were also released—Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology. One of the researchers who developed the testing method, **Dr Debjyoti Chakraborty**, was awarded the CSIR Young Scientist Award for 2020.
- For Biological Sciences, **Dr Shubhadeep Chaterjee** from the Centre for DNA Fingerprinting and Diagnostics and **Dr Vatsala Thirumalai** at the National Centre for Biological Sciences were awarded. Dr Chaterjee's work focuses on mechanisms that promote or suppress bacterial disease in plants. Dr Thirumalai works on neural circuits that control movement during development and adulthood in animals.
- In the field of Chemical Sciences, **Dr Jyotirmayee Dash** ,works on new methodologies for synthesis of diverse molecules and **Dr Subi Jacob George** works on supermolecular synthesis
- For Earth, Atmosphere, Ocean and Planetary Sciences, **Dr Abhijit Mukherjee** from Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur and **Dr Suryendu Dutta** from Indian Institute of Technology Bombay were named recipients. **Dr Mukherjee** is a geology professor and works on the exploration of groundwater as a sustainable drinking water source.
- For Engineering Sciences, **Dr Amol Arvindrao Kulkarni** from CSIR National Chemical Laboratory and Dr **Kinshuk Dasgupta** from Bhabha Atomic Research Centre were awarded. Dr Kulkarni's research focusses on developing multiphase reactors and microreactors.
- For Mathematical Sciences, **Dr Rajat Subhra Hazra** from Indian Statistical Institute and **Dr U K Anandavardhanan** from Indian Institute of Technology-Bombay were awarded.
- For Medical Sciences, **Dr Bushra Ateeq** from Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur and **Dr Ritesh Agarwal**, his main research area is a fungal infection called Allergic bronchopulmonary aspergillosis.
- For physical sciences, the award went to **Dr Rajesh Ganapathy** from Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research and **Dr Surajit Dhara** from University of Hyderabad.

## UP govt bags 8 awards in Garib Kalyan Rozgar Abhiyan

- Uttar Pradesh government has bagged 8 awards in **Garib Kalyan Rozgar Abhiyan (GKRA)** launched by the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation under the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti. The State has also got overall second rank in implementation of **Gandagi Mukt Bharat scheme**. The awards will be distributed at a virtual ceremony by the Minister of State, Ministry of Jal Shakti on October 2, 2020.
- The Government of India had launched the Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyan initiative to tackle the impact of COVID-19 on Labourers and workers. It is a rural public works scheme which was launched on June 20, 2020 with an initial funding of Rs 50,000 crore.
- Uttar Pradesh has got overall first position in the Garib Kalyan Rozgar Abhiyan category while in individual districts, **Prayagraj, Hardoi** and **Fatehpur** has bagged first, second and third ranks respectively. In Non-GKRA category, **Bareilly and Aligarh** have secured first and second ranks respectively. **Aligarh** has also received the Special Recognition award.

# Important MOU's

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

- **Vedanta Ltd** has tied up with **State Bank of India** for a long-term syndicated loan facility worth Rs **10,000 crore.**
- Vedanta Ltd has tied up a long-term syndicated loan facility for Rs 10,000 crore with State Bank of India as facility agent and **SBICAP Trustee Company Ltd** as the security trustee with door to door tenor of seven years.
- State Bank of India has given a commitment of **Rs 5,000 crore** as a lender.
- Security is provided by way of pledge over the shares held by the company in **Hindustan Zinc Ltd**, representing **14.82 per cent** of the paid-up share capital of HZL which will be released in a phased manner as per the terms of the facility.
- The company has also given a non-disposal undertaking in respect of its shareholding in HZL to the extent of 50.1 per cent of the paid-up share capital of HZL which shares are not pledged.

## C-CAMP inks pact with India Sweden Healthcare Innovation Centre to nurture frugal innovations

- The Centre for **Cellular and Molecular Platforms (C-CAMP)** has signed a pact with the **India Sweden Healthcare Innovation Centre (ISIC)** to jointly identify and nurture frugal innovations and make quality healthcare affordable and accessible.
- The crucial collaboration with the Swedish ecosystem is aimed at building a strong crop of biopharmaceuticals, medtech, diagnostics, nutraceuticals and other healthcare interventions in India, for India, and beyond, stated Taslimarif Saiyed, C-CAMP CEO and Director.
- The partnership, which extends to **ISIC Innovation Challenge 2020**, is looking to drive sweeping changes in the healthcare delivery system in India by providing an innovation platform for 'continuum of care', encompassing diagnostics, palliative care and therapeutic interventions.

## WhatsApp partners Cyber Peace Foundation to drive cyber safety awareness

- Facebook-owned **WhatsApp** has partnered **Cyber Peace Foundation (CPF)** to create awareness on cyber safety among students.
- The partners aim to reach about **15,000 students** in five Indian states **Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and Maharashtra** by the end of this year under the first phase of a pan-India programme.
- This latest initiative builds on a previous partnership under the **'e-Raksha'** programme that reached thousands of students.
- CPF will train teachers, parents and students using a co-created curriculum to arm them with tips and tricks to increase online safety for children in consultation with UNICEF and state police authorities.
- At the end of these trainings, the participants will create a **'Cyber Peace Club'** to ensure that this knowledge is further institutionalised and manage a repository of guidance that other students can refer to for boosting online child safety
- The curriculum that has been created by WhatsApp and CPF will focus on developmental skills and offer consultations with education boards, and governments at the state and national level.

## IIT Roorkee signs MoU with NIUA for building accessible, safe Indian cities

- **National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA)** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee** for collaboration in areas of universal design principles and inclusive development in the backdrop of **'Building Accessible Safe Inclusive Indian Cities' (BASIIC) program.**
- The MoU was signed between Prof. Ajit K Chaturvedi, Director, IIT Roorkee, and Mr. Hitesh Vaidya, Director, NIUA. The MoU facilitates cooperation in the field policy research, technical support, knowledge creation, and dissemination.

- IIT will bring in the expertise in accessibility, safety & inclusivity and jointly take up research and development, formulation of innovative solutions, knowledge management and training and capacity-building.
- NIUA will identify thrust areas of the program, provide the necessary intelligence, expertise and guidance in policy research and development in the discipline. **IIT Roorkee** will be working with BASIIC program partners including relevant Government bodies & Institutions and **Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)** of partner cities.

### About National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA):

- The National Institute of Urban Affairs is an institute for research, training and information dissemination in urban development and management in New Delhi, India. It was established in 1976 as an autonomous body under the Societies Registration Act.

### LEAF, AP Govt ink agreement with focus on food processing

- Integrated agri value-chain company – **Lawrencedale Agro Processing India (LEAF)** has entered into an agreement with the Government of **Andhra Pradesh** to expand the scope of **food processing** in the State.
- **LEAF** has inked an agreement with the Andhra Pradesh Food Processing Society at **Tadepalli, Guntur**, under the purview of the Andhra Pradesh government's Department of Industries and Commerceto boost the income of marginal farmers with special focus on food processing.
- In a release issued jointly by the State government and LEAF, Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy has stated, "This initiative of Integrated Food Park Scheme is one more aspect towards ensuring higher income for farmers," he stated.
- The State tops in the production of mango, lime, tomato, eggs, banana, chillies, and shrimp and second in production of ground nut, maize and paddy in the country.
- The CEO of the food processing society L Sridhar Reddy stated that the sector has attracted over Rs.5-lakh crore investments in recent years. "Such tie-ups and initiatives would besides empowering farmers, attract more investments," he stated

### Atal Innovation Mission Partners with Freshworks to empower AIM Startup Innovators

- To provide **robust support to innovators and entrepreneurs** in India, **Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog**, has partnered with **Freshworks Inc.,**
- The collaboration aims to increase the efficacy of the institutions and startups in the AIM portfolio and foster innovation and entrepreneurship among startup innovators.
- Freshworks will provide credits for its suite of products to AIM and its beneficiaries, which will empower startups to function efficiently while keeping a tab on costs in related activities.
- Resources and mentorship to startups in Freshworks' area of expertise will also be made available, including access to virtual or physical office hours to interface with functional leaders from Freshworks and an extended mentor network.

### Dell Technologies and NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission Launches SheCodes Innovation Challenge, Aimed at Championing Girl-Led Innovation

- **Dell Technologies** in association with **NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)** launches **'SheCodes Innovation Challenge'**, aimed to encourage girls to create, tinker, sustain and innovate.
- This collaboration has proved to be useful for students and educators alike, for that has enabled them to work with state-of-the-art technologies, systems and software.
- 'SheCodes Innovation Challenge' is a countrywide challenge, inviting girl innovators cutting across all lingual, geographical and cultural divide, thereby championing the thought of girl-led innovation.
- The challenge is focused on innovations amongst eight categories, including Water Conservation and Management (National Water Mission), Waste Management (Swacch Bharat), Clean Energy (Power for All), Smart Mobility, Health (Swasth Bharat), Agri-Tech, Architecture and Design, UN Sustainable Development Goals.

### Assam State Rural Livelihoods Mission, NESFB sign MoU

- **Assam State Rural Livelihoods Mission (ASRLM)** signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** with **North East Small Finance Bank (NESFB)** to work in cohesion in support of Bank Linkage of the **Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and Producer Groups/ Enterprises** under ASRLM.
- ASRLM is the first amongst all the State Livelihood Missions to initiate the signing of MoU with the new generation small finance banks.
- Both ASRLM and NESFB share the common goal of empowering women at grassroots by focusing on linking them with the banks for loans so that they can develop themselves into entrepreneurs with various livelihood generation activities. This collaboration of ASRLM and NESFB will cater to the financial needs of many SHG members, other higher level federation like VOs, CLFs, Producer Groups, Producer Collectives etc. to kick-start their dream projects of livelihood enhancement.
-  NESFB will support the SHG members in opening Individual and group accounts with minimum required documentation and within a shorter time span. NESFB will also be providing loans to the SHGs amounting within a range of Rs.1 lakh to Rs. 5 lakh depending on the proposals. The MoU also focuses on the disbursement of loans within shorter span of time and accelerate repeat linkage.

### NSDC, LinkedIn partner to impart free digital skills training

- **National Skill Development Corporation** and professional network **LinkedIn** have joined hands to provide access to **free LinkedIn Learning resources** for imparting **digital skills to youth for enhancing employability.**
- Under the partnership, 10 free LinkedIn Learning paths, consisting of 140 courses for a range of in-demand tech jobs, will be made available for free on eSkill India digital platform until March 31, 2021.
- LinkedIn will also provide periodic labour market insights based on its economic graph of more than 69 million members in India. This will include in-demand skills, emerging jobs, and global hiring rates to NSDC to better understand the skilling ecosystem.
- According to LinkedIn data, Indian professionals with digital skills were 20 percent more in demand than professionals without digital skills in 2020.
- The 10 free LinkedIn Learning paths will help India's youth develop the skills needed for those jobs. Each learning path includes video content designed to help job-seekers develop core digital skills needed for an in-demand tech role, covering a range of skills from entry-level digital literacy to advanced product-based skills.

### Telangana, UK India Business Council renew partnership to strengthen industrial development

- The **UK India Business Council (UKIBC)** renewed its Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Industries and Commerce Department**, **Government of Telangana** to further strengthen ties.
- This collaborative partnership is well-established and has already led to two UK business delegations to the State and a further delegation of leading UK universities. These interactions boost business investment, accelerate improvements in the ease of doing business, facilitate UK-Telangana business partnerships and expand higher education collaboration.
- UKIBC will continue to support interactions between UK businesses and Telangana to provide direct feedback from business on the ease of doing business, market access and other relevant issues which can further bolster business confidence and enhance the operating environment for doing business. These interactions will continue in the form of dialogues, annual ministerial meetings and various delegation visits.
- UKIBC will also work towards future investment opportunities, strengthening its relationship with state governments, supporting its members in addressing their key asks and smoothing investor interactions in different markets.

## CSIR-CMERI Durgapur and NISE, Gurugram sign an MoU as a Strategic Association to bolster the Solar Energy Sector

- CSIR-Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute (CMERI), Durgapur and National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE), Gurugram joined hands by signing an online Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) as a 'Strategic Association' to bolster the Solar Energy sector across the nation.
- The MoU was signed by Prof. Dr.Harish Hirani, Director, CSIR-CMERI, Durgapur and Dr. Arun Kumar Tripathy, Director-General, NISE.
- The institute is currently working on the development of Solar Energy based cooking system which will help in creating an energy reliant and carbon-neutral India in addition to the upliftment of the livelihood of the rural sector in India.
- CSIR-CMERI has expertise in design and development of various capacity Solar Artifacts for multifaceted uses ranging from fulfilling localized energy demand to boosting Agricultural sector for irrigation, solar powered agro dryer, de-centralized solar cold storage, charging of battery operated agricultural machineries etc.

## International Solar Alliance signs MoUs with NTPC, MNRE and World Bank

- The International Solar Alliance (ISA) has signed an MoU with the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) and the World Bank to design a plan for implementing 'One Solar One World and One Grid' (OSOWOG). The ISA also signed an MoU with India's largest power generator, NTPC Limited, for implementing solar energy projects in 47 member countries of ISA.
- The ISA is a partnership of solar resource-rich countries. Currently, 121 countries have agreed to be members of ISA. Most of these are countries with a large participation from Africa, Southeast Asia, and Europe. Pakistan and China are not a members of the ISA. The alliance is headquartered in Gurugram.
- At ISA's first World Solar Technology Summit (WSTS), Union power minister R K Singh delivered a message from Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who lauded ISA's efforts.
- According to the draft plan prepared by the MNRE, the ambitious OSOWOG will connect 140 countries through a common grid which will be used to transfer solar power. ISA will execute the bidding for the OSOWOG plan.

## IIT Roorkee inks MoU with OUAT for cooperation in agricultural research and education

- Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee (IIT-R) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology (OUAT), Bhubaneshwar to generate frontier technologies and produce quality manpower in the field of agricultural research and education for addressing the challenges faced by the rural communities and improving their quality of life.
- According to the MoU, both institutions will collaborate in research programmes where IITR and OUAT would work jointly in the field of Agriculture in the field of Genomics, Transgenics and Metabolomics and crop improvement.
- Some other fields mentioned in the MoU are Information and Communication, application of Sensors in agriculture, information and communication, IT-based societal development and related aspects of Agriculture leading to the creation of rural livelihood opportunities. The MoU has been signed for five years.
- The MoU entitles both institutions to establish mutual relations between their scientific and technical divisions and create facilities for the exchange of scientific technologists and experts and their proper placement.

## France-based EDF Group, VJTI, I2EN ink MoU to establish Centre of Excellence in civil nuclear sector in Maharashtra

- France-based EDF Group has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Veermata Jijabai Technological Institute in Mumbai and International Institute of Nuclear Energy (I2EN) to conduct a pre-feasibility study for the establishment of a Centre of Excellence in the civil nuclear sector in Maharashtra.
- I2EN is the umbrella organization of French stakeholders involved in nuclear education and training.

- EDF, which is engaged in the development and construction of the biggest nuclear plant in the world, with six European Pressurised Reactors totalling close to 10,000 MW at Jaitapur, along with state-run Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited, is aiming to develop a large pool of diversified skills in India to support the project.

## MoU signed between AYUSH Ministry and WCD Ministry for controlling Malnutrition as a part of POSHAN Abhiyaan

- A **Memorandum of Understanding** was signed between the **Ministry of AYUSH** and **Ministry of Women and Child Development** in **New Delhi for controlling Malnutrition** as a part of **POSHAN Abhiyaan**. The MoU will see some time-tested and scientifically proven Ayush-based solutions being adopted for controlling **malnutrition** in the country.
- On this occasion, Shripad Yesso Naik stated that Ayurveda and other AYUSH systems have much to contribute in dealing with mild and moderate mal-nutrition by way of many specific measures such as right intake of diet by the pregnant women, feeding practices by lactating mothers, use of traditional products augmenting milk secretion and nutritional food for children.

## ITBP Joins Hands With Uttarakhand Govt For Promoting Adventure Tourism At Tehri Lake

- The **Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)** and **Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board (UTDB)** joined hands to promote adventure sports activities at **Tehri Lake.**
- With this, the **Tehri Lake Adventure Institute** will now be **administered and managed by ITBP** for 20 years from now.
- The institute will impart training of water sports including kayaking, canoeing, rowing, sailing, parasailing, paragliding, water rescue and life-saving course.
- It will also benefit ITBP and other Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and State Police Forces in the field of water sports.

## J&K administration signs MoU with Army to operationalise Kishtwar airstrip

- In **Jammu and Kashmir**, the Union Territory Administration has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Army for development and operationalization of **Airstrip** in **Kishtwar**.
- The Lieutenant Governor observed that the Airstrip would provide a vital connectivity to Kishtwar District to benefit both Defence personnel and Civilians, even during the severe winter conditions and for medical and other emergencies, besides giving a fillip to socio-economic development of the region. The issue of operationalizing the airstrip was pending since 2018.
- Mr Sinha stated, the project is aimed to benefit around **2.50 lakh people** of Kishtwar and hoped that the project would deliver the desired results like increasing per capita earnings in district, owing to higher tourists influx which will facilitate better and quick transport facility through operationalization of airstrip, better health indicator (HDI)-low mortality rates- the speedy and crucial transfer of patient to better equipped Jammu hospital, reduce the time taken to travel from eight hours to less than 30 minutes; better monitoring and administration of the district and Integration of people with the main land.

## Virgin Hyperloop, BIAL sign MoU to study feasibility of high-speed corridor

- In arguably the first for any airport in the world, **the Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL)** and **Virgin Hyperloop** signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to conduct the study.
- With speeds of up to 1,080 kmph, Hyperloop could transport thousands of passengers per hour from the MoU was exchanged virtually between Sultan Ahmed bin Sulayem, Chairman of Virgin Hyperloop and DP World, and T M Vijay Bhaskar, Chief Secretary, Government of Karnataka and Chairman, Board of Directors, BIAL.
- Travelers could streamline their multimodal trip with seamless check in and security for both their hyperloop and air travel at centrally-located hyperloop portals.

- **Virgin Hyperloop** had successfully tested **hyperloop technology** at scale. It operated a full-scale hyperloop vehicle using electric propulsion and electromagnetic levitation under near-vacuum conditions, realizing a fundamentally new form of transportation that is faster, safer, cheaper, and more sustainable than existing modes.

## PFC signs MoU with Ministry of Power detailing targets for FY 2020-21

- **Power Finance Corporation Limited**, PFC has signed a performance-based **Memorandum of Understanding**, MoU with the **Ministry of Power** detailing various targets to be achieved by PFC during FY **2020-21**.
- The MoU was signed by Power Secretary Sanjiv Nandan Sahai and CMD of PFC R.S. Dhillon in presence of senior officials of the Ministry of Power and PFC.
- Government of India has set an ambitious revenue target of 36 thousand crore rupees along with various performance-related parameters such as Operating Profit as percentage of Revenue from Operation, PAT as a percentage of Average Net Worth and Non-financial parameters namely IPDS-related parameters.
- PFC has been delivering exemplary performance from the past years and the ratings from the Government of India stands testimony to the performance.

## Gujarat govt signs MoU with Denmark in water sector

- **Gujarat Government** has signed a Memorandum of Understanding -MoU with **Denmark** in the water sector. According to official sources, the state government arm Gujarat Water Supply and Sewerage Board has signed the MoU with '**Danish Water Forum**' through an online interactive platform.
- This will help in technology exchange, training, capacity building, knowledge exchange, cooperation in water supply, wastewater treatment- reuse and water management between the two organizations.
- MoU has been signed for a **five-year period** in order to set up Indo-Danish Water Technology Alliance in Gujarat and contribute to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal -6.

### Revision Points

| Organizations | Purpose |
| --- | --- |
| Vedanta Ltd & State Bank of India | Long-term syndicated loan facility worth Rs 10,000 crore. |
| C-CAMP & Sweden Healthcare Innovation Centre | Nurture frugal innovations |
| WhatsApp &Cyber Peace Foundation | To drive cyber safety awareness |
| IIT Roorkee & NIUA | For building accessible, safe Indian cities |
| LEAF & AP Govt | Food processing |
| Atal Innovation Mission & Freshworks | Empower AIM Startup Innovators |
| Dell Technologies & Atal Innovation Mission | SheCodes Innovation Challenge, Aimed at Championing Girl-Led Innovation |
| Assam State Rural Livelihoods Mission & North East Small Finance Bank | Linkage of the Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and Producer Groups/ Enterprises |
| NSDC & LinkedIn | Free digital skills training |
| CSIR-CMERI Durgapur & NISE, Gurugram | Bolstering the Solar Energy sector |

| International Solar Alliance & NTPC, MNRE and World Bank | Implementing 'One Solar One World and One Grid' (OSOWOG) |
|---|---|
| IIT Roorkee & OUAT | Cooperation in agricultural research and education |
| AYUSH Ministry and WCD Ministry | Controlling Malnutrition as a part of POSHAN Abhiyaan |
| ITBP & Uttarakhand Govt | For Promoting Adventure Tourism At Tehri Lake |
| J&K administration & Army | To operationalise Kishtwar airstrip |
| Virgin Hyperloop & BIAL | To study feasibility of high-speed corridor |
| Power Finance Corporation Limited & Ministry of Power | Detailing various targets to be achieved by PFC |
| Gujarat govt & Denmark | Water sector |

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

## Dr. Harsh Vardhan invites stakeholders in country and abroad to participate in formulating STIP 2020

- Union Minister for Science and Technology, **Dr. Harsh Vardhan** invited stakeholders and the public at large in the country and abroad to participate in formulating an evidence-driven, inclusive **Science Technology and Innovation Policy (STIP 2020).**
- He stated that it would bring about technology indigenization to become self-reliant, mainstream traditional knowledge systems with conventional R&D, strengthen industry-academia, government interconnectedness and promote equity.
- Dr. Harsh Vardhan was speaking at the inauguration of 'In Conversation With' - a series of exclusive interactions with leaders from across the country on STIP 2020, which is being formulated. He also launched the STIP 2020 Page on **MyGov Portal'** along with popularisation Quiz for school children in a virtual event.

## NCPUL organises "World Urdu Conference" in New Delhi

- Union Education Minister **Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank'** virtually addressed the inaugural session of the two days **World Urdu Conference** organised by **National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language ( NCPUL ) in New Delhi.**
- The Education Minister also made an important announcement and stated that Urdu writers and literators will be honoured with awards and honours in the name of important personalities of Urdu like Amir Khusrow, Mirza Ghalib, Agha Hashar, Ram Babu Saxena and Daya Shankar Naseem to encourage Urdu writers for literary and creative services by the Urdu Council from next year..

- The other participants on account of the NCPUL, that is Tehseen Munawwar, Ajmal Saeed and Dr Kalimullah too conducted the session very competently and professionally. The academic in charge of the NCPUL, while thanking all the dignitaries and the participants, stated that Urdu is not only the of language of the heart but future.

## 17TH ASEAN-India Economic Ministers' Consultations held
- **Shri Piyush Goyal**, Minister of Commerce and Industry & Railways and H.E. Tran Tuan Anh, Minister of Industry and Trade of Vietnam co-chaired the **17th ASEAN-India Economic Ministers Consultations** held virtually on 29th August 2020.
- The meeting was attended by the Trade Ministers of all the 10 ASEAN countries Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.
- The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to take collective actions in mitigating the economic impact of the pandemic and resolved to ensure macroeconomic and financial stability and resilient supply chain connectivity, particularly the unimpeded flow of essential goods and medicines in the region, in compliance with the WTO rules.
- The Ministers' discussion centred on the review of the **ASEAN India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA).** The Ministers appreciated the growing trade ties and deepening economic engagement between two parties. The report of the ASEAN India Business Council (AIBC) was placed before the Ministers. The AIBC Report has recommended that the AITIGA be reviewed for mutual benefit.

## 12th Mekong Ganga Cooperation Senior Officials' Meeting reviews progress made since Aug last year
- The **12th Mekong Ganga Cooperation**, MGC Senior Officials' Meeting reviewed the progress in all areas of cooperation. MGC is an initiative by **six countries - India and five ASEAN countries**, namely, **Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand** and **Vietnam** for cooperation in tourism, culture, education, as well as transport and communications.
- The Meeting held through video conference reviewed progress made since the **10th MGC Ministerial** Meeting held in **Bangkok** in August last year.
- The sectors which came under review include tourism, culture, education science and technology, traditional medicine and health, agriculture and allied sectors, water resources management, transportation and communication and small and medium enterprises.
- Vijay Thakur Singh, Secretary(East) in the Ministry of External Affairs and Sok Soken, Under Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Cambodia attended the meeting.

### About Mekong–Ganga Cooperation:
- The Mekong–Ganga Cooperation (MGC) was established on November 10, 2000, at **Vientiane, Laos** at the First MGC Ministerial Meeting. It comprises six member countries, namely India (Look-East connectivity projects), Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. The four areas of cooperation are tourism, culture, education, and transportation. The organization takes its name from the Ganga and the Mekong, two large rivers in the region.

## India to host summit of SCO council of heads of government on November 30
- **India** will host a summit of the **council of heads of government** of the **SCO** on November 30 with a focus on contributing to the trade and economic agenda of the influential grouping, a senior official in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has stated.

- India has been focusing on expanding its cooperation with **the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO),** an eight-nation regional grouping that represents around **42 per cent** of the world's population and **20 per cent** of the global GDP.
- India's chairmanship of the SCO council of heads of government during 2020 culminating in the summit in India on November 30, affords us an opportunity to contribute in a substantive way on the trade and economic agenda of SCO that will be the main mandate of the summit, Vikas Swarup, Secretary (West) in the MEA, stated
- The seminar was organised by the Indian Council of World Affairs, a leading think tank.

## Prahlad Singh Patel virtually attends 5th BRICS Culture Ministers' Meeting

- Union Minister of State (I/C) for Culture and Tourism **Shri Prahlad Singh Patel** virtually attended **5th BRICS Culture Ministers'** Meeting.
- The 5th BRICS Culture Ministers' Meeting was held through video conference under the **Chairpersonship of the Russian Federation**.
- The delegates from Culture Ministries of the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Russian Federation, the Republic of India, the People's Republic of China and the Republic of South Africa participated in the meeting.
- During the meeting, the discussion was held on the impact of the epidemiological situation on the cultural sphere in the BRICS countries and review of the possible implementation of joint cultural online-projects within BRICS.
- The Minister of State for Culture addressed participants of the meeting and presented India's perspective to strengthen the cultural cooperation within BRICS through alternative mechanisms of sharing and organizing cultural events in the online format given the prevailing pandemic situation.
- The **National Gallery of Modern Arts, New Delhi** will host the **BRICS Joint Exhibition** titled **'Bonding Regions & Imagining Cultural Synergies'** under the auspices of the BRICS Alliance of Art Museums and Galleries.
- The exhibition is proposed to be organized in 2021 coinciding with the BRICS event that India would be hosting in 2021.
- The exhibition aims to present around 100 works of art from the five prestigious institutions under the BRICS Alliance.

## 35th FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific (APRC)

- The **35th Session** of the **Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific** is being held **virtually** from **1-4 September 2020,** on a videoconferencing platform, on an exceptional basis, in light of the global COVID-19 pandemic and associated public health concerns.
- The move to a virtual format followed consultations with the FAO Director-General, the Regional Groups representing member nations, and with the concurrence of the **Host Country, Bhutan.**
- Hon'ble **Lyonpo Yeshi Penjor**, Minister for Agriculture and Forest was elected as the Chairperson for the 35th session of the APRC. More than 490 representatives from the 46 member countries are participating in this four days virtual conference.
- The Conference decided that the **36th APRC** will be held in **Dhaka, Bangladesh in 2022.**

## 3rd Annual Leadership Summit of US-India Strategic Partnership Forum

- PM Narendra Modi shall deliver the **Special Key Note Address** at the **USISPF 3rd Annual Leadership Summit** at, through video conference.
- 3rd Annual Leadership Summit of US-India Strategic Partnership Forum: Theme -The Theme of the 5 day Summit that began on the 31st of August is "**US-India Navigating New Challenges**".

- - The theme covers various subjects such as India's potential in becoming a Global Manufacturing Hub, Opportunities in India's Gas Market, Ease of Doing Business to attract FDI in India, Common Opportunities & Challenges in Tech Space, Indo-Pacific Economic issues, Innovation in Public Health and others.
- Goyal outlined to the members of USISPF about the steps being undertaken in the country, to facilitate industry and investments. He stated that **GIS-enabled land bank** has been launched on pilot basis, with six states on board, which will help the investors in identifying the land and location.
- The Minister also mentioned about the single-window system for clearances, which is being developed in cooperation with various approving authorities and agencies at the Central, State and Municipal levels. On the issue of trade agreement between the US and India, Shri Goyal stated India is ready to sign initial limited trade package, and it is up to the US to move ahead.

## First ever Virtual Buyer Seller Meet organised by GJEPC

- The **Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council of India (GJEPC)**, the apex body for promotion of Gems and Jewellery Exports,  inaugurated its **first Virtual Buyer and Seller Meet** for **loose diamonds**.
- The two-day meet will give an opportunity for buyers and exhibitors to connect and talk business over the virtual platform.
- The inauguration ceremony was attended by Shri Suresh Kumar, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Govt of India, Shri Senthil Nathan, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Govt of India and the participants from The Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council of India (GJEPC) were Mr Colin Shah, Chairman, Mr Dilip Shah, Convener, International Exhibition, GJEPC and Mr Sabyasachi Ray, Executive Director

## 1st World Solar Technology Summit

- **World Solar Technology Summit (WSTS)** organised by **ISA and FICCI** aims to bring together key stakeholders--leading academic scientists, technology developers, researchers and innovators to present and discuss the recent highlights of solar technologies, cost-wise; technology-wise, technology transfers, challenges and concerns in the field.
- The main objective of WSTS is **to showcase to member countries the state of the art and next-generation solar technologies worldwide** and to give an opportunity to decision-makers and stakeholders to meet, and discuss their own priorities and strategic agenda towards a larger integration.
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** in a message said that technology holds the key to scale up the use of solar energy at the inaugural session of **First World Solar Technology Summit.**
- The message was read out by International Solar Alliance (ISA) Assembly President **Barbara Pompili** and Minister of State (I/C) for Power and New & Renewable Energy **RK Singh.**

The Summit included signing of **four agreements** between

- ISA and International Institute of Refrigeration,
- ISA and Global Green Growth Institute.
- ISA and National Thermal Power Corporation,
- A tripartite agreement between India's Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, the World Bank and the International Solar Alliance.
- ISA also launched a **Journal on Solar Energy (I JOSE)** that would help authors from across the globe to publish their articles on solar energy.

## MoS V. Muraleedharan attends 10th East Asia Summit Foreign Ministers' Meeting

- Minister of State for External Affairs **V. Muraleedharan** attended the **10th East Asia Summit Foreign Ministers'** Meeting. The Meeting was held virtually.

- It was attended by the Foreign Ministers of the East Asia Summit participating countries and chaired by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Vietnam.
- The Meeting discussed ways and means to strengthen the Leaders-led **EAS platform** and to make it more responsive to emerging challenges on its **15th anniversary**.
- The Ministers exchanged views on the current regional and international developments including the COVID-19 pandemic and the cooperation to achieve a speedy and sustainable recovery.
- Mr Muraleedharan in his remarks appreciated Vietnam's efforts, as ASEAN Chair, for providing continued stewardship towards a 'Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN' during the pandemic.
- He underlined the key role played by EAS as a leading mechanism of the Indo-Pacific region and reiterated India's support to make it stronger and more responsive.

## Dr Harsh Vardhan attends 73rd Session Of WHO South East Asia Region through video conferencing

- **Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan** attended the **73rd session** of **WHO South East Asia Region (SEARO)** through video conference . Representing India, Dr. Harsh Vardhan offered two interventions in the ministerial **round table session** on COVID-19 Emergency Preparedness.
- He later expounded on the strategies that are being applied to ensure that there are increased investments in health and health emergency preparedness and response as well as in International Health Regulation (IHR) core capacities to prevent future pandemics.
- The Minister outlined the measures being undertaken by the Government such as issuing of travel advisories, creation of facilities for quarantine of persons returning from countries which reported cases of COVID - 19, issuing of guidelines for community level surveillance and also scaling up of testing facilities, tracking and testing of all suspect cases. He also highlighted the increasing domestic production capacity of PPE, ventilators and other medical items required for treatment of COVID patients which has resulted in India's resilience in the health sector.

## Dr. S. Jaishankar co-chairs the ASEAN-India Ministerial Meeting

- External Affairs Minister (EAM) of India H.E. **Dr. S. Jaishankarco-chaired** the **ASEAN-India Ministerial Meeting** along with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of **Thailand H.E. Don Pramudwinai**.
- The Meeting was held **virtually** and saw the participation of Foreign Ministers of the **ten ASEAN Member States and India.**
- The Meeting reviewed the status of **ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership in several areas including maritime cooperation, connectivity, education & capacity building and people-to-people contacts**. It reviewed the progress in implementation of the ASEAN-India Plan of Action (2016-2020).
- The Meeting also **reviewed the preparations for the upcoming17th ASEAN-India Summit** and also the progress in the implementation of key decisions of the Leaders of ASEAN Member States (AMS) and India arrived at the **16th ASEAN-India Summit held in Bangkok** in November 2019 and the previous Summits.
- **The new ASEAN-India Plan of Action (2021-2025)** was adopted at the Meeting. The Ministers discussed ways to strengthen cooperation to fight COVID-19 pandemic and exchanged views on important regional and international developments.

## Virtual meeting of G-20 Agriculture,Water Ministers held

- A **virtual meeting of G-20Agriculture and Water Ministers** was held. The meeting was attended by **Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat** and Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmer's Welfare **Parshottam Rupala**. During the meeting, the Jal Shakti Minister assured the forum of India's commitment to contribute towards the objectives, goals

and targets set by G-20. He stated, Government of India is implementing the **'Jal Jeevan Mission'** to provide household tap connections to 190 million rural homes, thereby ensuring drinking water security.

- About **Open Defecation Free India**, the forum was informed about the efforts to sustain the gains of 'Swachh **Bharat Mission'**, with more focus on solid and liquid waste management and grey water treatment and reuse.
- He also informed them about the protocols developed by India to use drones for spraying of pesticides for timely control of dessert locusts and appealed to the G-20 member countries to work in tandem and come up with an action plan for trans-boundary pest and diseases to safeguard agricultural crops. He also appealed to G-20 member countries to share knowledge and best practices to reduce the ill-effects of climate change that could affect agriculture and livelihoods of farmers.

## 10th Defence Technology and Trade Initiative, DTTI Group Meeting held virtually

- As part of the **Indo-US Bilateral Defence Cooperation**, the **10th Defence Technology and Trade Initiative**, DTTI Group Meeting was held virtually.
- The meeting was co-chaired by **Raj Kumar,** Secretary, Defence Production, Defence Ministry and Ellen M. Lord, Under Secretary of Defence for Acquisition and Sustainment, from the US Department of Defence.
- DTTI Group Meetings are normally held twice a year, alternating between India and the United States. This time, meeting was held virtually on account of COVID pandemic.
- The aim of the DTTI Group is to bring **sustained leadership focus** to the bilateral defense trade relationship and create opportunities for co-production and co-development of defence equipment.
- Four Joint Working Groups focused on land, naval, air, and aircraft carrier technologies have been established under DTTI to promote mutually agreed projects within their domains.

## Vice-President to inaugurate CII global Ayurveda summit

- **CII-Kerala** is organising the **4th edition of Global Ayurveda Summit**, a **virtual exhibition and conference** on emerging opportunities for Ayurveda between **September 15 and October 14** with the theme, **"Ayurvedha for immunity"**.
- The Vice-President M Venkaiah Naidu inaugurated the summit in the presence of the Minister of State for External Affairs and Parliamentary Affairs V Muraleedharan.
- CII is organising the summit in partnership with Ministry of Ayush, and with the support of Ayurveda Medical Association of India (AMAI), Ayurvedic Medicine Manufacturers Organisation in India (AMMOI) and Ayurveda Hospital Management Association (AHMA).
- The summit will showcase the Ayurveda immunity model and its success to the global scientific community.

## 10th virtual meeting of BRICS NSAs to be held virtually FILE PIC

- **10th Meeting** of the **BRICS High Representatives** on **National Security** chaired by **Russia**, will be held via video link.
- The National Security Advisors of the BRICS nations will deliberate upon the issues related to strengthening political security and cooperation among the five countries.
- Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin confirmed participation of Yang Jiechi, Director of the Office of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the CPC Central Committee, in meeting.
- **India, Russia and China** are members of BRICS, SCO and RIC and act as platform for mutual trust building and cooperation. This year **Russia** is chair of BRICS and SCO.

## NSA Ajit Doval attends 10th BRICS' meeting on security issues

- The **10th meeting of the NSAs, hosted by** the current chair of **BRICS Russia**, was attended by China's State Councillor Yang Jiechi and senior security officials from Brazil and South Africa.
- National Security Advisor Ajit Doval attended a virtual meet.

- This is to discuss an anti-terrorism draft strategy which is likely to be approved at an upcoming summit.
- The meeting exchanged views on combating terrorism and extremism besides deliberating on global and regional security issues.

## BRICS Communications Ministers' Meet
- Minister of State for Communications and Information Technology Sanjay Dhotre appreciated field force who managed telecom networks during COVID-19, and shared technology initiatives taken by the government to curb the pandemic at a BRICS meeting.
- The BRICS Communications Ministers' Meeting, was hosted by **Maxim Parshin**, deputy minister of digital development, communications and mass media of Russia.
- The meeting is held annually under the rotating chairship of member countries, and India will take over the chairmanship of the **next meeting to be hosted in 2021 by India.**
- The minister also highlighted various initiatives taken by the Indian government for COVID-19 management, such as **AarogyaSetu app, Covid Quarantine Alert System (CQAS), CovidSavdhan and ICT solutions** to facilitate movement of migrant workers back to their homes.
- Dhotre also talked about the **BharatNet project** to connect 2,50,000 gram panchayats involving local people through innovative PPP models, and other projects to connect hilly regions of northeast and remote islands of Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

## PM Modi to inaugurate and address VAIBHAV summit on 2nd October
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** will inaugurate and address **Vaibhav (Vishwik Bhartiya Vaignaynik) Summit on 2nd October**.
- Vaibhav Summit is a **global summit** of **Resident and Overseas Indian scientists, academicians and researchers.**
- More than 5500 academicians of Indian origin are there in top 500 Global Education Institutions and about 600 are working in the professional R&D institutes.
- **Vaishwik Bharatiya Vaigyanik (VAIBHAV) Summit** is a collaborative initiative by **S&T and Academic Organisations of India** to enable deliberations on thought process, practices and R&D culture with a problem solving approach for well defined objectives.
- The VAIBHAV initiative aims to bring out the comprehensive roadmap to leverage the expertise and knowledge of global Indian researcher for solving emerging challenges.
- The aim of summit is to reflect in-depth on the collaboration and cooperation instruments with academia and scientists in India. The goal is to create an ecosystem of Knowledge and Innovation in the country through global outreach.
- The virtual summit will be inaugurated by Prime Minister on 2nd October'2020 in the virtual presence of registered academia and researchers from across the world.
- This will be **followed byonline month-long deliberation sessions** starting from 3rd October to 25th October 2020 among researchers through webinar mode. Concluding session is planned on 2nd November.

## UN, Britain to co-host a global climate summit on Dec 12
- **United Nations** and **Britain** will co-host a **global climate summit** on December 12, the fifth anniversary of the landmark **Paris Agreement**. UN Secretary-General **Antonio Guterres** and the UK Prime Minister **Boris Johnson** will co-host the event to rally much greater climate action and ambition.
- National governments will be invited to present more ambitious and high-quality climate plans at the summit, which would involve government leaders, as well as the private sector and civil society.

- The summit is intended to increase momentum ahead of the **United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 26)** to be held in **Glasgow** in November 2021.

## Shri Piyush Goyal participates in the G-20 meeting of the Trade and Investment Ministers

- **Union Commerce and Industry & Railways Minister Shri Piyush Goyal** took part in the virtual meeting of the G-**20 Trade and Investment Ministers**. Making interventions during the meeting, he called upon G-20 to play a leadership role in crafting a pathway to recover from COVID19.
- He stated that one of the key lessons for all countries is the need to strike the right balance between their external and internal economic policies, with a view to ensuring balanced and sustainable development. He stated that India stands ready to engage constructively with all G-20 Members to push an agenda that is inclusive and development oriented.

## PM Modi to hold virtual bilateral summit with Sri Lankan PM on Sep 26

- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** and **Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa** will hold a **Virtual Bilateral Summit** on 26th of this month.
- The Virtual Bilateral Summit will give an opportunity to the two leaders to comprehensively review the broad framework of the bilateral relationship soon after the Parliamentary elections in Sri Lanka and in the context of the time-tested friendly ties between the two countries.
- The ministry stated the summit will give an opportunity to the two leaders to comprehensively review the broad framework of the bilateral relationship.
- The two leaders are expected to deliberate on a host of issues like ways to further deepen anti-terror cooperation, boost overall defence and trade ties as well as implementation of India's development projects in Sri Lanka.
- The long-pending Tamil issue in Sri Lanka is also likely to figure in the talks.

## EAM Dr S Jaishankar participates in Special Ministerial Meeting of FMs of CICA

- External Affairs Minister **Dr S Jaishankar** participated in the **Special Ministerial Meeting** of **Foreign Ministers of the CICA.**
- **CICA** is the **Conference on Interaction & Confidence Building Measures in Asia.**
- The Minister underlined India's commitment to a pluralistic cooperative security order in Asia through CICA.
- He also highlighted India's contributions to the global fight against COVID19 and India's openness to do more, including with respect to vaccines and also about **India-central Asia cooperation and the Indo-Pacific Ocean's Initiative.**
- He reaffirmed **India's support for Afghan peace process** that respects its national sovereignty and territorial integrity and preserves its democratic progress.

## Minister of Environment addresses Ministerial Roundtable Dialogue on Biodiversity Beyond 2020 virtually

- Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change **Prakash Javadekar** addressed the **Ministerial Roundtable Dialogue on Biodiversity Beyond 2020: Building a Shared Future for All Life on Earth**, virtually **hosted by China**, one week ahead of the upcoming United Nation Summit on Biodiversity, to exchange views on biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.
- Prakash Javadekar stated that COVID-19 pandemic has emphasized the fact that un-regulated exploitation of natural resources coupled with un-sustainable food habits and consumption patterns lead to destruction of systems that support human life.
- **India aims to restore 26 million hectares** of **degraded land**, and **achieve land-degradation neutrality** by 2030.

- India has enhanced the combined forest and tree cover to nearly 25 percent of the total geographical area of the country.
- He also said that we have the **highest number of tigers** and have **doubled its number** ahead of the deadline of **2022.**

## PM Narendra Modi to inaugurate AI summit 'RAISE 2020' on October 5

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** will on **October 5** inaugurate a **virtual summit on artificial intelligence 'RAISE 2020'**, which is being jointly organised by **the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and the NITI Aayog.**
- **Responsible AI for Social Empowerment 2020' (RAISE 2020)** will be a global meeting to exchange ideas and chart a course for using AI for social transformation, inclusion and empowerment in areas such as healthcare, agriculture, education and smart mobility.
- At the RAISE 2020 summit, delegates and experts in research, policy and innovation on AI will join from across the globe.
- **RAISE 2020**, which will take place **betweenOctober 5 and October 9,** will facilitate an exchange of ideas to create mass awareness about the need to ethically develop and practice AI.
- The summit aims to help create a data-rich environment, which is a stepping stone to eventually transform lives globally.

## Informal Meeting of SAARC Council of Ministers (Virtual Mode)

- The External Affairs Minister of the Republic of India, **Dr. S. Jaishankar, participated in the** annual Informal **Meeting of the SAARC Council of Ministers**.
- The meeting, **chaired by Nepal,** was held in virtual mode and saw participation of all SAARC member states.
- **The last informal meeting** of the SAARC Council of Ministers held in **New York**.
- The meeting reviewed regional efforts to combat the Covid-19 pandemic. In particular, participants appreciated the leadership of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India in convening a video conference of SAARC Leaders on to take collaborative measures towards combating the pandemic across the region.
- This included the creation of SAARC COVID-19 Emergency Fund, to which all countries have pledged voluntary contributions.
- India's contribution to SAARC COVID-19 Emergency Fund, supply of essential drugs, medical consumables, COVID protection and testing kits, and other equipment, amounting USD 2.3 million, were made available to countries in the SAARC region.

## G20 Leaders' Summit will be held virtually on November 21-22 amid Covid

- This year's **G20 leaders** summit under the theme of "**Realising opportunities of the 21st century for all**" will be held in an online format amid the coronavirus pandemic, the G20 Saudi Secretariat stated.
- The summit will be chaired by Saudi Arabian **King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud**.
- "The 2020 G20 Leaders' Summit will be held virtually on November 21-22 and will be chaired by His Majesty King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud," the statement says.
- According to the release, the summit will focus on protecting lives and restoring growth, by addressing vulnerabilities uncovered during the pandemic and will also focus on fostering international action to realise opportunities of the 21st century for all.
- "The G20 Presidency will build on the success of the extraordinary virtual G20 Leaders' Summit held in March, and on the outcomes of over 100 virtual working groups and ministerial meetings," as per the statement.

## MeitY and NITI Aayog to organize mega virtual summit on AI- RAISE 2020

- The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and NITI Aayog will organize a **Mega Virtual Summit on Artificial Intelligence (AI), RAISE 2020- 'Responsible AI for Social Empowerment 2020,**' from October 5-9, 2020.
- RAISE 2020 will be a global meeting of minds to exchange ideas and chart a course for using AI for social transformation, inclusion and empowerment in areas like Healthcare, Agriculture, Education and Smart Mobility, among other sectors.
- The RAISE 2020 Summit will also feature some of the most exciting startups working in Artificial Intelligence-related fields. Startups chosen through the AI Solution Challenge will showcase their solutions in the AI Startup Pitchfest scheduled on 6th Oct 2020. This is part of Government of India's continuing support to tech entrepreneurs and startups by providing exposure, recognition and guidance.
- RAISE 2020 (http://raise2020.indiaai.gov.in/) will facilitate an exchange of ideas to create mass awareness about the need to ethically develop and practice AI.

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

| Conference/Summits | Venue/Host Country | Chaired By/Theme/Addressed By/Others |
|---|---|---|
| World Urdu Conference | New Delhi | National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language ( NCPUL ) |
| 17th ASEAN-India Economic Ministers Consultations | Virtual | MGC is an initiative by six countries - India and five ASEAN countries, namely, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam |
| 12th Mekong Ganga Cooperation | | |
| Summit of the council of heads of government of the SCO | India | |
| 5th BRICS Culture Ministers' Meeting | Virtual | Prahlad Singh Patel |
| 35th FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific | Host Country - Bhutan | |
| 3rd Annual Leadership Summit of US-India Strategic Partnership Forum | Virtual | US-India Navigating New Challenges |
| First ever Virtual Buyer Seller Meet | | Organized by Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council of India |
| 1st World Solar Technology Summit | | Organised by ISA and FICCI |
| 10th East Asia Summit Foreign Ministers' Meeting | Virtual | Attended byV. Muraleedharan |
| 3rd session of WHO South East Asia Region (SEARO) | Virtual | Attended by Dr. Harsh Vardhan |
| G-20 Agriculture and Water Ministers | Virtual | Attended by Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and Parshottam Rupala |

| 10th Defence Technology and Trade Initiative | Virtual | Co-chaired by Raj Kumar, Secretary, Defence Production |
|---|---|---|
| 4th edition of Global Ayurveda Summit | Virtual | Ayurveda for immunity |
| 10th Meeting of the BRICS High Representatives on National Security | Virtual | Chaired by Russia |
| 10th meeting of the NSAs | Hosted by the current chair of BRICS Russia | |
| Vaibhav (Vaishwik Bharatiya Vaigyanik) Summit | | Inaugurated by PM Modi |
| Global climate summit | Co-host by United Nations and Britain | |
| AI summit 'RAISE 2020' | Inaugurated by PM Modi | Organised by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and the NITI Aayog. |

## Important Defence News

### BEML bags Rs.842 cr mobility vehicles order for Pinaka project

- **Pinaka** is a **multi-barrel rocket launcher** developed indigenously for the Indian Army
- **BEML**, a Bengaluru-based defence equipment manufacturer, has bagged an order worth **Rs.842 crore** from **Ministry of Defence (MoD)** for the supply of **330 high mobility vehicles**, for Pinaka Project.
- Pinaka is a multi-barrel rocket launcher developed indigenously for the Indian Army and produced in India by involving public sector and private sector defence industries.
- The multi-barrel launcher system is mounted on the highly rugged BEML truck, much acclaimed for its off-road mobility and would provide the Indian Army with vital manoeuvrability on the battlefield.
- This order is a big boost to BEML, involved in the manufacturing of the high mobility vehicles with superior features under the Make in India program, thus demonstrating BEML's efforts under the 'AatmaNirbhar Bharat' initiative. The equipment will be manufactured by BEML at its Palakkad Plant in Kerala and will supply the vehicle platform to MoD in a span of three years.

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

- The 11th edition of exercise INDRA NAVY, a biennial bilateral maritime exercise between Indian and Russian Navy will begin in the Bay of Bengal. Initiated in 2003, Exercise INDRA NAVY epitomises the long-term strategic relationship between the two Navies.
- This exercise has matured over the years with increase in scope, complexity of operations, and level of participation. The primary aim of exercise INDRA NAVY-20 is to further consolidate inter-operability built up by the two Navies over the years and also to enhance understanding and procedures for multi-faceted maritime operations.

- The scope of this edition includes wide-ranging and diverse activities across the spectrum of maritime operations. Due to restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, INDRA NAVY-20 would be undertaken in a 'non-contact, at sea only' format.
- The exercise is aimed at enhancing interoperability, improving understanding and imbibing best practices between the two navies and would involve surface and anti-aircraft drills, firing exercises, helicopter operations, seamanship evolutions etc. The last edition of the exercise was conducted off Visakhapatnam in December 2018.

## DRDO develops P-7 Heavy Drop System capable of para dropping military stores
- **Defence Research and Development Organization, DRDO** has developed **P-7 Heavy Drop System** which is capable of para dropping military stores up to seven-tonne weight class from **IL- 76** aircraft.
- It consists of a platform and **specialized parachute system**. The parachute system is a multi-stage system comprises of five Main canopies, five Brake chutes, two Auxiliary chutes, one Extractor parachute and platform is a metallic structure made up of Aluminium or steel alloys.
- The system has been developed successfully with 100 per cent indigenous resources. P-7 Heavy Drop System has been inducted in the Army.

## For first time, ITBP deploys female doctors at forward locations in Ladakh
- For the first time, **the Indo-Tibet Border Police (ITBP)** has sent **female doctors** to forward operating locations in **Ladakh.**
- From sending troops from Leh to taking care of them at the forward locations, the ITBP female doctors have given all kinds of charge.
- Considering the tensed situation at the border, ITBP has changed its standard operating procedure (SOP), which did not allow any female officer to be deployed at such locations.
- The department, irrespective of gender, has sent female doctors and other staff The officials claimed that earlier, only male doctors were sent to the forward locations near to the Line of Actual Control (LAC).
- According to the ITBP top officials in Leh, female officers are now deployed at the border area to take care of troops along with other para-medics.
- Importantly, these females doctors have been tasked to supervise the medical requirements of troops. They have been deployed in different strategic locations with other paramedics to assist them.

## India's first Coast Guard academy to come up at Mangaluru
- **India's first Coast Guard academy** will be established at **Mangaluru, Karnataka**.
- Around 158 acres **Karnataka Industrial Area Development Board (KIADB)** land has been taken over for setting up ICG Academy.

## DRDO conducts successful flight test of ABHYAS
- The successful flight test of **ABHYAS - High-speed Expendable Aerial Target** was conducted by **Defence Research and Development Organisation, DRDO** from the Interim Test Range, Balasore in Odisha.
- Abhyas is designed and developed by Aeronautical Development Establishment of DRDO.
- The air vehicle is launched using twin underslung booster. It is powered by a small gas turbine engine and has MEMS based **Inertial Navigation System for navigation** along with the Flight Control Computer for guidance and control.
- The vehicle is programmed for fully autonomous flight. The check out of air vehicle is done using laptop based Ground Control Station.
- During the test campaign, the user requirement of 5 kilometres flying altitude, vehicle speed of 0.5 mach, endurance of 30 minutes and 2g turn capability of the test vehicle were successfully achieved.

## DRDO successfully test-fires Laser-Guided Anti Tank Missile

- The **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** successfully test-fired the indigenously-developed **Laser-Guided Anti Tank Guided Missile (ATGM)** from the Main Battle Tank (MBT) Arjun at KK Ranges in Ahmednagar in **Maharashtra.**
- The missile uses a warhead that has the capability to neutralise armoured vehicles which have reactive armours, which are specially-designed protective armours used in military vehicles.
- Pune-based DRDO facilities – Armament Research & Development Establishment (ARDE) and the High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL) — have developed the missile in collaboration with another DRDO laboratory, Instruments Research and Development Establishment (IRDE) in Dehradun.
- **Over the last three years**, the DRDO has successfully conducted tests of **Man Portable ATGM** and also a ATGM system named Nag. The indigenously developed low-weight, 'fire and forget' **Man Portable Anti Tank Guided Missile (MPATGM)** in September last year. In February 2018, **ATGM Nag** was successfully tested in **desert conditions.**

## Kineco flags-off India's first commercial Sonar Dome for Indian Navy

- **Goa-based Kineco Limited**, a leading composite technology provider for defence, aerospace, railway and industrial sectors, flagged off **India'sfirst-ever commercial Sonar Dome**.
- The Sonar Dome is a critical component of a warship as it houses the **Sonar (Sonar Navigation and Ranging) Array** - which is  used for detection, navigation, and ranging. The Sonar Dome, manufactured by Kineco was flagged off to its esteemed customer **Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited Mumbai (MDL),** where it will be mounted on the **Indian Navy's P15 Alpha Warship.**

## Indian Navy, Royal Australian Navy Passage Exercise (PASSEX) underway in Eastern Indian Ocean

- **PASSEX** underway between **Royal Australian Navy** and **Indian Navy** in **Eastern Indian Ocean Region**.
- Air Warfare Destroyer **HMAS Hobart**, Stealth Frigate INS Sahyadri and Missile Corvette INS Karmuk are engaged in complex Maritime Exercises.

## India-Japan Maritime bilateral exercise 'JIMEX'

- The fourth edition of **India-Japan Maritime bilateral exercise (JIMEX)** begins in North Arabian Sea. The exercise is conducted biennially between **the Indian Navy** and **Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF).**
- 'JIMEX' series of exercises commenced in January 2012 with special focus on maritime security cooperation. The last edition of JIMEX was conducted in October 2018 off Visakhapatnam coast. JIMEX 20 will be spread over three days and is being conducted in a '**non-contact at-sea-only format'**, in view of COVID-19 restrictions.

## Important Science and Technology News

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

- Indian Railways has developed a remote-controlled medical trolley named '**MEDBOT'** to help deliver food and medicines to COVID-19 patients.
- It is providing service in the Central Hospital of the Diesel Rail Engine Factory of Indian Railways.

## IIT Bombay students launch AI-based alternative to CamScanner: AIR Scanner

- **IIT Bombay**, launched **AIR Scanner**, a free-of-cost document-scanning mobile application.
- The AI (Artificial Intelligence) based Reading Assistant and Document Scanner app is developed by **Rohit Kumar Chaudhary and Kavin Agrawal**, both students of IIT Bombay.

- AIR Scanner app does not collect any information about the user and all the documents are stored in the phone's local storage.
- The document scanned using a mobile camera will be saved in PDF format and will be stored in the device only.

## CSIR-CMERI develops World's Largest Solar Tree

- **CSIR-CMERI** has developed the **World's Largest Solar Tree**, which is installed at CSIR-CMERI Residential Colony, **Durgapur.**
- The installed capacity of the Solar Tree is above **11.5 kWp.** It has the annual capacity to generate **12,000-14,000 units of Clean and Green Power.**
- There are a total of **35 Solar PV Panels** in each tree with a capacity of 330 wp each.
- Each Solar Tree has the potential **to save 10-12 tons of $CO_2$ emissions** being released into the atmosphere as Greenhouse Gases when compared with fossil fuel fired energy generation
- The inclination of the arms holding the Solar PV Panels are flexible and can be adjusted as per requirement, this feature is not available in Roof-Mounted Solar facilities. The energy generation data can be monitored either real-time or on daily basis.
- Each Solar Tree will cost Rs 7.5 lakhs and the interested MSMEs can align their Business Model with the **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evem Utthan Mahabhiyan (PM KUSUM) Scheme for farmers,** for developing a Renewable Energy based Energy Grid.
- The CSIR-CMERI developed solar powered **e-Suvidha Kiosks** may also be connected to the Solar Trees for real-time access to the vast majority of agricultural database as well as to the **eNAM i.e. National Agricultural MarketPlace** for instant and real-time access to an unified online market.This Solar Tree is a Quantum Leap towards making an Energy Reliant and Carbon Negative India.

## Indian astronomers discover one of the farthest Star galaxies in universe

- Indian astronomers have discovered one of the **farthest Star galaxies** in the universe in a landmark achievement. Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh stated it is a matter of pride that **India's first Multi-Wavelength Space Observatory 'AstroSat'** has detected **extreme-UV light** from a galaxy located **9.3 billion light-years a**way from Earth.
- The galaxy called **AUDFs01** was discovered by a team of Astronomers led by Dr Kanak Saha from the **Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics, Pune.**
- Dr Jitendra Singh congratulated India's Space Scientists for once again proving to the world that India's capability in Space technology has risen to a distinguished level.

## IIT Madras startup subsidiary launches nano textile coating to inactive Coronavirus

- A subsidiary of a tech startup incubated by **IIT Madras** has launched a **nanotech coating for textiles** that can inactivate the novel Coronavirus within five minutes of contact.
- It continuously destroys or inactivates viruses as small as 30 nanometres and other microbes.At present the particles can be coated on materials like cotton, polyester and cotton – polyester.
- A study conducted as per international standards with a U.S.-based independent laboratory showed that the antiviral coating inactivated **99.99 per cent** of the **coronavirus 229E** within five minutes of contact time.
- The coating lasts upto 60 washes at 70 degrees Celsius and does not show any leaching of chemicals.Tests have also shown that it is non-toxic to human cells and is comfortable to use.
- Based out of Bangalore, **the startup -Muse Nanobots-plans** to establish three more coating facilities in different cities to cater to demand by the end of September.

- The startup is also targeting installation of the nano coating machine in textile companies that make regular office and casual attire, sportswear, PPEs, home furnishings and packaging material by end of 2020.

## India bans PUBG, 117 other Chinese apps for 'stealing, transmitting users' data' to servers outside India'

- **The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology** has received many complaints from various sources including several reports about **misuse of some mobile apps** available on Android and iOS platforms for **stealing and surreptitiously transmitting users' data** in an unauthorized manner to servers which have locations outside India.
- Besides PUBG Mobile, the Centre also banned the recently released PUBG MOBILE Nordic Map: Livik, as well other popular Chinese apps such as WeChat Work, WeChat Reading and Alibaba Group's payment app AliPay.
- These 118 apps join the earlier 59, including TikTok, UC Browser, CAM Scanner, etc, which were banned by the Union government in June this year following a clash in the Galwan Valley in Ladakh.

## SpiceJet launches portable ventilator SpiceOxy for patients with breathing issues

- **SpiceJet** introduced a portable ventilator for patients  **'SpiceOxy',** the compact ventilator was designed by engineers of SpiceJet Technic, a subsidiary of SpiceJet.
- This light weight device can be used at home, in an ambulance, on hilly terrain like army base camps, hospitals, and portable applications like wheelchairs and gurneys, according to the airlines.
- The company claimed that the device is an "effective solution for patients with mild to moderate breathing issues".
- The new SpiceOxy ventilator could be useful to coronavirus patients as well. Along with the ventilator, SpiceJet also launched fingertip pulse oximeter, a handy device making it easier for people to measure the oxygen level of the blood.
- SpiceOxy has been certified by international agency TUV and has also obtained ISO certification that is exclusive for medical equipment's among other necessary certifications.

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

- A team of researchers from **Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati**, in collaboration with scientists from the **University of Pardubice, Czech Republic**, is working towards developing **indigenous algorithms** that can protect the **Nation's digital data** from **cyber-attacks** by advanced computers. The team has also designed encryption architectures that can be used to protect sensitive health data that is transmitted through the internet.
- The phenomenal computational power of quantum computers not only embodies possibilities of astronomical progress, but also enormous threats.
- It is generally feared that once quantum computers become the predominant workhorse of the near-future digital era, almost all existing data-protective encryption schemes would become vulnerable and obsolete.
- This need has given rise to a new field of research, called **Post-Quantum Cryptography (PQC)** and state-of-art research teams all over the world, such as the one at IIT Guwahati, has been working on developing algorithms to secure data from attacks by advanced computers.

## IIT Delhi incubated startup launches "Chakr DeCoV" to decontaminate N95 masks

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

## DIAT Develops Herbal Based Immunity Boosting Room Freshener 'Healthy Air'

- **Defence Institute of Advanced Technology (DIAT)**, a Deemed to be University located near Khadakwasla, has developed **herbal-based immunity-boosting room freshener product** named "**Healthy Air**" to contain the spread of Coronavirus disease (COVID19).
- The product Healthy Air has been developed by Deptt of Metallurgical and Materials Engineering with various extracts of herbal oils like Neem, Neelgiri, Camphor, Daalcheeni, Tulsi, Lemon, Turmeric, Laung, Ajwain, Lavender, Elaichi, Turmeric, Natural Vetiveru, Raimuniya and Pine Oil.
- The product has resulted in removing the toxic fumes, cleanses the air, and does not contain any synthetic solvent/surfactant in its formulation.
- Healthy Air does not contain any synthetic chemicals nor secondary solvents. Whereas the commercial room fresheners mostly contain synthetic adsorbents, surfactants, disinfectants, oxidizers, allergens, and chemical air sanitizers in the main formulation could affect respiratory system & brain neural sensing, do not contain any immunity-boosting agents and does not possess the anti-bacterial properties.
- The product can be used in any kind of rooms, conference halls, at public places, hospitals, malls, cinema halls, waiting lounges/rooms of Airports / Railway Stn etc.

## IISc researchers develop low-cost, on demand printing technique

- The researchers at the Centre for Nano Science and Engineering in the Bengaluru based Indian Institute of Science have developed a low cost, on demand printing technique. This new technique replaces the nozzles of an inkjet printer with a mesh covered chemically treated nano wires that repel water.
- Because of the short contact time of the impacting droplet with the mesh, the chances of clogging the pore are minimised. The mesh can also be easily cleaned and reused. This is useful for 3D printing of living cells, ceramic materials, electronic circuits and machine components.
- The Associate Professor in the Centre for Nano Science, Prosenjit Sen says that the new technique reduces the operational cost of the printer. The PhD student in the Centre, Chandantaru Dey Modak says that the capability to print a wide range of droplet sizes while using this application makes the new technique of printing unique.

## CMERI Durgapur develops solar-powered sprayers for small, marginal farmers

- **CMERI Durgapur** has developed **twosolar-powered spray systems** to help **small and marginal farmers** engage in site-specific irrigation to reduce water wastage.
- The **solar battery-operated sprayers** developed by **CSIR-Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute (CMERI)** can also be used for targeted **pest control**, thus reducing environmental pollution.
- The systems are equipped with two tanks, flow control and pressure regulators for different water and pesticide requirements of the crops.
- These devices can bring a revolution in the sphere of precision agriculture by reducing water usage in the fields.

## IIT Guwahati Researchers Design Engineered Surfaces To Detect, Prevent COVID-19

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

- Thus, surface engineering, on one hand, shall facilitate a quick detection method and on the other hand, it would be a very secure method of protection against the virus, for example when applied on PPEs.

## IIT Bombay's robotic submarine Matsya 6 finishes third in RoboSub competition

- A robotic submarine - **Matsya 6 -** designed by students of the **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bombay,** won the third position in presentation at the global RoboSub competition held in California.
- **Matsya 6** is the latest in the series of **autonomous underwater vehicles (AUV)** developed by students of IIT Bombay.
- The IIT-B team ranked seventh in the overall category. Matsya 6 is an autonomous underwater vehicle that operates on its own without any human intervention. It is capable of detecting underwater objects through cameras installed on it or the sound excited by the object.

## SpaceX launches 60 Starlink satellites, inches closer to faster internet

- **SpaceX** has successfully sent **60 Starlink internet satellites** aboard the Falcon 9.
- The launch was Starlink's first mission of the month. **The Elon-musk** owned space tech company has conducted sixteen missions this year.
- Falcon 9 successfully lifted off with the twelfth Starlink mission, carrying 60 Starlink satellites to orbit. Falcon 9 lifted off **from Launch Complex 39A (LC-39A)** at Kennedy Space Center in Florida," SpaceX stated .Falcon 9's first stage of the mission was carried out in June with the launch of the **GPS III Space Vehicle 03**.
- The satellites are meant to provide '**cheaper and faster' internet** to inaccessible areas. The satellites in its initial tests had provided over 100 Mbps speeds.
- "Falcon 9 launches 60 Starlink satellites to orbit – Starlink will deliver high-speed broadband internet to locations where access has been unreliable, expensive, or completely unavailable," SpaceX.
- "In initial tests of Starlink, the team has been collecting latency data and performing standard speed tests of the system. Results from these tests have shown super low latency and download speeds greater than 100 mbps – fast enough to stream multiple HD movies at once and still have the bandwidth to spare," it added.
- The company is targeting the Northern United States and Canada for initial service in 2020. It will then expand internet coverage globally by 2021, it stated.

## China just launched a 'reusable experimental spacecraft' into orbit

- **China** launched an experimental **reusable spacecraft** into orbit with few details about what the spacecraft will do.A report from Chinese state media's Xinhua stated the launch was successful and that a **Long March 2F rocket** sent the spacecraft into orbit from **the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center** in the **Gobi Desert**, but it provided no information about exact launch time or what technologies the spacecraft will test.
- After a period of in-orbit operation, the spacecraft will return to the scheduled landing site in China. It will test reusable technologies during its flight, providing technological support for the peaceful use of space, Xinhua stated.
- Space News noted a few months of low-key work related to the launch and that it may be the same reusable space plane project that China stated, back in 2017, that it wanted to launch in 2020.

## IIT Kharagpur Researchers Develop Painless Drug Delivery and Vaccination Device

- Researchers at the Institute's Dept. of Electronics & Electrical Communication Engineering of **IIT Kharagpur** have developed a **micropump and microneedle** which are integral parts of **transdermal drug delivery systems** capable of administering large and viscous drug molecules in a **painless way**. The innovation will further enable transdermal application of COVID-19 vaccine.
- The hollow microneedles operate by means of a pressurized and controlled micropump delivering the drug through the skin.

- The micropump pushes out the drug in the reservoir through the microneedle array. The microneedles are painless as they are too small to touch the nerves in the skin and induce pain reactions.
- The innovation by IIT Kharagpur has **notonly reduced the diameter size** of the micro needles but has **also increased the strength** so that they do not break while penetrating the skin.

## DRDO successfully tests Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle

- **The hypersonic air-breathing scramjet technology** was successfully demonstrated by the **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** with a flight test of the **Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle (HSTDV)**, which will lead to the development of hypersonic cruise missiles and vehicles in future.
- The hypersonic cruise vehicle was launched using a proven solid rocket motor, which took it to an altitude of 30 km, where the aerodynamic heat shields were separated at hypersonic speed.
- The DRDO, with this mission, has demonstrated capabilities for highly complex technology that will serve as the building block for next generation hypersonic vehicles in partnership with the industry.
- A ship was also deployed in the Bay of Bengal to monitor the performance during the cruise phase of the hypersonic vehicle.

## Reliance-backed Fynd launches mobile game to encourage social distancing

- **Reliance-backed eCommerce platform Fynd** has launched a **new hyper-casual game** titled **'Social Doori'** to encourage social distancing amid the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The hypercasual game is based on an Avatar selected by the user. Being positioned in a public place, the Avatar would engage the player by guiding on various safety measures, including maintaining safe social distance, among others.
- The company in April had launched cross-platform game **'Corona Striker,'** built on the theme of the global coronavirus pandemic as part of this initiative.
- Social Doori will be available on the MyJio App.

## Chandrayaan-3 launch likely to take place in early 2021: Jitendra Singh

- Minister of State for the Department of Space **Jitendra Singh** stated that **Chandrayaan-3, India's mission to Moon**, would be launched in early **2021**. Singh added that Chandrayaan-3 will be different from Chandrayaan-2 as the former will not have an orbiter, but will include a lander and a rover.
- It may be recalled that Chandrayaan-2 was launched in September 2019 and India's premier space agency ISRO had planned to launch Chandrayaan-3 in 2020 but the plan failed to materialise due to coronavirus pandemic and the subsequent lockdown imposed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to curb the spread of the deadly virus.
- Chandrayaan-2 was launched on July 22, 2019 and it was planned to land on the South Pole of the Moon but its lander named Vikram hard-landed, crashing India's dream of becoming the first country in the world to land on the surface of the moon in its maiden attempt.
- Meanwhile, Chandrayaan-1, ISRO's maiden mission to the Moon launched in 2008, has sent images which show that moon may be rusting along the poles. The sign of this finding is that even though the surface of the Moon is known to have iron-rich rocks, it is not known for the presence of water and oxygen, which are the two elements needed to interact with iron to create rust, he stated.

## India, U.S. and Israel collaborating in 5G tech

- **India, Israel and the United States** have begun collaboration in developmental area, and in next generation of **emerging technologies**, including **a transparent, open, reliable and secure 5G communication network.**
- The virtual US-India-Israel summit that focused on trilateral partnerships in the strategic, technology and development arenas. The summit was also addressed by Israeli Ambassador to India Ron Malka and his counterpart Sanjeev Singla.

## Northrop Grumman names spacecraft in honour of Kalpana Chawla

- Northrop Grumman has named its **next space station resupply ship** 'S.S. Kalpana Chawla' after **Dr Kalpana Chawla**, an astronaut of Indian descent.
- **Northrop Grumman** is proud to name the **NG-14 Cygnusspacecraft** after former astronaut **Kalpana Chawla**.
- It is the company's tradition to name each Cygnus after an individual who has played a pivotal role in human spaceflight.
- Chawla was selected in honor of her prominent place in history as the first woman of Indian descent to go to space.
- The Cygnus spacecraft will deliver approximately 3,629 kg (8,000lb.) of cargo to the space station. It will be launched into orbit from Virginia Space's Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport (MARS) Wallops Island, Virginia .

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

- Scientists from **Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology(WIHG),** an autonomous Institute under the **Department of Science & Technology, Govt. of India**, have developed a neural-based (machine learning-based) practical approach for automatic interpretation of **3D seismic data**. This first of its kind approach has been developed by computing a new attribute called **meta-attribute**.
- The tabular sheet intrusions between older layers of sedimentary rock or beds of volcanic lava (sill complexes) significantly contribute to the transport and storage of hot magma, and leading to overburden. This acts as plausible structural traps for hydrocarbon accumulations in sedimentary basins.
- The petroliferous (petroleum containing) Canterbury basin of New Zealand is a classic example, where saucer-shaped magmatic sills are embedded within the Cretaceous to Eocene (geological period that lasted from about 145 to 33.9 million years ago) succession resulting into forced folds and hydrothermal vents above the sill terminations.
- Scientists from WIHG captured this scenario by designing a workflow and computing Sill Cube (SC) and Fluid Cube (FC) meta-attributes. These are hybrid attributes that are generated by amalgamating a number of seismic attributes (associated with the geologic targets) using a neural-based approach. This study is published in the research journal '**Tectonophysics**'. The WIHG team prepared the meta-attributes following supervised neural learning (machine learning), where computing systems are trained under the guidance of a human analyst.
- This work is an important step forward towards application of machine learning to address geological problems and looks promising in understanding complex geological processes in an active mountain belt such as the Himalaya.

## C-DAC, IIT-Kharagpur developing robot for pesticide spraying

- The **Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), Kolkata**, is coordinating a multi-body project with **IIT-Kharagpur, funded by the Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology**, to **develop a robot** essentially for **spraying pesticides in agricultural fields.**
- The robot, when fully developed, will be able to move around in a farm, take photographs of plants, diagnose any disease, select an appropriate pesticide from its tank and spray it on that particular plant.
- The machine will feature a camera that will take pictures and process the photographs to detect any disease in a plant.
- When the robot detects a disease in a plant it will reach it, select an appropriate pesticide or medicine from its tank and spray it on that plant.

## IIM, Kozhikode based incubatee start-up launches wearable gadget for implementing social distancing norms

- **Indian Institute of Management, Kozhikode** based incubatee start-up has come up with a unique user friendly **wearable device** that alarms proximity for helping implement **social distancing norms**.
- Known as the **Veli Band**, this wearable device has been developed by **Qual5 India Pvt. Ltd**, a startup co-founded by woman entrepreneur Kiranmayee.

- The start up was mentored and funded by IIMK's business incubator and entrepreneurship development center.
- Veli Band helps implement social distancing and location and contact tracing which can help organizations comply with social distancing norms during the current pandemic situation.
- Veli Band momentarily vibrates, sounds buzzer, and flashes LED simultaneously to notify wearers that another band is within 3 feet.
- The device to be worn on the wrist can anonymously keep track of interactions with other devices and thus not only help in maintaining a safer workplace but also aid in tracking employee movements in real time.

## China launches 9 satellites into space from ocean platform

- **China** launched a **Long March 11 rocket** from an ocean platform in the **Yellow Sea**, successfully sending **nine satellites into orbit.**
- It is the first time however that **China has used new seaport facilities** at **Haiyang** in eastern China. **China** is only the **third country** to perform a sea launch, following the **U.S. and Russia.**
- Nine **Jilin-1 Gaofen-03 (High Resolution-03)Earth observation satellites** were put into roughly 332-mile (535 kilometers) orbits and will provide **data for land resource survey, urban planning, disaster monitoring and other uses.**
- The satellites belong to **Chang Guang Satellite Technology Co., Ltd., (CGST).**
- **Six of the satellites** are **push-broom imaging satellites**, capable of returning images showing features as small as 3 feet (nearly 1 1 meter).
- **The last three** are **video imaging satellites.**

## Three tech institutions join hands to develop IoT-compatible sensors for agriculture

- Three premier Indian technology institutions – **IIT Bombay, Gauhati University** and the Gandhinagar-based **Dhirubhai Ambani Institute of Information and Communication Technology** – have joined hands to develop **high-tech sensors** for use in agriculture.
- The use of sensors in agriculture is not entirely new. These tiny products, placed under the soil, detect parameters such as moisture and temperature and help fine-tune inputs for higher produce. Bosch, for example, has a suite of products for this purpose.
- However, the sensors developed by the three institutions is more hi-tech and can be hooked on to compatible with Internet-of-Things (IoT). They feature 'ultra-small graphene particles', made from graphene quantum dots, which are nano-sized fragments of graphene.
- The project was funded by the **Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, the University Grants Commission, the Assam Science Technology and Environmental Council.**

## Delhi Metro develops indigenous signalling technology under 'Make in India'

- The **Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC)** has taken a major step towards the development of an **indigenously built signalling technology** for **metro trains in line** with the government's flagship 'Make in India' initiative.
- **i-ATS**, an **important sub-system of the signalling system.**
- **ATS (Automatic Train Supervision)** is a **computer based system**, which manages train operations. This system is indispensable for high density operations such as the metro, where services are scheduled every few minutes.
- i-ATS is the indigenously developed technology, which will significantly reduce the dependence of Indian metros on foreign vendors dealing with such technologies. Some of the important features of this technology are:
- It can work with Train Control & Signaling Systems of different suppliers.
- i-ATS can work with different levels of technology of Train control and Signalling systems.

- It is also suitable for introduction in Indian Railways which is now introducing Centralized Train control, on a large scale, which uses part of ATS functions.

## CSIR Collaborates With Aurobindo Pharma To Develop COVID-19 Vaccines

- The **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)** and **Aurobindo Pharma Limited** on announced a collaboration to develop vaccines for COVID-19.
- As per the release issued by the **Centre for Cellular & Molecular Biology (CCMB),** under the signed agreement between **CSIR- CCMB** and **Aurobindo Pharma**, Aurobindo will partner with CSIR for the development of several novel COVID-19 vaccines.
- Three CSIR labs namely CCMB Hyderabad, Institute of Medical Technology (IMTECH), Chandigarh and Indian Institute of Chemical Biology (IICB), Kolkata are developing vaccine candidates using different technology platforms. Aurobindo will undertake clinical development and commercialization of the vaccines, it stated.
- Aurobindo Pharma Limited also expresses pride over the collaboration with CSIR for developing vaccines to combat the COVID-19 pandemic and stated that is already setting up a large-scale facility in Hyderabad for manufacturing the vaccine.

## Ashok Leyland, Hindustan Zinc team up with IIT-M to develop Zinc air battery

- Truck major **Ashok Leyland** and **Hindustan Zinc** have (separately) joined hands with **IIT-Madras** in the technology institute's endeavour to develop a **Zinc air battery**.
- While Lithium-ion batteries are the darling of the energy storage industry today, they pose challenges such as concentration of raw material source with a handful of countries, high charging time and safety issues in hot climates. (Technologies for fast charging are coming up, but they are expensive.) Therefore, a worldwide search is under way for a good alternative. Sodium-ion, iron-ion and metal air batteries are the emerging candidates.
- At the heart of the battery is the Zinc anode which can be taken out once the battery discharges its power, and replaced. The cathode of the battery is, as for metal air batteries, air. Zinc reacts with the Oxygen in the air to deliver electricity, and becomes Zinc oxide. In an external contrivance, which could be solar-powered, Oxygen is kicked out of the Zinc oxide and the metal is won back —a process called '**electrowinning**'.

## IIIT-Bhubaneswar students make first-of-its-kind ventilation device "Swasner"to ease mild breathing issues

- A group of seven engineering students from **IIIT, Bhubaneswar** claimed to have developed a first-of-its-kind **helmet-like ventilation device"Swasner"** that benefits patients suffering from **mild respiratory distress**.
- It can also act as a comfortable alternative to the suffocating PPE kits, the students claimed.
- Shaped as a bubble enclosure for the head, the device works on the principle of hyperbaric oxygen therapy - mostly used for treating diving-related illness and some other medical conditions.
- These students - Tapaswin Padhy, Sai Sambit Nayak, Sidharth Nayak, Ananya Aprameya, Jivitesh Debata, Vitthal Gupta, Nand Kishore Gupta, Divyajyoti Dash and Shovit Mitra - took four months to design the device named '**Swasner.'**

These students have connected the device to an IoT-powered diagnostics monitoring system that allows doctors to check the patient's vitals from remote locations.

## Jupiter-sized planet found orbiting a dead star — a first in space discoveries

- According to findings published in the journal Nature, a planet the size of **Jupite**r is in orbit around a white dwarf ,The white dwarf known as **WD 1856+534** is hosting the newly discovered planet named **WD 1586 b**. — the remnant after a star's death — which is **80 light years** away from Earth. The planet takes merely 1.4 days to complete one orbit.

- Earlier it was thought that planets could not form around a white dwarf due to the violent nature of the white dwarf formation.
- However, this study supports the theory that massive planets can survive the creation of a white dwarf, migrate close to it and then resume orbit around the new remnant.
- The observations were made using **NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS)** and retired Spitzer Space Telescope.
- The findings have implications for the survival of other kinds of planets during the death of a star, including Earth-like rocky planets.

## IIT Madras develops AI processing models for 11 local languages

- The **Indian Institute of Technology Madras** has developed **artificial intelligence models** and datasets to process texts in **11 Indian regional languages**. This was taken up jointly with **AI4Bharat**, a platform for building AI solutions for problems of relevance to India.
- Researchers from IIT Madras and AI4Bharat released AI models and datasets for the following languages: Tamil, Hindi, Malayalam, Telugu, Kannada, Punjabi, Bengali, Odia, Assamese, Gujarati and Marathi.
- The multilingual AI models and datasets will provide the essential building blocks to students, faculty, start-ups and industry to work on Indian language tools and push the frontiers of technology, says a press release from IIT Madras.

## NASA outlines plan for first woman on Moon by 2024

- The **US space agency (NASA)** has formally outlined its **$28bn (£22bn)** plan to return to the **Moon** by **2024.**
- As part of a programme called **Artemis,**Nasa will send a man and a woman to the lunar surface in the first landing with humans since 1972.
- But the agency's timeline is contingent on Congress releasing $3.2bn for building a landing system.
- Astronauts will travel in an Apollo-like capsule called **Orion** that will launch on a powerful rocket called SLS.
- **Artemis-3** will become the first mission to send astronauts to the lunar surface since Apollo 17 some 48 years ago.

## Indigenously developed surface-to-surface Prithvi-II missile test fired

- **India** conducted a successful night testfire of its **indigenously developed** nuclear capable surface-to-surface **Prithvi-II missile** as part of a user trial by the Army from a **base in Odisha.**
- The state-of-the-art missile was testfired from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at **Chandipur, Odisha.**
- Prithvi-II is capable of carrying 500 to 1,000 kg of warheads and is powered by liquid propulsion twin engines and it has a strike range of 350 km.
- In 2003, nine-metre long 'Prithvi' was the first missile to have been developed by DRDO under the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP).

## IIT Madras researchers develop 'MOUSHIK' chip for IoT device

- Researchers at the **Indian Institute of Technology, Madras**have indigenously developed **microprocessor "MOUSHIK"** aimed at serving the **Internet of Things devices**, under the Centre''s Digital India ''smart cities'' initiative.
- **The project is funded** by the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology**.
- ''MOUSHIK'' was conceptualised, designed and developed at the **Pratap SubrahmanyamCentre for Digital Intelligence** and Secure Hardware Architecture of the **RISE Group, department of computer science and engineering, IIT Madras.**
- All the three processes (design, fabrication and post-silicon boot up) for ''MOUSHIK'' were undertaken in India demonstrating the ''Atma Nirbhar'' ecosystem in Digital Design.
- The field applications of the microprocessor include -- **smart cards including credit cards, debit cards, electronic voting machines and office management systems.**

## Israeli Defence Forces successfully test sea-to-sea missile system

- The Israeli Navy tested a sea-to-sea missile for use in protecting Mediterranean Sea natural gas platforms.
- The new Israeli missile system has precision capabilities with a longer range and expanded offensive options.
- The missile successfully struck and sank a decommissioned target vessel meant to simulate an enemy vessel. The missiles will be integrated into the Israeli Navy's newest **Sa'ar-5 and Sa'ar-6 class ships**, made in the United States by Huntington Ingalls Industries.
- The **missile system has not been named**. It was developed by Israeli Aerospace Industries, and tested by the Navy and the Defense Ministry's Weapons Development and Technology Infrastructure Administration, known as **MAFAT.**

## Revision Points

| Institutions/Persons | Things to be Discovered/Developed |
|---|---|
| Indian Railways | MEDBOT |
| IIT Bombay | AIR Scanner |
| CSIR-CMERI | World's Largest Solar Tree |
| IIT Madras | Nanotech coating for textiles |
| SpiceJet | SpiceOxy |
| IIT Delhi | Chakr DeCoV |
| Defence Institute of Advanced Technology | Herbal Based Immunity Boosting Room Freshener 'Healthy Air' |
| IISc researchers | Low-cost, on demand printing technique |
| CMERI Durgapur | Twosolar-powered spray systems |
| Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati | Engineered Surfaces To Detect, Prevent COVID-19 |
| Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bombay | Matsya 6 |
| IIT Kharagpur Researchers | Painless Drug Delivery and Vaccination Device |
| Fynd | Social Doori |
| C-DAC, IIT-Kharagpur | Robot for pesticide spraying |
| IIM, Kozhikode based start-up | Veli Band |
| Delhi Metro Rail Corporation | i-ATS |
| Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) and Aurobindo Pharma Limited | To Develop COVID-19 Vaccines |
| IIIT, Bhubaneswar | Helmet-like ventilation device "Swasner" |
| Indian Institute of Technology Madras | AI processing models for 11 local languages |
| Indian Institute of Technology, Madras | MOUSHIK |

## Important Environment News

## 2 new species of wetland plant discovered in Western Ghats

- Scientists have discovered **two new species of pipeworts**, a type of wetland plant, in areas along the Western Ghats in Maharashtra and Karnataka.
- Scientists from **Agharkar Research Institute (ARI)** claim that the species display different floral characters than previously known species

- The species found in Maharashtra has been named **Eriocaulon parvicephalum** and the Karnataka species is being called **Eriocaulon karaavalense**.
- Researchers claim that figuring out the species within the wild is a problem, primarily on account of their tiny dimension. Its tiny seeds and flowers make the identification of the species tough.

<p align="center" style="color:red;">Important Rankings and Indexes</p>

| Index | India's Rank | Top | Released By |
|---|---|---|---|
| Global Economic Freedom Index 2020 | 105th | Hong Kong and Singapore | Canada's Fraser Institute |
| World Bank's Human Capital Index | 116th | | World Bank |
| World Risk Report 2020 | **89th spot** | Qatar - lowest risk | United Nations University's Institute for Environment and Human Security &calculated by the International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict |
| Global Innovation Index 2020 | 48th | Switzerland | World Intellectual Property Organization |
| Global Smart City Index | Hyderabad (85), New Delhi (86), Mumbai (93), Bangalore (95) | Singapore | The Institute for Management Development |

## Amul becomes first Indian dairy company to be in Rabobank's Global Top 20 list; Nestle leads

- **Amul**, Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF), has become the first Indian dairy firm to make a place of **16th in the global top 20 list released by Rabobank**, a Dutch multinational banking and financial services company.
- **Switzerland's Nestle topped** the list with a turnover of US $22.1 billion, followed by France's Lactalis with US $ 21 billion turnover. Amul has achieved an annual turnover of $5.5 billion.

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

- **India** ranked in the **top 50 countries** for the **first time** in the **Global Innovation Index**. India jumped four positions to rank at **48th** since 2019. The index compiled by **World Intellectual Property Index (WIPO)** presented the latest global trends and annual innovation ranking for **131 countries**.
- Moving up four positions since last year, India became the third most innovative lower middle economy in the world. According to the report jump can be attributed to newly available indicators and improvements in various areas of the GII. India ranks in the top 15 in indicators such as ICT services exports, government online services, graduates in science and engineering and R&D-intensive global companies.
- The report added that due to universities like **IIT Delhi** and **Bombay, IISC Bengaluru** and other top scientific publications, India is the lower middle-income economy with the highest innovation.

## Elon Musk is now the third richest person in the world

- Elon Musk's net worth is now **$115 billion**, pushing him past **Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg** on the list of the world's richest people, according to Bloomberg.
- Musk's increase in wealth was propelled by Tesla's (TSLA) wild 12% stock gain that happened Monday after Tesla's 5-1 stock split. This makes the Tesla founder and CEO the **third-richest person** in the world, according to the **Bloomberg Billionaires Index**. He is now only poorer than Bill Gates and Jeff Bezos.
- The world's top five billionaires (in order) are: Jeff Bezos, Bill Gates, Elon Musk, Mark Zuckerberg and Bernard Arnault, the CEO of LVMH in France.
- Musk is also the founder of several other companies including SpaceX, The Boring Company, Hyperloop and OpenAI.
- Tesla's stock has already soared about 500% in 2020, and the company is now worth about $475 billion.
- Musk's pay package, which was approved by Tesla shareholders in 2018, doesn't pay him any salary or cash bonuses. Instead, the CEO gets paid in millions of stock options, worth billions of dollars. He has received two multi-billion-dollar payouts as the company hit certain profit and stock price thresholds, and he is due to receive another soon.

## Akash, Isha Ambani Enter Fortune's '40 Under 40' Global List

- The twin children of billionaire Mukesh Ambani, **Akash and Isha**, have made it to **the Fortune's** latest **'40 Under 40' list** of influential people around the world.
- Fortune credited Akash and Isha for helping seal the company's recent megadeal with Facebook and for major follow-on investments from tech giants like Google, Qualcomm, and Intel.
- Recently, Akash and Isha helped launch Jio Mart, a venture that aims to challenge Amazon and Walmart's Flipkart for command of India's massive and fast-growing online shopping market.
- **Byju's CEO Raveendran**, 39, **made it to the list** for showing that it is possible to build a massively successful online education company and **Xiaomi India** Managing Director **Manu Kumar Jain**, among others.

## IISc leads 63 Indian institutions in THE World University Rankings 2021

- The **Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru,** maintained its **lead as the country's top** institution in **the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings 2021**.
- Following IISc, which was ranked globally in the **301-350 band**, were the **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Ropar and IIT Indore**, which retained their second and third spots, respectively, among the Indian institutions on the list.
- Among the ones making their debut from India, the Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology (Delhi), King George's Medical University (Lucknow), and the Mahatma Gandhi University (Delhi) ranked highest (601-800 band).
- While globally, the **UK's University of Oxford** retained the **top spot** for the **fifth consecutive year**, **China's Tsinghua University** became the **first Asian university** to break into the **Top 20** since the current methodology launched in 2011.

## Andhra Pradesh tops ease of doing business rankings, Telangana on 3rd spot

- **Andhra Pradesh** has bagged the **first rank** among all the states in the country in the state **business reforms action plan-2019 (BRAP-2019),** representing ease of doing business for Atmanirbhar Bharat.
- The ranks were announced by the **Department of Industrial Promotion and Internal Trade (DPIIT)** during a virtual event chaired by Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman, in the presence of Union minister of commerce Piyush Goyal and all state industries ministers.
- While **Uttar Pradesh** stood in the **second position**, **Telangana** bagged the **third spot** in the overall ranking of the state business process reforms undertaken during 2019.
- Andhra Pradesh has undertaken several reforms in the last year, ranging from the development of online systems, enhancing transparency to regulating inspections covering the entire lifecycle of the business.

## About BRAP-2019

- The Business Reform Action Plan 2019 released by the Centre contains a list of 80 reforms (187 reform action points) to be implemented by 19 State departments.
- Andhra Pradesh has achieved 100 percent compliance to the 187 reform action points by DPIIT-World Bank as a part of BRAP 2019

## Hyderabad among top cities for career in AI

- **Hyderabad** is one of the **top five cities** in the country **to offer jobs** in **the field of artificial intelligence (AI), a latest report** by job portal site **Indeed** has revealed.
- **Bengaluru** tops the **list of destinations for a career in AI**, followed by **Mumbai, Hyderabad, Pune, and Chennai.**
- Job searches in the field have risen 106 per cent in the past year (June 2019 to June 2020), and this has increased further by 20 per cent from March to July 2020, in line with the onset of the pandemic.
- AI-related job postings have also seen a steady rise in the last two years, with a 51 per cent jump between June 2019 and June 2020.

## Kerala Most Literate State in Country With 96.2% Literacy, Andhra Worst Performer at 66.4%

- A recent report based on **National Statistical Office (NSO) survey** stated that **Kerala** has once again emerged as the **most literate state in the country** with **96.2 per cent literacy**. On the other hand, **Andhra Pradesh** is at the **bottom** with a rate of **66.4 per cent.**
- The report on **Household Social Consumption: Education in India** as part of 75th round of National Sample Survey – from July 2017 to June 2018' provides for state-wise detail of literacy rate among the persons aged seven years and above.
- After Kerala, **Delhi** has the best literacy rate at **88.7 per cent**, followed by **Uttarakhand's 87.6 per** cent, **Himachal Pradesh's 86.6 per cent** and **Assam's at 85.9 per cent.**
- The study has pegged the **overall literacy rate** in the country at about **77.7 per cent**. In **rural areas**, the literacy rate is **73.5 per cent** compared to **87.7 per cent** in **urban areas** of the country.
- At all-India level, the **male literacy rate** is higher at **84.7 per cent** compared to **70.3 per cent** among **women.**

## Forbes Releases 39th Annual Forbes 400 Ranking Of The Richest Americans

- Forbes released the **39th annual Forbes 400 list**, the definitive ranking of the wealthiest Americans.
- **Jeff Bezos**, CEO and founder of Amazon, remains in the top spot on the 2020 Forbes 400 list for the **third consecutive year**. Bezos' fortune of **$179 billion**, as of **July 24, 2020.**
- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Cofounder **Bill Gates is ranked second** on the list with a net worth of **USD 111 billion.**
- **The list has seven Indian-Americans** - cybersecurity firm ZScaler CEO **Jay Chaudhry(85th )**, Founder and Chairman of Symphony Technology Group **Romesh Wadhwani(238th )**, cofounder and CEO of online home goods retailer **Wayfair Niraj Shah(299th)**, Silicon Valley venture capital firm Khosla Ventures founder **Vinod Khosla(353rd )**, Managing Partner of Sherpalo Ventures **Kavitark Ram Shriram(359th)**, Airline veteran **Rakesh Gangwal(359th )** and Workday CEO and Cofounder **Aneel Bhusri(359th ).**
- Facebook founder **Mark Zuckerberg** on the **third spot** with a net worth of USD 85 billion, Berkshire Hathaway CEO **Warren Buffett**, ranked **4th** and with a net worth of USD 73.5 billion and chairman, chief technology officer and cofounder of software giant Oracle **Larry Ellison**, ranked **5th** with a new worth of USD 72 billion.
- **President Donald Trump** is **ranked 339th** on the list with a net worth of USD 2.5 billion.

## India is second-fastest-growing freelance market in the world, says report

- India is the **second-fastest-growing freelance** market in the world with a massive increase in the number of freelancers this year, according to a report on '**Freelancing in 2020: An Abundance of Opportunities'** by Payoneer.

- "Ranked as the second-fastest-growing freelance market in the world, India's freelance economy currently consists of an estimated 15 million freelancers," the report stated.
- Furthermore, India witnessed a **46 per cent** increase in new freelancers from Q1 to Q2, 2020 as per the report.
- "Rapid changes in technology and workplace expectations have redefined traditional employment models. There has been an increase in the number of individuals who are considering freelancing as a long-term career," it stated.
- Freelancers are also recovering from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. As relaxations imposed to curb the spread of Covid-19 ease, freelancers are bouncing back with growth in revenue.
- Apart from India, other popular markets for gig workers include the **US, Pakistan**, and **Ukraine**.
- The report further highlighted how the pandemic has changed the future of work with increased technology adoption, stating that "a permanent change in the global workforce is inevitable".

## India ranks to 105th spot from 79th in global economic freedom ranking
- **India** has been ranked **105th on the Global Economic Freedom Index 2020,** falling 26 spots from **79th position in last year's rankings.**
- The **Economic Freedom of the World: 2020 Annual Report** prepared by **Canada's Fraser Institute** has been released in India in conjunction with New Delhi-based think tank Centre For Civil Society.
- The report highlighted that the prospect of increasing economic freedom in India depends on the next generation of reforms in factor markets including greater openness to international trade.
- According to the report, based on 2018 data, **Hong Kong and Singapore once again topped the index**, continuing their streak as first and second ranked, respectively.
- Some of the other countries in that make up the top 10 are New Zealand, Switzerland, US, Australia, Mauritius, Georgia, Canada and Ireland.
- Meanwhile, the 10 lowest ranked countries on the latest index are African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Zimbabwe, Republic of Congo, Algeria, Iran, Angola, Libya, Sudan and Venezuela.

## Startup ranking: Gujarat, Andaman & Nicobar Islands are best performers
- **Gujarat and Andaman & Nicobar Islands** have emerged as the **best performers** among states and UTs in the s**econd edition of ranking of the startup ecosystem in the country,** followed by Karnataka and Kerala who were "top performers".
- The **States' Startup Ranking Framework 2019** is **based on seven broad reform areas** consisting of 30 action points ranging from institutional support, easing compliances, relaxation in public procurement norms, incubation support, seed funding support, venture funding support, and awareness and outreach. Based on these categories, the states have been recognized as best performer, top performers, leaders, aspiring leaders.
- The last 2018 edition ranked Gujarat as the best performer in developing the startup ecosystem for budding entrepreneurs. Other top performers were Karnataka, Kerala, Odisha and Rajasthan.

## India ranks 116th in World Bank's Human Capital Index
- India has been ranked at the **116th position** in the latest edition of the **World Bank's annual Human Capital Index** that benchmarks key components of human capital across countries.
- However, India's score increased to **0.49** from **0.44** in 2018, as per the Human Capital Index report released by the World Bank.
- The 2020 Human Capital Index update includes health and education data for 174 countries — covering 98 per cent of the world's population — up to **March 2020**, providing a pre-pandemic baseline on the health and education of children, with the biggest strides made in low-income countries.

- The analysis shows that pre-pandemic, most countries had made steady progress in building human capital of children, with the biggest strides made in low-income countries.
- Last year, India had raised "**serious reservations**" over the Human Capital Index, wherein India was ranked 115 out of 157 countries. This year India finds itself at 116th from among 174 countries.

## Indian Cities Slip In Global Smart City Index, Singapore On Top

- **The Institute for Management Development**, in collaboration with **Singapore University for Technology and Design**, has released the **2020 Smart City Index**, with key findings on how technology is playing a role in the Covid-19 era.
- In the 2020 Smart City Index, **Hyderabad** was placed at the **85th position** (down from 67 in 2019), **New Delhi at 86th rank** (down from 68 in 2019), **Mumbai was at 93rd place** (in 2019 it was at 78) and **Bengaluru at 95th** (79 in 2019).
- The 2020 Smart City Index was topped by Singapore, followed by Helsinki and Zurich in the second and the third place respectively. Others in the top 10 list include Auckland (4th), Oslo (5th), Copenhagen (6th), Geneva (7th), Taipei City (8th), Amsterdam (9th) and New York at the 10th place.

## Most valuable brands: HDFC Bank retains 1st position; Reliance Retail leads top risers

- HDFC Bank Ltd has again emerged as **the most valuable brand in India in 2020**, despite its ranking seeing an **11 per cent decline from 2019**, BrandZ Top 75 Most Valuable Indian Brands rankings, **WPP Plc and Kantar report**.
- This is the **seventh consecutive year** when HDFC Bank remained the top-ranked brand in India.
- **HDFC Bank** has been valued at **$20.2 billion** by WPP and Kantar list of most valued brands. It is followed by state-owned **insurer LIC, valued at $18.2 billion**, and **TCS,** which has been valued at **$14.5 billion.**
- With a 102 per cent year-on-year increase in value, **Reliance Retail** has been ranked as the **fast-expanding brand. Mukesh Ambani-led retail company stood at 25th spot** in the list of most-valued brands.

## Ayushmann Khurrana only Indian actor on Time's 100 most influential list

- **Ayushmann Khurrana** has been named among **world's 100 most influential people** by the **Time Magazine**.
- The 36-year-old 'Andhadhun' actor features alongside international stars like Oscar-winner Bong Joon Ho, 'Fleabag' icon Phoebe Waller-Bridge, and The Weeknd among others in the artists category.
- Others Indians on the list include **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**, **Google CEO Sundar Pichai**, London-based Indian-origin doctor **Ravindra Gupta**, and Bilkis - a grandmother from **Shaheen Bagh**, a Delhi neighbourhood that became the epicentre of the **anti-CAA protests**. US Vice Presidential nominee **Kamala Harris also features in the Leaders category** alongside Modi.

## QS Global MBA Rankings 2021: IIM Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Calcutta top Indian B-schools

- **Placed at the 50th position**, IIM Ahmedabad was the **top-ranked Indian B-School** followed by **IIM Bangalore and IIM Calcutta** in the latest **QS Global MBA rankings.**
- **IIM Bangalore** was placed at the **54th position** while **IIM Calcutta** was at the **79th position**. Indian School of Business, which has campuses in Hyderabad and Mohali (Punjab), secured the 93rd position.
- Overall, **the list is dominated byAmerican business schools**. Stanford Graduate School of Business, Penn (Wharton) and MIT (Sloan) are the top three institutions to do MBA from globally, according to the QS Global MBA rankings for 2021.
- Harvard Business School comes at the fourth place while HEC Paris is at the fifth place. INSEAD, a multi-campus institutions, based in Paris and Singapore comes sixth in the rankings.

## India ranks 89th in World Risk Report 2020

- **India** has been ranked at the **89th spot** among 181 Countries by **World Risk Index (WRI) 2020**.
- WRI has been developed in cooperation with the **United Nations University's Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNUEHS)** and calculated by the **International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict (IFHV).**

- The **Pacific island state of Vanuatu** leads the index as the country with the **highest disaster risk (49.74).**
- **Qatar has the lowest risk (0.31).**
- In terms of the continents, Oceania ranks first in terms of highest disaster risk, followed by the Americas, Asia and Europe.

## Mukesh Ambani tops Hurun India Rich List for ninth year

- **Mukesh Ambani, chairman and MD of Reliance Industries**, ranked at the **top on the IIFL Wealth Hurun India Rich List for the ninth consecutive year**, with a total wealth of **Rs 6,58,400 crore.**
- Ambani is followed by **London-based Hinduja brothers (SP Hinduja, along with his three brothers) with a joint wealth of Rs 1,43,700** and **HCL founder Shiv Nadar with a wealth of Rs 1,41,700 crore.** Radhakishan Damani, founder of Avenue Supermarts, debuted in the top 10 list this year with a net worth of Rs 87,200 crore that put him at the 7th spot.
- The other Indians among the top 10 with a net worth more than Rs 1,000 crore include Gautam Adani & family (Rs 1,40,200 cr), Azim Premji (Rs 1,14,400 cr), Cyrus S. Poonawalla (Rs 94,300 cr), Uday Kotak (Rs 87,000 cr), Dilip Shanghvi (Rs 84,000 cr) and Cyrus and Shapoor Pallonji Mistry (Rs 76,000 cr).
- Hurun Report India and IIFL Wealth Management Ltd. released the ninth edition of IIFL Wealth Hurun India Rich List 2020.
- The list ranks the richest individuals in India with net worth of Rs 1,000 crore or more as on 31 August 2020. This year, 828 Indians including 50 women, featured on the list. Of them, 64 per cent are self-made, while two per cent are professional managers.

## Important Books and Authors

| Authors/ Released by | Books |
|---|---|
| Karan Johar | The Big Thoughts of Little Luv (story of the twins Luv and Kusha) |
| Ramachandra Guha (co-published by HarperCollins India and William Collins UK) | The Commonwealth of Cricket: A Lifelong Love Affair with the Most Subtle and Sophisticated Game Known to Humankind |
| Channing Tatum | The One and Only Sparkella' (Feiwel & Friends) |
| Pope Francis and his biographer Austen Ivereigh | Let Us Dream |
| Radha Nair | Breaking The Cocoon @ 40 |
| Goonmeet Singh Chauhan (published by Harper Collins-India) | Invertonomics |
| Manbeena Sandhu (published by Harper Collins, India) | My Story in My Own Words, Nothing To Lose |
| Gauri Khan | My Life In Design |
| Claude Arpi | The End of an Era; India Exits Tibet |
| Arundhati Roy (Published by Penguin Books Limited) | AZADI Freedom. Fascism. Fiction |
| Barack Obama (Published by Penguin Random House) | A Promised Land (book will be released in 25 languages) |

| | |
|---|---|
| Romila Thapar (Published by Penguin Random House India and Seagull Books) | Voices of Dissent |
| Vikas Khanna (Published by Penguin Random House India) | Kitchens of Gratitude (Chef Vikas Khanna has been chosen to be honoured with the prestigious Asia Game Changer Award 2020) |
| Baljinder Kaur | Fauja Singh Keeps Going |
| Neena Gupta (Published under Penguin 'Ebury Press' imprint) | Sach Kahun Toh |
| Anand Neelakantan | The Very, Extremely, Most Naughty Asura Tales for Kids |
| Dr Krishna Saksena (Launched by Rajnath Singh) | A bouquet of flowers |
| "The House of Jaipur — The Inside Story of India's Most Glamorous Royal Family" | John Zubrzycki |

## Important Peoples' in News

### Former Olympic Giant Slalom Champion Viktoria Rebensburg Retires at 30

- Olympic ski champion **Viktoria Rebensburgretired from the sport**, who won the **gold medal in** giant slalom at the **2010 Vancouver Olympics**
- Rebensburg had only one World Cup podium finish when she won Olympic gold in Vancouver.
- Rebensburg developed into a consistent medal challenger in the following years, especially in giant slalom, and won an Olympic bronze in the same discipline at the 2014 Sochi Games. She became the face of the German women's team when three-time Olympic champion Maria Hfl-Riesch retired that year.
- Rebensburg won the season-long World Cup giant slalom title in 2011, 2012 and 2018, and won world championship silver in giant slalom in 2015 and 2019. She finishes with 19 career World Cup wins and 49 podium finishes.

### Former England batsman Ian Bell announces retirement from cricket

- **Former England batsman Ian Bell** has announced his **retirement from professional cricket.**
- Bell played 161 one-day internationals and eight Twenty20s.
- He was player of the series in the 2013 Ashes, in which he hit three centuries in five matches as England beat Australia 3-0.

### Police Officer Poonam Khatri crowned Wushu World Champion

- **Indian Wushu stalwartPoonam Khatri** has claimed **World Championship** status after her silver medal at the **Wushu World Championship** last year has been upgraded to a **Gold medal**. Poonam had lost the final to Iranian opponent Mariyam in the Women's 75 kg category but after Mariyam recently failed the dope test, the gold medal has been awarded to **Poonam Khatri**.
- The information was clarified by Secretary General of the Indian Wushu Association, Suhel Ahmed. Poonam over the years has acquired a reputation for being an all round consistent performer at the national and international level. In addition to her recent World Championship heroics, the 33 year old who hails from Haryana's Jhajjar district, also won a gold medal in the 2019 South Asian Games and is also a 10 time National Champion.

### Afghanistan bans coach Noor Mohammad for five years on corruption charges

- The **Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB)** has **banned** domestic-level coach **Noor Mohammad 'Lalai'** from all forms of the game for **five years** after he was found guilty of approaching a national team player **to spot-fix matches.**

- Mohammad is a domestic assistant coach with the Kapisa province side and a full-time coach with Hampalana private academy.
- His act was reported by the national team player, who was approached for corruption but has not been named by the ACB.
- The development comes three months after the ACB banned wicketkeeper-batsman **Shafiquallah Shafaq** for six years on match-fixing allegations.

## Cristiano Ronaldo becomes second men's player to score 100 international goals

- **Cristiano Ronaldo** became the **second man** to score **100 international goals**, hitting the landmark for Portugal in **UEFA Nations League** match against Sweden.
- The 35 year-old Juventus forward became the first European to reach 100 goals for his country after Ali Daei, who scored 109 times for Iran. It took him 165 appearances to reach the milestone.
- The **five-time Ballon d'Or winner's goal** was also the 57th of his career from a direct free-kick and the 10th in his nation's colours.
- Out of Ronaldo's 100 goals, only 17 of them have come in international friendlies. In his long career for Portugal, he has scored seven goals vs Lithuania, six vs Sweden, five vs Andorra, Armenia, Latvia, and Luxembourg.

## Lionel Messi Remains Ahead of Cristiano Ronaldo as World's Richest Footballer

- According to a list compiled by Forbes, **Messi's** total earnings this year are **126 million dollars - 92 million dollars** from his salary and 34 million dollars in endorsements. Not surprisingly **Cristiano Ronaldo** comes in second although earnings of 117 million dollars will soften the blow for the Juventus forward, as will his status as the most followed soccer player in the world on social media.
- **Neymar** comes in **third** on the Forbes list (96 million dollars) with his **Paris St Germain** team mate, 21-year-old Kylian Mbappe, up in fourth spot (42 million dollars).
- The **Premier League** remains the world's richest domestic soccer league but only two of its outfield players feature in the top 10 of the wealth table - Liverpool's title-winning striker Mohamed Salah in fifth spot (37 million dollars) and Manchester United's midfielder Paul Pogba (34 million dollars) in sixth. Pogba's team mate, keeper David de Gea (27 million dollars) is 10th.
- **Barcelona's Antoine Griezmann** was seventh and Real Madrid's Gareth Bale eighth. Bayern Munich striker Robert Lewandowski, the only Bundesliga player, in ninth.

## Navy gets its first women combat aviators

- Sub Lieutenant **Kumudini Tyagi** and Sub Lieutenant **Riti Singh** would be the first women airborne tacticians in India to operate from the deck of warships.
- This is seen as a landmark event as before this, women have not been posted on warships despite being employed in different ranks in Indian Navy.
- Both **Tyagi and Singh** passed out of Indian Navy's Observer Course at Southern Naval Command in Kerala's Kochi city.
- The two officers are part of a group of 17 officers of the Navy, including four women officers and three officers of the Indian Coast Guard, who were awarded **"Wings"** on graduating as **"Observers"** at a ceremony.
- The two officers are expected to eventually fly the **Navy's new MH-60 R helicopters**, which are designed to detect enemy ships and submarines and can be engaged using missiles and torpedoes.

## Flight Lieutenant Shivangi Singh will be first woman fighter pilot to fly Rafale

- Flight Lieutenant **Shivangi Singh** will be the **first woman pilot to fly Rafale**, India's most modern multi-role fighter aircraft.

- Flt Lt Singh, who was commissioned into the IAF in 2017 as part of the second batch of women fighter pilots, is currently flying a **MiG-21 Bison**, the oldest combat aircraft in the force's inventory.
- Once the training is completed, she will join the **Ambala-based 17 Squadron**, home to the Rafale fighters.

<p style="text-align:center;color:red;">Important Mergers and Acquisitions</p>

## Reliance Industries to acquire Future Group's retail business for Rs 24,713 crore

• Mukesh Ambani's **Reliance Industries** announced the **acquisition** of the retail, wholesale, logistics and warehousing businesses of Kishore Biyani's **Future Group for Rs 24,713 crore**. The acquisition was done through the company's subsidiary Reliance Retail Ventures.

• Reliance Retail will now have access to close to 1,800 outlets of Future Group's Big Bazaar, Easyday, Central, and Foodhall stores, which are spread across 420 cities in India.

• The deal will help Reliance Retail accelerate and provide support to millions of small merchants in increasing their competitiveness and enhance their income during these challenging times.

• The Reliance Retail and Fashion Lifestyle Limited also proposes to invest about Rs 1,200 crore in the preferential issue of equity shares of Future Enterprises to acquire 6.09% of post-merger equity.

## Adani Group buys 74% stake in Mumbai international airport

- The **Adani Group** has acquired **74% stake** in **Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport** in **Mumbai.**
- This makes the group the second largest private operator in India after the **GMR group**, which operates the Delhi and Hyderabad airports.
- Gautam Adani's company will buy **50.5% stake** held by **GVK Group** and will take steps to acquire **23.5% stake** of minority partners – **Airport Company of South Africa and the Bidvest Group**.
- Airports Company South Africa and Bidvest Group hold 10% and 13.5% stake respectively of the Mumbai International Airport.
- Adani has already won bids to operate and manage development of six airports – Lucknow, Ahmedabad, Mangalore, Jaipur, Guwahati and Thiruvananthapuram.

## IndiGrid completes Rs 1,080 cr acquisition of GPTL Transmission project

- **India Grid Trust (IndiGrid)** has completed the acquisition of another transmission asset **Gurgaon Palwal Transmission Ltd (GPTL)** from **Sterlite Power** at an enterprise value of **Rs 1,080 crore**.
- With this acquisition, IndiGrid's assets under management have increased by **9 per cent** to Rs 13,300 crore. Its asset portfolio will now consist of 10 power transmission projects with a total network of 25 power transmission lines and 7 substations extending over 6,080 circuit kilometres and 10,735 mega volt amperes (MVA) in 15 Indian states.
- The acquisition of GPTL was envisaged as part of the framework agreement signed with Sterlite Power in April 2019 for the acquisition of three assets upon commissioning. This acquisition has been funded by internal accruals, proceeds from the preference issue done in May 2019 and new debt.
- IndiGrid Chief Executive Officer Harsh Shah stated the infrastructure investment trust has another **Rs 5,500 crore** pipeline of transmission projects under the framework agreement with Sterlite Power providing visibility of Rs **18,000 crore** of assets under management over the next two years.

## Infosys acquires US-based Kaleidoscope Innovation for $42 million

- Infosys acquires US-based product design and development firm, **Kaleidoscope Innovation**, for **$42 million**.
- With this acquisition, the company will be able to expand its engineering services portfolio, especially in medical devices, consumer and industrial markets across the US, the company stated.
- This is the company's second acquisition in the year and the amount includes earn-out payments, management incentives and bonuses. The company acquired **Simplus**, a Salesforce partner, in February for **$250 million**.
- **Kaleidoscope** designs microsurgical instruments, devices used in minimally invasive surgery, drug delivery devices for ophthalmic therapies and user-centric wearables. It also offers usability testing in support of regulatory submissions, including the delivery mechanism for aortic stents, the statement stated.

## Infosys to acquire Europe-based GuideVision for 30 million euros

- **Infosys Ltd** has entered into a **definitive agreement to acquire** Europe-based **GuideVision** for up to **€30 million (approximately $35 million)** to augment its **Cobalt portfolio of cloud services** and further strengthen near-shore delivery presence in the European region.
- **Infosys launched Cobalt**, a set of services, solutions, and platforms to help its clients, mostly large enterprises, build new cloud-first capabilities.
- The **acquisition of GuideVision is expected to close** during the **third quarter of fiscal 2021**.
- GuideVision's acquisition is a significant step towards strengthening our Infosys Cobalt offerings portfolio, bringing the combination of services, solutions and platforms, which acts as a force multiplier for cloud-powered enterprise transformation.

## Tech Mahindra sells stake in Altiostar to Rakuten

- Indian IT services company **Tech Mahindra** and **Rakuten Mobile Inc**., a Rakuten group company responsible for mobile communications, announced an agreement under which the former has been appointed the **preferred partner** for global go-to market opportunities for the **Rakuten Communications Platform (RCP).** As part of the deal, Tech Mahindra has sold its stake in Delaware-based Altiostar Networks to Rakuten for $45 million.
- In 2018, Tech Mahindra had acquired a **17.5% stake** in the US-based telecom software development company Altiostar Networks for **$15 million**.
- Rakuten Mobile and Tech Mahindra aim to drive innovation by transforming network services and enhancing customer experience globally. Based on the agreement, as a preferred partner, **Tech Mahindra** will provide its leading technologies and software capabilities to support the development and deployment of mobile networks for global customers of RCP.
- Through the agreement, Tech Mahindra will also provide managed IT, security and network services to Rakuten Mobile, and there are also plans to designate Tech Mahindra as an official reseller of RCP.

## Bharti Airtel picks up strategic stake in Cloud analytics startup Waybeo

- Telecom major **Bharti Airtel** stated it has picked up a strategic stake in cloud analytics **startup Waybeo** under the Airtel Startup Accelerator Programme.
- Thiruvananthapuram-headquartered **Waybeo**, focused on deep Artificial Intelligence-based analytics for Cloud telephony, is the fifth startup to join the fast-growing **Airtel Startup Accelerator Program**, which helps promising startups unlock their potential.
- The Airtel Startup Accelerator Programme allows startups to leverage Airtel's robust ecosystem, including its core strengths in data, distribution, networks and payments.

- Waybeo has built cutting-edge analytics tools for the enterprise cloud telephony segment and under the Airtel Startup Accelerator Programme, Waybeo's solutions will get larger distribution reach while giving Airtel access to Waybeo's proven as well as emerging technologies.

## CCI approves PharmEasy's merger with rival Medlife

- Healthtech sector in India witnessed another big consolidation. After **Reliance's acquisition** of digital pharmacy **Netmeds** in August, the **Competition Commission of India (CCI)** approved the merger between online pharmacy **PharmEasy's** parent company **API Holdings** and rival **Medlife**.
- According to an earlier CCI filing, PharmEasy will acquire **100 per cent equity shares** of Medlife while the latter's promoters will get 19.95 per cent equity share capital in return in the merged business. The two had reached out to the competition's watchdog in August seeking approval for the merger. The merger's approval was tweeted by CCI.
- Launched in 2015, PharmEasy offers services including online medicines, healthcare products and booking lab tests in more than 1000 cities. It has so far raised $328 million across seven funding rounds and had last raised $220 million in November 2019, as per deals tracker Crunchbase.
- PharmEasy, which counts Temasek, Bessemer Venture Partners, Nandan Nilekani etc., among its investors, was last valued at reportedly $700 million. On the other hand, Medlife was founded in 2014 and serves over 4,000 cities. The startup had raised $56.5 million.

## SBI Cap takes over collateral for 56% stake in Jindal Stainless

- **SBICAP Trustee Company** stated it acquired **56.17 per cent stake** in **Jindal Stainless (JSL)**. The latter's promoters had pledged shares as collateral to secure a term loan of **Rs 400 crore** from IndusInd Bank.
- JSL had pledged 13.02 million shares to secure the term loan, stated SBICAP. "Since multiple promoter group entities — spread across different locations — were involved and due to the challenges arising out of Covid, the last promoter entity of JSL signed the agreement on September 21, 2020. Therefore, the disclosure is being made within two working days from September 21," stated.
- As on June 30, 2020, promoter and promoter group of Jindal Stainless held **68.12 per cent stake** in the firm company with the balance 31.88 per cent being public shareholding.
- The present disclosure is for creation of a pledge on the 13.02 million shares of the stainless steel producer in favour of SBICAP Trustee.

**Revision points**

| Company | Merging Company |
|---|---|
| Reliance Industries | Kishore Biyani's Future Group |
| Adani Group | Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport in Mumbai (74%) |
| India Grid Trust | Gurgaon Palwal Transmission Ltd |
| Infosys | Kaleidoscope Innovation |
| Bharti Airtel | Waybeo |
| PharmEasy | Medlife |
| SBICAP Trustee Company | Jindal Stainless (JSL) (56.17%) |

# Important Web Portals and Mobile Apps

## ICICI Prudential Life Insurance introduces customer service chatbot 'LiGo' on Google Assistant

- **ICICI Prudential Life Insurance** has introduced its customer service chatbot 'LiGo' on **'Google Assistant'.**
- This would enable the Company's policyholders to have their queries addressed by simple voice commands such as "Ok Google, I want to speak to ICICI Prudential Life LiGo" or "May I talk to ICICI Prudential Life LiGo".
- There has been rapid adoption of **AI-powered voice assistants** by individuals owing to personalized, and immediate experiences being provided.
- Customers can instantly access information on their policies by activating 'Google Assistant' on their Android smartphones and speaking out their policy number or registered phone number. It is as simple as asking Google for directions or traffic.

## Naveen Patnaik launches citizen-centric apps

- Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched mobile App **'AMA SAHAR' and 'SWACHHA SAHAR ODISHA'** web app to provide citizen centric services.
- The ULBs will be able to submit utilisation certificate online which will bring better fiscal management.
- A **Handbook on sanitation** which is a compendium of important notifications, letters and guidelines issued by the Urban Department was also released by him.
- He dedicated 100 functional micro composite centres and 50 functional material recovery facilities in various urban local bodies of the State.
- He also laid the foundation stone for establishment of 51 fecal sludge treatment plants to ensure larger coverage of this facility across all cities and towns, to mark the **State-level Local Self Government Day.**

## Punjab launches 'iRakhwali' mobile app to save environment

- **Punjab government** has decided to induct common people as **'Greenery Saviours'** to further strengthen its drive to preserve the environment in the state.
- The state Forest Department has announced to launch a dedicated app **'iRakhwali'** in this regard.

## Hyderabad based EFLU app 'English Pro' launched

- **Union Minister for Education Dr Ramesh Pokhriyal** launched a mobile application, **'English Pro'**, developed by the Hyderabad-based **English and Foreign Languages University (EFLU).**
- The app, launched at a virtual meet, has been developed under **University Social Responsibility (USR),** a first-of-its kind initiative by any university in the country.
- It aims at helping learners develop Indian English pronunciation in the unique **'Bharatiya'** way.
- The mobile app was a useful digital tool and an educational resource for teachers, students and for people from varied backgrounds.

## Mahindra Finance's subsidiary set to enter online insurance, will launch portal called PayBima

- **Mahindra Finance** is set to enter the **business of online insurance broking** giving digital services to the customers of its insurance brokerage subsidiary, Mahindra Insurance Brokers, through a soon-to-be launched portal called **PayBima.**
- The new portal would play a role in the transformation of Mahindra's insurance broking services to a "phygital" model, which would leverage its feet-on-the-street agents at more than 400 locations in the country, with the digital aggregation and settlement services.

- The move comes at a time when the demand for insurance products pertaining especially to health and life is at a high due to increased urgency among individuals and businesses to get themselves covered against medical and business risks, amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

## PM Modi digitally launches Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana & e-Gopala App

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi digitally launched the **Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY).**
- He also launched the **e-Gopala App**, a comprehensive breed improvement marketplace and information portal for direct use of farmers.
- The Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana is a flagship scheme for focused and sustainable development of fisheries sector in the country with an estimated investment of over **Rs. 20 thousand crore**.
- This is the highest ever investment in the fisheries sector. It also aims at enhancing fish production by an additional **70 lakh tonne** by **2024-25**.

## Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launches Aero India 2021 website, show scheduled in February

- **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh** launched the website of **Aero India 2021** -- https://aeroindia.gov.in -- in Delhi.
- The 13th edition of **Aero India-21 will be held at** Air Force Station, Yelahanka, **Bengaluru in Karnataka** from **February 3 to February 7 next year.**
- The Aero India 2021 website will be a contactless online interface for Asia's largest aero show. It will host and stream all online services related to the event for both the exhibitors and visitors.
- Besides, it will also host informative content about the Ministry of Defence's recent policies, initiatives and product profile of indigenous aircraft and helicopters.
- Exhibitors will be able to register and book space online as per their requirements on a **first-come-first-served basis and make all payments online** on the Aero India website.
- The website will be interactive and aims to provide the first of the numerous contactless experiences at the show and will help build the participants' confidence towards the event being cognizant and in conformance with prevailing pandemic related guidelines and safeguards.

## IIT Bombay's Techfest launches mental health awareness initiative

- **Techfest**, the annual science and technology festival of the **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bombay**, launched a nationwide initiative for college-goers to **address mental health concerns** among the youth amid the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic.
- The festival committee has also launched a section on its **official website** that will connect **students to counsellors and help fight the stigma attached to mental illnesses.** It is called **HOPE (Healing Occurs with Positivity and Expression).**
- The website will feature an interactive query section where the students will be able to post their queries and mental health-related issues anonymously and get help from counsellors.
- The website will also host helpline numbers of more than 10 prominent NGOs (non-governmental organisations) from across the country.
- Blogs addressing general mental health issues will be also published on the website

## Southern Railway's Chennai Division launches Freight Seva app

- The **Chennai Division of Southern Railways (SR)** has launched an in-house mobile application - **Freight Seva - to serve customers better**.
- The app will be a one stop destination for information needs, and have requisite details for access by freight customers.

- This includes various incentive schemes of Indian Railways for freight customers; all goods sheds in Chennai Division; types of wagons and the various commodities that can be dealt in them and parcel cargo express trains with schedules, freight rates and parcel rates.
- The mobile app also facilitates customers to ask for an approximate quote for any commodity and to any rail destination.

## e- Peek Pahani app will reduce hardships of farmers, says Maharashtra CM

- **Maharashtra** Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has stated that **e- Peek Pahani** mobile application of the State Government will reduce **hardships of farmers** and help them get the right price and good market for their produce.
- Ministers Balasaheb Thorat, Eknath Shinde, Dadaji Bhuse and Abdul Sattar and senior government officials and representatives of Tata Trust, in association with whom the application has been developed, also attended the meeting.
- Farmers can upload images of their crop using the application and after verification of the same, **Talathis** can register the details on 7/12 extract.

## CM Jagan Mohan Reddy launches AP Police Seva app

- **Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy** launched the **AP Police Seva app** in an event which saw a participation of 46,000 police personnel from about 1,000 locations across the state via a video conference.
- The motive of the app is to enhance and further take the 87 services provided by the AP Police department to the doorstep of the people by incorporating state of the art technology, thus breaking the stigma associated with police stations and bridging the gap between the police and the public.
- The app will enable the public to **register complaints**, **check FIR status and e-challans**, file **applications for passports, licences** and **no-objection certificates.**
- In addition, the app will also periodically update information about missing persons and unidentified dead bodies.

## Agriculture minister Tomar launches portal for testing performance of farm machinery

- **Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar** launched **a portal** where **manufacturers can online apply for testing and evaluation their farm machineries**.
- The minister launched the **'Centralized Farm Machinery Performance Testing Portal'** to improve services of farm machinery testing institutions and bring out transparency in the entire process of testing and evaluation of machines.
- Ministers of State for Agriculture **Parshottam Rupala and Kailash Choudhary** as well as Agriculture Secretary **Sanjay Agarwal** were present on the occasion.
- This portal will facilitate manufacturers in applying, communicating and monitoring the progress of testing of their machines in a seamless manner as it is easily accessible from any location and from any device connected to the Internet.
- The portal will help in improving the efficiency of the testing institutes thereby reducing testing time for various agricultural machines and equipment.

## Union Health Minister launches Vaccine portal for COVID-19

- **Union Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan** inaugurated the **vaccine portal** for Covid-19 to create awareness among masses.
- Portal will disseminate vaccine related information regarding Indian efforts towards vaccine development against COVID-19. Currently 3 vaccines are undergoing clinical trials in India for COVID-19.
- In addition, a first of its kind **ICMR-NIN web portal** also has been developed to collect data which will be useful in the present complicated by COVID-19 pandemic. Health Minister also released Report '**What India Eats'** to know the main

dietary patterns in India which is important for nutrition and health policy makers to understand distributions in diets within populations.

- Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), and All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) New Delhi launched a **National Clinical Registry** for COVID-19. The registry will aim at collecting good quality real time clinical data to inform evidence-based clinical practice, research, formulating guidelines and policy.

## Assam govt develops new mobile app for air passengers

- The **Assam government** has developed a **mobile app** through which **air passengers can downloadforms, fill it up, and show it at airports** to avoid delay in completing formalities for COVID-19 tests.
- The app named **'visitassam'** has been developed to ensure that proper social distancing is maintained and passengers are not delayed as filling up necessary forms at the airports is time consuming.
- The state government has also introduced a change of protocol for arriving passengers at the airports who can now take **'Tatkal RT-PCR'** test on payment of **Rs 2,200** and get the result within 24 hours.
- The free RT-PCR facility for passengers will, however, continue and the results will be available within three to five days.
- The state government has also decided to waive the quarantine of those who will undertake journeys by rail or air after recovering from the infection.

## Telangana: Dharani land web portal to be launched on Dussehra

- **The chief minister of Telangana K Chandrasekhar Rao** will launch a web portal named **"Dharani"** for integrated land record management on Dussehra( Oct 26$^{th}$ ).
- He wanted the officials to keep the software, hardware and bandwidth of the portal ready before the launch.
- He said all over the state, registration rates would be fixed survey number-wise and the registrations would be done as per the fixed rates.

## NCRPB launches P-MIS portal

- **The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)** launched **the Project Management Information System** (P-MIS) portal of the **National Capital Region Planning Board (NCRPB)** to monitor the progress of projects and administering loans.
- "P-MIS is a major step in using digital/mobile technology to improve transparency and accountability in monitoring progress of projects and administering loans. This portal is well-timed during Covid-19 when use of technology has grown tremendously," stated Durga Shanker Mishra, Secretary, MoHUA.
- NCRPB has sanctioned over Rs.15,000 crore loan in over Rs.31,000-crore worth of projects, and 265 projects of more than Rs.18,500 crore are complete and the rest are under construction, he added.
- "P-MIS will bring ease in review and management of projects, and provide information and opportunity to give feedbacks to the citizens," stated Mishra.

## Revision Points

| Applications/Web portals | Launched By/Developed By |
|---|---|
| LiGo | ICICI Prudential Life Insurance |
| 'U-Rise' | Uttar Pradesh Government |
| AMA SAHAR, SWACHHA SAHAR ODISHA | Naveen Patnaik |
| iRakhwali | Punjab government |

| English Pro | Hyderabad based EFLU |
|---|---|
| PayBima | Mahindra Finance |
| e-Gopala App | Prime Minister Narendra Modi |
| Aero India 2021 -- https://aeroindia.gov.in | Defence Minister Rajnath Singh |
| HOPE (Healing Occurs with Positivity and Expression) | Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bombay |
| Freight Seva | Chennai Division of Southern Railways |
| e- Peek Pahani | Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray |
| AP Police Seva app | Jagan Mohan Reddy |
| Centralized Farm Machinery Performance Testing Portal | Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar |
| Visitassam | Assam government |
| Dharani land web portal | K Chandrasekhar Rao |
| Project Management Information System (P-MIS) portal | National Capital Region Planning Board |

# Important Sports News

## Cricket

### Australia's Alyssa Healy breaks MS Dhoni's T20I record

- Australia women's cricket starAlyssa Healy surpassed Dhoni's record to take the top position in the list of wicketkeepers with most dismissals in T20i.
- Healy achieved the feat in the 2nd T20I against New Zealand at the Allan Border Field in Brisbane.
- Dhoni, who retired from international cricket in August, led Indian team to three ICC trophies - 2007 T20 World Cup, 2011 ODI World Cup and 2013 Champions Trophy.
- In his career, Dhoni achieved 91 dismissals (57 catches + 34 stumpings) as keeper in T20Is, the most by any player.

## Football

### Gurpreet, Sanju declared winners of AIFF Player of the Year Awards

- Indian football team goalkeeper Gurpreet Singh Sandhu and midfielder Sanju are the winners of the 2019-20 AIFF Men's Footballer of the Year Award and the AIFF Women's Footballer of the Year Award respectively.
- This is the first time Gurpreet has received this prestigious award, and in the process, he became the second goalkeeperafter Subrata Paul in 2009 to be named the AIFF Player of the Year.
- The Blue Tigers custodian was elected as the winner on the basis of votes from Indian Super League and I-League club coaches.
- Furthermore, midfielder Anirudh Thapa was named as the AIFF 2019-20 Men's Emerging Footballer of the Year.
- The 2019-20 AIFF Award for the Best Referee was won by L Ajit Kumar Meetei from Manipur while P Vairamuthu from Tamil Nadu was named the winner of the 2019-20 AIFF Award for the Best Assistant Referee.
- Meanwhile, the 2019-20 AIFF Award for the Best Grassroots Development Programme went to the Indian Football Association (West Bengal).

## 2020 Chess Olympiad: India, Russia declared joint winners after server malfunction

- **India and Russia** were declared **joint winners** of the **2020 Online Chess Olympiad** after the final was marred by **internet disconnection and server malfunction.**
- This was the first time FIDE, the international chess federation, was holding the Olympiad in an online format, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **FIDE President Arkady Dvorkovich** made a decision to give **gold medals** of FIDE Online #ChessOlympiad to both teams - **India and Russia.**
- Russia were initially declared winners after two Indian players -- Nihal Sarin and Divya Deshmukh -- lost out on time in the final after suffering a disconnection with the server.
- The first round of the final ended in a 3-3 draw with all the six games finishing in stalemate.
- Russia won the second round 4.5-1.5 with wins for **Andrey Esipenko over Sarin and Polina Shuvalova over Deshmukh,** leading to a controversy as the Indians claimed the losses were due to connection issues.
- The Indian squad at the Chess Olympiad 2020 included Vishwanathan Anand, Vidit Santosh Gujarati (captain), P. Harikrishna, Koneru Humpy, Dronavalli Harika, Bhakti Kulkarni, Nihal Sarin, Divya Deshmukh, R. Praggnanandha, Vantika Agrawal, R. Vaishali and Arvindh Chithambaram.

## Arsenal defeat Liverpool on penalties in thrilling final to win FA Community Shield

- **Arsenal defeated Liverpool** on penalties to win the **FA Community Shield at the Wembley Stadium in England.**
- **FA Community Shield** is an annual football match played **between the winners of the previous season's Premier League winner and the previous season's FA Cup winners.**
- Liverpool had won the 2019-20 Premier League title while Arsenal had won the FA Cup after defeating Chelsea in the finals.

## Sumit Nagal becomes 1st Indian to win grand slam singles main draw match in 7 years

- **Sumit Nagal** stormed into the second round of the ongoing **US Open Tennis**. Nagal defeated **Bradley Klahn** of USA 6-1, 6-3, 3-6, 6-1 in the first round of the US Open to progress further into the tournament.
- With this result, the **23-year-old Nagal** has become the **first Indian** to win a singles main draw match at a **Grand Slam** in the last seven years.
- In 2013, **Somdev Devvarman** had reached the second round of the Australian Open, French Open and US Open. Nagal, who is the world number 122, will now face second seeded Austria's Dominic Thiem in the second round of the tournament.

## CFI all set to host first-ever Cycling Summit in 2021

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

- This one-day summit is designed to promote the culture of cycling and exchange knowledge with budding and professional cyclists.
- The summit aims to offer a platform to all sections of the cycling community to get a deeper understanding of the technical know-how related to cycling, as a hobby and as a professional sport.

## Indian Grandmaster P Iniyan Wins World Open Online Chess Tournament

- **Indian Grandmaster P Iniyan** won the prestigious Annual **World Open online chess tournament**.
- Iniyan defeated Grandmasters Baadur Jobava of Georgia, Sam Sevian, Sergey Erenburg of USA and Nyzhyk Illia of Ukraine.
- A total number of 120 players from 16 countries participated in the event which included more than 30 Grandmasters.
- Iniyan had recently defeated world number two Fabiano Caruana in an online blitz event.

## Ja Morant wins 2019-20 Kia NBA Rookie of the Year Award

- The Memphis Grizzlies' **Ja Morant** has been named the **2019-20 Kia NBA Rookie of the Year**.
- He is the **second player** to win the Rookie of the Year Award with the Grizzlies, joining **Pau Gasol (2001-02).**
- Morant received 99 first-place votes from a global panel of 100 sportswriters and broadcasters and earned 498 total points. Miami Heat guard Kendrick Nunn finished in second place with 204 points. New Orleans Pelicans forward Zion Williamson received one first-place vote and finished in third place with 140 points.

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

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

## Pierre Gasly wins thrilling Italian Grand Prix

- **Pierre Gasly** took a stunning upset **win** in the **Italian Grand Prix** for Red Bull's Alpha Tauri team in **one of the most remarkable races in history.**
- **Lewis Hamilton** was dominating until he **was penalised** for being called in for a stop when the **pit lane was closed.**
- **McLaren's Carlos Sainz** has spotted **second** and he is followed by **Lance Stroll.**

## Parachutist Raphael Domjan makes world's first jump from solar-powered plane

- A parachutist **Raphael Domjan**has completed the **world's first jump** from a **solar-powered aircraft**.
- Raphael Domjan reached a speed of 93mph (150kph) before releasing his parachute and landing safely in **Payerne, western Switzerland**.
- The team's next milestone is to make the **first solar-powered flight to the stratosphere**, which it plans to complete in **2022.**
- Four years ago, Switzerland's Solar Impulse mission completed the first circumnavigation of the globe with a solar-powered plane.

## Novak Djokovic out of US Open 2020 after hitting line judge with ball

- **Novak Djokovic** was **kicked out of** the **US Open**for accidentally hitting a line judge** in the throat with a tennis ball after dropping a game in his fourth-round match, a stunning end to his 29-match winning streak and bid for an 18th Grand Slam title.
- During a discussion of about 10 minutes near the net involving tournament referee Soeren Friemel, Grand Slam supervisor Andreas Egli and chair umpire Aurelie Tourte, Djokovic pleaded his case.

## Dominic Thiem first since 1949 to win US Open

- **Dominic Thiem** became the **first man in 71 years to win the U.S. Open** after dropping the first two sets of the final.
- Thiem earned his first Grand Slam title with a 2-6, 4-6, 6-4, 6-3, 7-6 (6) comeback victory **against Alexander Zverev**. The U.S. Open never had been decided by a fifth-set tiebreaker.
- **Pancho Gonzalez** made the **same sort of turnaround against Ted Schroeder in 1949** to win the event then known as the **U.S. Championships**.

## Naomi Osaka wins second US Open title after comeback win over Victoria Azarenka

- Japanese Tennis star **Naomi Osaka** beat **Victoria Azarenka** of Belarus to claim her **second US Open** title in three years with a 1-6, 6-3, 6-3 comeback win.
- **Osaka,** a 22-year-old born in Japan and now based in the United States, added to her trophies from the 2018 U.S. Open -- earned with a brilliant performance in a memorably chaotic final against Serena Williams -- and **2019 Australian Open**.
- This one was a back-and-forth affair. Even after Osaka surged ahead 4-1 in the third set, the outcome was unclear. She held four break points in the next game -- convert any of those, and she would have served for the win at 5-1 -- but Azarenka didn't flinch.

## Tuscan Grand Prix: Lewis Hamilton claims 90th win after incredible race

- **Lewis Hamilton** took his **90th career victory** by beating **Mercedes team-mate Valtteri Bottas** in **Tuscan Grand Prix.**
- Red Bull's Thai-British driver **Alex Albon** took a maiden podium in **third.**
- This was his **6th win** of the season and **90th F1 win** of his career.

## Thomas and Uber Cup Finals postponed to 2021 by BWF

- The **Thomas and Uber Cup in Denmarkpostponed to next year** by the **Badminton World Federation** following a wave of withdrawals by top teams due to the raging COVID-19 pandemic.
- India had announced both the men's and women's squads for the prestigious event which was scheduled to be held in Aarhus, Denmark from 3 to 11 October.
- Indonesia, South Korea,Thailand, Australia, Chinese Taipei and Algeria in pulling out due to the dreaded disease.

## Neymar banned for 2 matches, Layvin Kurzawa banned for 6 matches

- **Layvin Kurzawa** comes away with the biggest suspension, and will miss **6 matches**, after kicking Jordan Amavi. The **Marseille man** receives a **3-match suspension**. Dario Benedetto is the other OM player to receive a suspension, receiving a 1-match ban.
- **Neymar** is banned for **2 matches (+ 1 with a suspended sentence) after hitting Alvaro Gonzalez** on the head – Leandro Paredes has received the exact same sanction.
- Finally, the LFP have opened an investigation into Neymar's claims that Alvaro Gonzalez used racist language towards him.

## Fed Cup renamed as Billie Jean King Cup to honour the legendary player

- The **Fed Cup** will be **renamed** as **Billie Jean King Cup,** the International Tennis Federationannounced.
- The change of name is being done **to honour King** considered the greatest trailblazer in **women's tennis for her** lifelong battle for equality and social justice.
- **Almost six decades after King helped the US to win the inaugural Fed Cup,** the tournament becomes the **first tennis competition to be named after a woman.**

## Novak Djokovic wins Men's Singles event in Italian Open

- In tennis, world number one **Novak Djokovic** won a record **36th Masters title** by beating **Diego Schwartzman** in the **Italian Open** at Rome.

- Djokovic has also passed childhood idol Pete Sampras for the second-most weeks at No. 1 with 287 - trailing only Roger Federer's 310 weeks in the top spot.
- Earlier, top-seeded **Simona Halep** of Romania won her **first Italian Open** title when defending champion Czech **Karolína Pliskova** retired midway through the final with an injury. Halep was leading 6-0, 2-1 when Czech player Pliskova stopped playing after just 31 minutes.

## Professional tennis player, former cricketer Ashleigh Barty wins golf tournament in COVID-19 break

- **Multi-talented Ashleigh Barty** has conquered **tennis**, been a **professional cricketer** and has now added another string to her sporting bow by **winning a golf tournament**.
- She has taken a course designed by **Greg Norman**, claiming the **Brookwater Golf Club women's title** near Brisbane, Australia.
- Barty, who played **cricket for Brisbane Heat** in the **Women's Big Bash League in 2015-16**, has been working on her golf game during her Covid-19 enforced absence from tennis.

## Valtteri Bottas wins Russian GP

- **Valtteri Bottas** won his **second Formula One race of the 2020 season**, easing to victory at the **Russian Grand Prix** after teammate **Lewis Hamilton was hampered by two separate five-second penalties.**
- Hamilton was penalized for performing practice starts outside his designated area as he left the pits.
- Max Verstappen in second while Hamilton fought back to finish in third.

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

| Organization | Headquarters | Key Person |
|---|---|---|
| All India Football Federation (AIFF) | New Delhi | Praful Patel |
| Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) | New Delhi | Pramod Chandra Mody |
| United Nations | New York, USA | António Guterres |
| International Monetary Fund (IMF) | Washington D.C. | Kristalina Georgieva |
| Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank | Beijing, China | Jin Liqun |
| Competition Commission of India (CCI) | New Delhi | Ashok Kumar Gupta |
| Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) | New Delhi | Rita Teaotia |
| National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) | New Delhi | Manish Kumar |
| Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) | New Delhi | Sangita Reddy |
| NTPC Ltd | New Delhi | Gurdeep Singh |
| Power Finance Corporation | New Delhi | Ravinder Singh Dhillon |
| International Solar Alliance (ISA) | Gurugram | Upendra Tripathy (Leader) |
| World Bank | Washington D.C, USA | David Malpass |
| Asian Development Bank | Mandaluyong, Philippines | Masatsugu Asakawa |
|  |  |  |
| National Aeronautics and Space | Washington DC | James Morhard |

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|---|---|---|
| Administration (NASA) | | |
| United Nations Childrens' Fund (UNICEF) | New York, USA | Henrietta H. Fore |
| World Health Organization | Geneva, Switzerland | Tedros Adhanom |
| | | |
| 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 |
| Google | California, United States | Sundar Pichai |
| Amazon | Washington, United States | Jeff Bezos |
| International Finance Corporation (IFC) | Washington, D.C., United States | Philippe Le Houérou |
| Paytm | Noida | Vijay Shekhar Sharma |
| Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs | New Delhi | M Ajit Kumar |
| National Technical Research Organisation | New Delhi | Anil Dhasmana |
| Film and Television Institute of India | Pune | Shekhar Kapur |
| Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) | Mumbai | Subhash Kamath |
| The Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations | Delhi | Vinkesh Gulati |
| Myntra | Bengaluru | Amar Nagaram |
| Google pay | USA | Sundar Pichai |
| Citi group | New York, USA | Michael Corbat |
| Twitter | San Francisco, USA | Jack Dorsey |
| Vedantu | Bengaluru | Vamsi Krishna |
| Paytm First Games | Noida | Vijay Shekhar Sharma |
| United Nations Environment Programme | Nairobi, Kenya | Inger Andersen |

## Important Obituaries

| Name | Field |
|---|---|
| Katyayani Shankar Bajpai | Former diplomat, India's ambassador to the United States, China, and Pakistan |
| Dr Sivaramakrishna Iyer Padmavati | Cardiologist ('Godmother of cardiology') |

| | |
|---|---|
| David Capel | Former England cricket allrounder |
| Tom Seaver | Mets legend and Baseball Hall of Famer |
| Johnny Bakshi | Producer-director |
| Dr Mahesh Kumar Dwivedy | Former DIG of BSF (Medical Wing) |
| Kesavananda Bharati | Petitioner in landmark SC judgement |
| Jiri Menzel | Czech Film Director |
| Dr. Govind Swarup | Father of India's Radio Astronomy |
| Jaya Prakash Reddy | Telugu actor |
| R J Shahaney | Ashok Leyland's Chairman |
| Swami Agnivesh | Social activist (In 1981, he founded the organisation Bandhua Mukti Morcha (BMM)) |
| Raghuvansh Prasad Singh | Former Union ministerfor Rural Development in Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's cabinet |
| Chanesh Ram Rathiya | Congress leader and former Chhattisgarh minister |
| Sadashiv Raoji Patil | Former Indian Cricket player (Captained Maharashtra in the Ranji Trophy) |
| Kapila Vatsyayan (Padma Vibhushan in 2011) | Scholar, author and connoisseur of the arts |
| P R Krishnakumar ('Padmashri award' in 2009 & 'Dhanwanthari Puraskar' in 2016) | Chairman and Managing Director of the Arya Vaidya Pharmacy (AVP) Coimbatore Limited |
| Moussa Traore | Mali's former president |
| Ashok Gasti (COVID-19) | First-time Rajya Sabha MP from Karnataka |
| Amitabha Ghosh | Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Governor for 21 days |
| Sachin Deshmukh (COVID-19) | 'Mini Gavaskar'in local cricket |
| Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg (USA) | Second woman appointed to the bench (dubbed the 'Notorious RBG') |
| John Turner | Former Canadian Prime Minister |
| Purba Dam | Rabindra Sangeet exponent |
| Ashalata Wabgaonkar | Marathi actress |
| Ang Rita Sherpa (snow leopard) | First man to climb Mount Everest 10 times |
| Bibhuranjan Choudhury | Assam musician, singer, lyricist and actor |
| Suresh Angadi (COVID-19) | Minister of State for Railways (He was a four-time BJP MP from Belagavi) |
| Dean Jones | Former Australia cricketer (a part of IPL official broadcaster's commentary panel) |
| SP Balasubrahmanyam | Playback singer |
| Dr Sekhar Basu (Padma Shri in 2014) | Atomic scientist and former chairman of Atomic Energy Commission |
| Jaswant Singh | Former Union minister (Minister for Finance, Minister for |

| | Defence and Minister for External Affairs) |
|---|---|
| Isher Judge Ahluwalia | Economist (Stepped down as chairman of Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER)) |
| Syeda Anwara Taimur | Assam's only woman CM |
| Dr G S Amur | Critic and versatile writer (Sahitya Akademi Award, Rajyotsava Award and Bharatiya Bhasha Award) |
| Abhilash | Songwriter (best known for the song 'Itni Shakti Hame Dena Daata') |