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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

India extends medical assistance worth USD 1 million to North Korea
- India has extended anti-tuberculosis medical assistance worth about USD 1 million to North Korea in response to a request received from the World Health Organisation (WHO).
- The medical assistance is given under the aegis of an ongoing WHO anti-tuberculosis programme in Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK).

India-UK affirm shared commitment towards Free Trade Agreement
- India and the United Kingdom affirmed their shared commitment towards a Free Trade Agreement during the 14th Joint Economic and Trade Committee meeting on July 24, 2020.
- The virtual meeting was co-chaired by Union Minister for Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal and UK Secretary of State for International Trade Elizabeth Truss.
- The Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Hardeep Singh Puri and UK's Minister of State for International Trade Ranil Jayawardena had also attended the meeting.

UN General Assembly to go virtual for first time in 75 years
- The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) will go virtual for the first time in 75 years for its session scheduled to be held in September 2020. The world leaders of UN member countries have been asked to submit their pre-recorded videos for the session.
- The UN Assembly will hold its 75th session on September 15, 2020.

China launches its 1st independent mission to Mars
- China has successfully launched “Tianwen-1” its first independent mission to Mars. A Long March 5 rocket carrying the spacecraft ignited at the Wenchang Space Launch Site in south China’s tropical Hainan province.
- China had launched an orbiter destined for Mars on a Russian rocket in 2011, but the mission failed because the rocket malfunctioned.

South Korea launches its first military satellite ANASIS-II
- SpaceX has successfully launched South Korea’s first military satellite “ANASIS-II”. The satellite was deployed into a geostationary transfer orbit (GTO) by a Falcon 9 rocket. It was launched from the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in the US of Florida.
- The satellite is expected to reach its orbit of 36,000 kilometres in 2 weeks. The Military of South Korea is likely to take over the satellite system in October 2020. The satellite has been launched with an aim to enhance Korea's ability to defend itself against the North Korea.

United Arab Emirates launches “Hope” mission to “Mars”
- A mission titled as “Hope” has been launched to “Mars” by the United Arab Emirates. With the help of mission, UAE aims to provide a complete picture of the Martian
atmosphere for the first time, studying daily and seasonal changes.

- An unmanned “Hope” Probe blasted off from Japan’s Tanegashima Space Center at 1:58 a.m. (UAE time) for a seven-month journey to the red planet and is expected to enter Mars orbit by February 2021, which also marks the 50th anniversary of the unification of the UAE, an alliance of seven emirates.

- While the objective of the Mars mission is to provide a comprehensive image of the weather dynamics in the Red Planet’s atmosphere, the probe is a foundation for a much bigger goal - building a human settlement on Mars within the next 100 years.

**UK bans companies from sourcing 5G equipment from Huawei**

- The United Kingdom has imposed a ban on its telecom companies from sourcing 5G equipment from Chinese telecom company Huawei. The announcement was made by UK’s Digital Secretary Oliver Dowden after a meeting chaired by UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

- UK’s Digital Secretary informed the British parliament that from the end of this year, telecom providers must not buy any 5G equipment from Huawei. Under the new guideline, the British telecom operators will be required to remove all 5G-related equipment, supplied by Huawei, from their infrastructure by 2027.

**Tunisia’s Prime Minister Elyes Fakhfakh resigns**

- Prime Minister of Tunisia, Elyes Fakhfakh has submitted his resignation to the President of Tunisia.

- His resignation has come after a campaign to oust him in a vote of no confidence gathered momentum and to avoid more conflicts between state institutions in the country.

**Singapore enters into recession, GDP falls by 41.2 percent**

- Singapore has entered into the phase of economic recession after the country’s GDP contracted by around 41.2 percent in last 3 months.

- The extended C-19 amid has adversely impacted the economy of the nation. The announcement was made by Ministry of Trade and Industry of Singapore.

**Russia first nation to complete clinical trials of vaccine**

- Russia has successfully completed the human trials of Chinese virus vaccine. With this, Russia has become the first country to complete the trials of C-19 vaccine.

- The volunteers who took part in the trials will be discharged soon. The trials were aimed at showing the safety of vaccine for human health.

**Andrzej Duda wins Poland’s presidential election**

- Andrzej Duda has been re-elected as the President of Poland. He won the presidential elections recently held in Poland after winning 51.21% of the votes, defeating the opposition candidate, liberal Warsaw Mayor Rafal Trzaskowski who got 48.79% votes. Voter turnout was a record high at 68.12 percent.
Maldives & Sri Lanka eliminate measles & rubella, ahead of 2023 target

- According to the World Health Organisation’s (WHO), South-East Asian Region (SEAR) office, Maldives and Sri Lanka were verified for having eliminated measles and rubella.
- Now, Maldives and Sri Lanka are the first two countries in the WHO South-East Asia Region to achieve measles and rubella elimination ahead of the 2023 target.
- The Maldives reported last endemic case of measles in 2009 and of rubella in October 2015, while Sri Lanka reported last endemic case of measles in May 2016 and of rubella in March 2017.

The US formally announced its withdrawal from the World Health Organization

- The United States has formalized to withdraw from the World Health Organization (WHO). The actual project of disentangling the U.S. from WHO began on July 6, 2020, with a letter signed by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. It will take one year to go into effect.
- In April, the US stopped funding to WHO as the Trump administration reviewed the ties.

Jean Castex appointed as Prime Minister of France

- Jean Castex has been appointed as the new Prime Minister of France. The appointment of Jean Castex as the new french PM was made by the french President Emmanuel Macron.
- He replaced the former french Prime Minister Edouard Philippe who resigned from the post ahead of a government reshuffle.

Israel launches a new spy satellite

- Israel’s Defence Ministry announced on July 6, 2020 that it has successfully launched a new spy satellite. The satellite is expected to serve as an additional tool to keep tabs on many threats across the region.
- The spy satellite, “Ofek 16” will join other Israeli spy satellites that have been launched in the past two decades.
- The satellites are being used to monitor any threats on the state of Israel, including arch-enemy Iran.

French Prime Minister Edouard Philippe resigns

- French Prime Minister Edouard Philippe has resigned from his post ahead of a government reshuffle by President Emmanuel Macron.
- As per the announcement made by the French Presidency, Edouard Philippe will handle the government affairs until a new cabinet would be named.

Russians approve for new constitutional reforms, Vladimir Putin may stay Russia’s President till 2036

- Russians have approved the constitutional changes on July 1, 2020, which were proposed by President Vladimir Putin led Russian government. These changes may allow President Putin to stay in power for another 16 years, till 2036.
Russia went to poll for a nationwide referendum on newly proposed constitutional reforms.

**FCC designates 2 Chinese companies as National Security Threats**
- The US Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has designated two Chinese companies - Huawei Technologies and ZTE Corporation as national security threats.
- FCC Chairman Ajit Pai stated that both Huawei and ZTE have close ties with Chinese Communist Party and China’s military apparatus. He stated that the US government will not allow the Chinese Communist Party to exploit vulnerabilities in US communications networks.
- The agency is considering banning these Chinese telephone companies from entering the US market. As per the US, Huawei’s equipment could be used by China for spying.

**China passes national security law for Hong Kong**
- China has passed the controversial Hong Kong National Security Law. The law will come into effect from July 1, 2020 and carries maximum penalty of life term in jail. The law has been passed on the day that is commemorated as 23rd anniversary of the day when the British passed Hong Kong to China.
- Earlier, the law received unanimous approval of National People's Congress Standing Committee.

**NATIONAL NEWS**

**Govt establishes authority to protect and enforce consumer rights**
- The government has set up the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA), under Consumer Protection Act, 2019 with the objective to promote, protect and enforce the rights of consumers.
- The CCPA will begin its functioning in the premises of Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA). Smt. Nidhi Khare, the Additional Secretary in the Department of Consumer Affairs, has been appointed as the Chief Commissioner of CCPA.
- The CCPA has been set up under the section 10 of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, which came into force on 20 July, 2020.

**NITI Aayog, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation launch AIM iCREST incubator program**
- NITI Aayog’s Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), has launched AIM iCREST, a first of its kind initiative, for advancing innovation to enable the incubation ecosystem, at scale in India. AIMiCREST is an Incubator Capabilities enhancement program for a Robust Ecosystem focused on creating high performing Startups.
- AIM has collaborated with Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Wadhwani Foundation, which will lend credible support and expertise in the entrepreneurship and innovation space.
- Under the initiative, the AIM’s incubators are set to be upscaled and provided requisite support to foster the incubation enterprise economy, that will help them to significantly
enhance their performance.

**Green-Ag project launched in Mizoram**
- Green-Ag, a project funded by Global Environment Facility (GEF), which aims to catalyze sustainable transformation of Indian agriculture sector without compromising the country’s food security and farmers’ income, has been launched in Mizoram.
- In Mizoram, the project will be implemented in Dampa Tiger Reserve in west Mizoram’s Mamit district and Thorangtlang Wildlife Sanctuary in Lunglei district in the southern part of the state covering more than 30 villages.
- Mizoram is among five Indian states where the project will be implemented. The other four states are Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand.

**HRD Ministry to be renamed as Ministry of Education**
- The Ministry of Human Resource and Development (MHRD) has been renamed as Ministry of Education. The decision was taken during a cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister.
- The HRD Ministry is currently headed by Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank. The name change was a key recommendation of the draft New Education Policy. The HRD ministry name was adopted in 1985.

**Union Cabinet Approves National Education Policy 2020**
- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister has approved the National Education Policy 2020. The recently approved National Education Policy 2020 will replace the thirty-four year old National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986.
- The National Education Policy 2020 comprises major reforms in the higher education sector including a target of 50% gross enrollment ratio by 2035 and a provision for multiple entry and exit.
- It is aligned to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and is based on the foundational pillars of Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability and Accountability.
- It seeks to transform India into a vibrant knowledge society and global knowledge superpower by making both school and college education more holistic, flexible & multidisciplinary, as per the requirements of 21st century.

**Major Reforms**
- Enrollment: 50% gross enrollment ratio by 2035.
- UGC-AICTE merged: The cabinet has approved merger of the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and University Grants Commission.
- Flexibility of Subjects: Holistic and Multidisciplinary Education
- Multiple entry/ exit
  - UG Programme- 3 or 4 years
  - PG Programme- 1 or 2 years
  - Integrated 5 year Bachelor’s/Master’s
  - M Phil to be discontinued
- Credit Transfer and Academic Bank of Credits
- HEIs: Research Intensive/ Teaching Intensive Universities and Autonomous Degree
Granting Colleges
- Model Multidisciplinary Education and Research University (MERU)
- Graded Autonomy- Under this, graded academic, administrative and financial autonomy will be given to colleges, on the basis of the status of their accreditation. There are over 45,000 affiliated colleges in the country.

Five Rafale Fighter Jets land in India at Ambala air base
- A fleet of five French-manufactured Rafale multi-role combat jets arrived in India. Rafale Jets landed at the Ambala Air Force base after covering a distance of 7,000 km from the Merignac airbase in French port city of Bordeaux.
- The fleet, which comprises three single seater and two twin seater aircraft, would be inducted into the IAF as part of its Ambala-based No 17 Squadron, also known as the ‘Golden Arrows’. The addition of these fighter jets is expected to transform the capabilities of Air Force.

MoES-Knowledge Resource Centre Network launched
- Ministry of Earth Sciences has launched the “MoES-Knowledge Resource Centre Network (KRCNet)” under the Digital India initiative of Government of India. MoES has transformed the traditional libraries of the MoES system into a top-notch Knowledge Resource Centres (KRC). These KRCs will be linked with each other and integrated into the KRCNet portal. This portal would be a single point entry to the intellectual world of Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES).

DRDO launched Dare to Dream 2.0 contest for innovators and startups
- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has launched its innovation contest ‘Dare to Dream 2.0’ on 27 July 2020, the 5th death anniversary of former President and noted scientist Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam.
- The scheme has been aimed for emerging technologies to promote the individuals & startups for innovation in defence and aerospace technologies in India.

Centre to go ahead with disinvestment of 23 PSUs cleared by the cabinet
- Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman announced on July 27 that the central government has been working on completing the stake sale process of about 23 public sector companies whose disinvestment has been cleared by the cabinet.
- For the fiscal year, 2020-21, the central government has set a disinvestment target of Rs. 2.10 lakh crore. Out of this, Rs. 1.20 lakh crore will come from the disinvestment of PSUs and another Rs. 90,000 crores from the stake sale in financial institutions.
- The Union Minister also mentioned that she will soon meet small finance firms and the non-banking finance companies (NBFCs) in order to review the credit being extended by them to businesses.
- The central government as part of the Atmanirbhar Package had announced opening up of all the sectors for private participation. In those sectors which will be called strategic, the private will be allowed to come in but the public sectors will be limited to a maximum of 4 units.
BIS-Care mobile app launched
- The Consumer Affairs Minister Ram Vilas Paswan launched the Bureau of Indian Standard's (BIS) Mobile App BIS-Care on July 28, 2020. The Consumer Affairs Minister launched three portals on Standardization, Conformity Assessment and Training of e-BIS.
- The BIS-Care mobile app can be operated on any Android phone. Consumers will be able to check the authenticity of the ISI-marked and hallmarked products through this Application.
- The consumers can also lodge complaints using the app. The government has taken several steps to protect the interests of consumers in the country. Certification and surveillance are important aspects of BIS functioning.

IMD launches first weather app ‘Mausam’ for general public
- The Ministry of Earth Sciences has launched a Mobile app ‘Mausam’ to provide all current weather information and forecasts, among other warnings. This is the first app launched by the 145-year-old India Meteorological Department (IMD) that is meant for general public to communicate weather forecasts in a simple manner with no technical jargon.
- The mobile application, Mausam, has been designed and developed jointly by the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), Hyderabad and the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune.
- IMD already has another app, Meghdoot, meant only for farmers and those involved in agriculture.

India further bans 47 Chinese apps
- Indian Government has further banned 47 more Chinese apps in addition to earlier banned 59 apps. These 47 apps were like clones of the apps banned earlier by the government.
- The decision to ban the app was taken by Union Telecom Ministry. The list of all the banned Chinese apps will be released by government soon.
- The banned clone apps include TiktokLite, HeloLite, SHAREitLite, BIGO LIVE Lite and VFY Lite.

Delhi government launches portal “Rozgar Bazar”
- The Delhi state government has launched a portal named as “Rozgar Bazar”, to enable better coordination between job seekers and employers in the national capital. The announcement was made by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on July 27, 2020.
- The Chief Minister stated that the construction work has begun in the capital but workers are missing and the employees who lost their jobs are not able to find new ones.
- Hence, the Delhi government has decided to launch a job portal- jobs.delhi.gov.in- to provide a common platform for both job seekers and employers seeking to hire
India to take up clinical trials of OXFORD Vaccine COVISHIELD
- University of Oxford and AstraZeneca have shown successful clinical trials on the C-19 vaccine, COVISHIELD. Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) also announced that it will conduct clinical trials of the C-19 vaccine, COVISHIELD.
- World Health Organization (WHO) stated that the first use of the vaccine is expected in early 2021. Serum Institute of India (SII) has sought permission from the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) to conduct phases II/III human clinical trials of the potential vaccine.

India’s first honey testing laboratory set up at NDDB in Anand district of Gujarat
- India’s first dedicated honey testing laboratory has been set up at the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) in Anand district of Gujarat.
- The ‘World Class State of Art Honey Testing Laboratory’ was inaugurated virtually by Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar on 24 July 2020, with the aim to boost exports and ensure better rates to farmers.
- The facility has been established by NDDB with support of National Bee Board (NBB). The new lab will test honey as per the norms specified by the food safety regulator FSSAI.

J&K LG announces launch of ‘Macadamisation Program’
- Lieutenant Governor, Girish Chandra Murmu has announced the launch of a ‘Macadamisation Program’ for the improvement of roads across Jammu and Kashmir.
- Murmu has approved a program for 100 percent Macadamisation of all roads in the Union Territory including 11,000 km of fair-weather roads.

Indian Railways Constructing World’s first electrified double-stack container tunnel near Haryana
- The Indian Railways is constructing the world’s first electrified double-stack container tunnel, between the Aravalli hills, on the railway’s Western Dedicated Freight Corridor near Haryana’s Sohna.
- The D-shaped tunnel is one of the biggest Railway tunnels in India in terms of cross-sectional area, measuring 150 square metres. One end of the tunnel is near Rewari while the other end of the tunnel is at Dadri. The tunnel connects the Mewat and Gurugram district of Haryana.
- Once operational, a double-stack container goods train will be able to run at a speed of more than 100 km from within this one-km-tunnel. The Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India Limited (DFCCIL) is the implementing agency of the project.

PM Modi addresses India Ideas Summit 2020 organised by USIBC
- The India Ideas Summit was organised on 21-22 July 2020 by the US-India Business Council (USIBC). The theme for 2020 India Idea Summit was ‘Building a Better Future’.
- 2020 marks the 45th anniversary of the formation of the US-India Business Council.
Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually delivered a keynote address at the India Ideas Summit on 22 July 2020.

- The Prime Minister has also invited American firms to invest in sectors like healthcare, energy, infrastructure, civil aviation, defence, finance and insurance, space, among others.

**Adani Ports signs up for Science-Based Targets initiative**

- Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd (APSEZ) has become the first Indian port to sign the Science-Based Targets initiative (SBTi). After signing up for the SBTi, APSEZ has committed to set up science-based emissions reduction targets across their entire value chain.
- These targets would be consistent with keeping global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

**Union Minister Nitin Gadkari launches ‘RestartIndia’ advisory platform for MSME sector**

- The Union Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSMEs), Shri Nitin Gadkari launched a mentoring platform ‘www.restartindia.in’, on 23 July 2020, with the main objective to help the sector in restarting businesses across the country.
- This website has been developed jointly by Muthoot Fincorp and INKtalks as an open platform for advisory support, and is in sync with Atmanirbhar project.
- The objective of Restart India is to raise the self-confidence primarily of small businesses by creating an environment for the re-establishment and progress of their businesses.

**Largest Solar Power Plant of Indian Navy Commissioned**

- Vice Admiral Anil Kumar Chawla, Commanding-in-Chief of Southern Naval Command commissioned a 3 MW Solar Power Plant at the Indian Naval Academy, Ezhimala on July 22, 2020 through virtual conferencing.
- The solar plant is Indian Navy’s largest plant and has an estimated life of 25 years. Its launch is in line with the centre’s initiative of ‘National Solar Mission’ to achieve 100GW of solar power by 2022.
- All components of the plant were indigenously sourced including 9180 highly efficient monocrystalline solar panels employing the latest technology.

**Kakrapar Atomic Power Project (KAPP-3) Gujarat attains its first criticality**

- The Unit 3 of the Kakrapar Atomic Power Project (KAPP-3) in Gujarat achieved its ‘first criticality’ at 9.36 am on 22 July 2020.
- KAPP-3 is India’s first 700 MWe (megawatt electric) Pressurised Heavy Water Reactor (PHWR) as well as biggest indigenously developed variant of the Pressurised Heavy Water Reactor (PHWR).
- A nuclear reactor attains criticality when every nuclear fission event releases a sufficient number of neutrons to sustain an ongoing series of reactions or a self-sustaining chain reaction.
Government grants permission for permanent commission of women in Indian Army
- Central government has given its approval for permanent commission of women officers in Indian Army, empowering women to carry out larger roles in the armed force.
- The Government order specifies that the grant of permanent commission will be available for Short Service Commissioned (SSC) female officers in all 10 streams of the army.
- It will direct the Indian Army to work on its existing policies which will bring an equilibrium in the service conditions for both the female and male officers.

Home Minister to launch “Vriksharopan Abhiyan” in New Delhi
- “Vriksharopan Abhiyan” will be launched by the Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah in New Delhi. Ministry of Coal will organize the abhiyan along with all Coal/Lignite PSUs.
- During the launch of “Vriksharopan Abhiyan”, the Union Home Minister will also inaugurate and lay the foundation stone of 6 Ecoparks/Tourism sites which will offer avenues for recreation, adventure, water sport, bird watching etc for the people residing in nearby area.
- Under the “Vriksharopan Abhiyan”, large scale plantation would be carried out in mines, colonies, offices and other suitable areas of Coal/Lignite PSUs in order to promote “plantation by the society”.

Indian Army gets ‘Bharat’ drones
- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has provided drones named ‘Bharat’ to the Indian Army. The indigenously developed drones are sent in order to provide accurate surveillance along the Line of Actual Control in high altitude and mountainous terrains of Eastern Ladakh.
- It can also detect humans who are hidden in deep forests. Bharat drones are equipped with artificial intelligence which helps the drone to detect friends from foes and helps take any action accordingly.
- It has been made in a way that ensures its survival in extreme cold weather temperatures. Bharat Drones a series of drones that are one of the world’s lightest and agile drone.

India successfully tests fires ATGM “Dhruvastra”
- The trials of Helicopter-launched Nag Missile anti-tank guided missile ‘Dhruvastra’ were conducted on July 15-16 at the Integrated Test Range (ITR) in Balasore, Odisha. The missile was earlier named as HELINA.
- ‘Dhruvastra’ is an anti-tank guided missile (ATGM) which has been developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). It is a helicopter version of ‘Nag Helina’.

Union Power Minister inaugurated India's first of its kind public EV Charging Plaza
- Union Minister for Power, New & Renewable Energy, Shri R.K Singh, inaugurated India’s first public Electric Vehicle (EV) charging plaza at Chelmsford Club in New Delhi
on 20 July 2020. The initiatives focus on energy efficiency, promoting e-mobility, and improving indoor air quality.

- RAISE (Retrofit of Air-conditioning to improve Indoor Air Quality for Safety and Efficiency) is a joint initiative of Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) MAITREE programme.

**Odisha Government Includes Transgender Community under Madhu Babu Pension Yojana**

- The official notification of The Department of Social security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SSEPD) informed that, Odisha Government has included the transgender community under MadhuBabu Pension Yojana (MBPY), a social security scheme by amending to Rule 6 of the Madhu Babu Pension Rules 2008.
- In addition to transgenders women, those who are fighting divorce cases in courts are also included.
- Under this scheme, about 6,000 transgenders will receive Rs. 500, Rs. 700 and Rs. 900 per month as a pension under various categories depending on their age.

**Consumer Protection Act, 2019 Comes into Force from 20 July 2020**

- The Consumer Protection Act, 2019 has come into force from July 20, 2020, as the Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Ram Vilas Paswan stated that the new law will empower the consumers.
- The new law will protect the rights of the consumers through its notified rules and provisions like consumer disputes redressal commissions, consumer protection councils, product liability, mediation, and punishment for the manufacture or sale of products that contain adulterant goods.

**Salient Features of Consumer Protection Act 2019**

- Establishment of Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) to promote, protect and enforce the rights of consumers.
- Establishment of Consumer Protection Councils
- Simplified Dispute Resolution Process
- Ease of approaching Consumer Commissions
- Filing from place of residence/work
- Videoconferencing for hearing
- No fee for filing cases upto Rs. 5 lakh
- Alternate Dispute Resolution mechanism of Mediation
- Introduction to the concept of Product Liability
- A manufacturer or product service provider or product seller to be responsible to compensate for injury or damage caused by defective product or deficiency in services
- Rules on e-commerce and direct selling
- Penalty for adulteration of products/spurious goods

**AIIMS Delhi begins registration for conducting human trials of COVAXIN**

- AIIMS Delhi has begun the registration process for conducting human trials of the indigenously developed Chinese virus vaccine - COVAXIN
AIIMS-Delhi is one of the 12 institutes chosen by the Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR) to conduct phase I and phase II human trials of COVAXIN. The phase I human trials is likely to involve around 375 volunteers, among whom about 100 would be from AIIMs.

Indian direct selling industry records USD 2.477 bn sales in 2019, ranked 15th globally

In accordance with the report of “The Global Direct Selling – 2019 Retail Sales” by the World Federation of Direct Selling Associations (WFDSA), India was ranked 15th in global direct selling industry with sales of USD 2.477 billion in 2019.

This has shown a growth of 12.1% in comparison to the 19th rank in 2018. The ranking has been topped by the United States (US) which contributed 20% of the global direct selling industry with sales of USD 35.21 billion, followed by China with 13% contribution at 2nd rank, and Korea and Germany with 10% contribution each at 3rd position.

In terms of the number of direct sellers, India has been ranked at 6th position, proving employment to 57.50 lakh people. In Asia Pacific region, India was ranked 4th which has been topped by Australia and followed by China and Hong Kong at 2nd and 3rd rank.

ICAT launches an e-portal “ASPIRE”

An e-Portal named “Automobile Solutions Portal for Industry, Research & Education (ASPIRE)” has been launched by the International Centre for Automotive Technology (ICAT). The portal can be accessed through https://aspire.icat.in.

The portal has been launched to improve the technological capability of Indian automotive sector with the help of exchange of knowledge & expertise, to make them self-reliant and to enable the growth of automobile sector including overall socio-economic progress of the country.

The portal is a part of strategy devised by the Department of Heavy Industry (DHI), Government of India, under the leadership of Secretary, Heavy Industries, to promote innovation, R&D and product development in India.

All capitals cities of North-Eastern states to be connected with rail network by 2023

The Railway Board Chairman VK Yadav has announced that Indian Railways has set the target to connect the capital cities of all the North-Eastern states of India to the rail network by 2023.

In the present time, except Sikkim, all North-Eastern states have connectivity to the rail network. The capitals of Assam, Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh are already connected to the railway network.

The capital connectivity work is in progress in Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland and Meghalaya. Manipur will be connected in March 2022, Mizoram in March 2023, Nagaland in March 2023, Meghalaya in March 2022 and Sikkim in December 2022.

Mobile App of “PM Street Vendor Atma Nirbhar Nidhi” launched

The mobile application of PM Street Vendor’s Atma Nirbhar Nidhi (PM SVNidhi) has
been launched. It aims to offer user friendly digital interface to the Lending Institutions (LIs) as well as to their field functionaries in order to source and process loan applications to the street vendors under the scheme.

- The launch of the mobile app is a step towards boosting the use of digital technology and will ensure maximum coverage of the scheme.
- The mobile app will promote paper-less digital accessing of micro-credit facilities by the Street Vendors and will give impetus to the implementation strategy of the PM SVA Nidhi scheme.

**Uttarakhand govt to generate electricity from waste**

- The Uttarakhand government has decided to convert waste generated in the state to electricity under an initiative titled ‘Waste to Energy’.
- According to Uttarakhand Environment Protection and Pollution Control Board (UEPPCB), this waste can generate up to 5 megawatts of electricity and curb pollution.
- The scheme also aims to solve the problem of unavailability of landfills to dispose of the solid waste across the hill state with has 10 out if 13 districts as hill areas.

**India lifted record 273 million out of poverty in 10 years, says UN report**

- About 273 million Indians were lifted out of multidimensional poverty, over a period of 10 years, between 2005-2006 and 2015-2016, according to a study conducted by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme.
- The study titled ‘Charting pathways out of multidimensional poverty: Achieving the SDGs’ was based on a global multidimensional poverty index (MPI) which annually measures the complexities of poor people’s lives, individually and collectively.
- The report noted that, India has recorded the largest reduction in the number of people living in poverty, among the 75 countries studied in MPI.

**PM Modi to address ECOSOC on 75th anniversary of UN**

- PM Narendra Modi will be virtually addressing the session of Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) on 17th July on the occasion of 75th anniversary of the United Nations.
- This will be PM Modi’s first speech at the UN after being elected to the UN Security Council. Besides the Prime Minister, Norway PM Erna Solberg and UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres will also be addressing the event.
- The theme of the High-Level Segment which is held annually by ECOSOC is “Multilateralism after C-19: What kind of UN do we need at the 75th anniversary”.

**DRDO developed fully indigenous P7 Heavy Drop System for IL 76 aircraft**

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has developed the P7 Heavy Drop System which is capable of para dropping military stores up to 7-ton weight class from IL 76 aircraft.
- The design of this fully indigenous system has been developed by Aerial Delivery Research and Development Establishment (ADRDE), a pioneer Research & Development
(R&D) lab of DRDO based in Agra, Uttar Pradesh (UP).

- It’s platform system manufactured by L&T (Larsen & Toubro) while parachutes manufactured by Ordnance Factory.

**Indian Railways first cable-stayed bridge ‘AnjiKhad Bridge’ being set up in Jammu & Kashmir**

- India’s first cable-stayed railway bridge ‘AnjiKhad bridge ‘is being constructed by the Indian Railways’ in Jammu & Kashmir to connect Katra and Reasi Section of Jammu–Baramulla line.
- The Rs. 458 crore railway bridge is being developed by Konkan Railway Corporation Limited, a Government of India undertaking.
- The total length of the AnjiKhad Bridge is 473.25 metres, standing at a height of 331 metres above the Chenab river bed.

**UNICEF India Partners with FICCI to launch #Reimagine Campaign**

- The UNICEF INDIA has entered into partnership with the Socio Economic Development Foundation (SEDF) of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), to co-develop #Reimagine Campaign.
- The #Reimagine Campaign of UNICEF aims to support the most vulnerable populations and children during the C-19 response and its after-math in India.

**IIT Kanpur develops UV sanitizing device ‘SHUDH’ to disinfect room in 15 mins**

- A team of engineers at IIT Kanpur has developed an Ultraviolet (UV) sanitizing product named SHUDH, which is capable to disinfect a 10 sqft room in about 15 minutes.
- SHUDH stands for Smartphone operated Handy Ultraviolet Disinfection Helper. It has been jointly developed by J. Ramkumar, Amandeep Singh and ShivamSachan.
- SHUDH has six UV lights of 15 Watts each that can be individually monitored from a distance and can be rotated up to 360 degrees. Users can use the number of lights based upon the size of the room.

**India launches World’s Most Affordable C-19 kit “COROSURE”**

- The Union Minister of Human Resource and Development Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishnak launched world’s most affordable C-19 kit. The kit was developed by IIT Delhi.
- The test called “COROSURE” has been billed as the world’s most affordable RT-PCR based C-19 diagnostic kit. The base price of the kit is Rs 399.

**DCGI approves India’s 1st homemade Pneumonia vaccine**

- India’s first fully indigenously developed Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Conjugate Vaccine (Pneumonia vaccine) has received the approval from Drug Controller General of India (DCGI).
- It will be utilized for active immunization against invasive disease and pneumonia caused by “Streptococcus pneumonia” among infants.
Madhya Pradesh Tops in the Implementation of PM SVANidhi
- Madhya Pradesh has topped in implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Street Vendors AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) by sanctioning an interest-free loan of around Rs 15.50 crore to 15,500 street vendors in the state.
- PM SVANidhi is a central sector scheme to help and formalize the street vendors involved in small businesses across the country. The scheme is funded by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

DRDO develops P7 Heavy Drop System
- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has developed P7 Heavy Drop System that is capable of para dropping military stores up to 7-ton weight class from IL 76 aircraft.
- The system is fully indigenous and is being manufactured by L&T who makes the platform system, parachutes manufactured by Ordnance Factory.

Government to increase public health expenditure to 2.5% of GDP by 2025
- The Union Health Ministry has called for increased expenditure on public health. Union Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan highlighted during a meeting with the 15th Finance Commission that the government aims to gradually increase the public health expenditure to 2.5 percent of the nation’s GDP by 2025.
- The Minister asserted that the outlay for primary health expenditure will also be made nearly 2/3rd of the total public health expenditure in the country. The Health Minister further emphasized on the importance of increasing the state’s health sector spending to nearly 8 percent of their total budget.
- The Health Ministry has also revised its requirement of around 4.9 lakh crores to 6.04 lakh crores in the wake of the C-19. The Ministry has asked for additional resources for the states that will be utilized for the achievement of the National Health Policy targets.

Iran drops India from Chabahar rail project
- Iran has dropped India from Chabahar rail project which comprises rail line from Chabahar port to Zahedan, along the border with Afghanistan. The Iranian government cited delays from the Indian side in funding and starting the project, for its decision of dropping India from the project.
- Now, Iranian Railways will go ahead without India’s assistance and utilize around $400 million from the Iranian National Development Fund.

NITI Aayog presents India’s second Voluntary National Review at UN’s High-Level Political Forum
- NITI Aayog presented India’s second Voluntary National Review (VNR) at the United Nations High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development, 2020. It is organised annually in July for eight days under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the UN.
- The India VNR 2020 report was titled Decade of Action: Taking SDGs from Global to
The report was presented by Dr Rajiv Kumar, Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog.

- The HLPF is the foremost international platform for countries to present its follow-up and review of progress on achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

**United States remains India’s top trading partner for 2nd consecutive year in 2019-20**

- According to the data of the Union Ministry of Commerce, United States remained India’s top trading partner for the second consecutive fiscal in 2019-20. The recently released data shows increasing economic ties between the two nations.
- As per the data, the bilateral trade between the US and India has increased from $87.96 billion in 2018-19 to $88.75 billion in the fiscal year 2019-20. China was India’s top trading partner since 2013-14 to 2017-18.

**Chhattisgarh Government organises India’s first e-Lok Adalat**

- Chhattisgarh government has organised the first e-LokAdalat of India amid the C-19 C-19. The virtual hearings were conducted through video conferencing under the e-Lok Adalat along with its live streaming.
- The “e-Lok Adalat” was organized by the High Court and Chhattisgarh State Legal Services Authority and was inaugurated by P R Ramchandra Menon, the Chief Justice of Chhattisgarh High Court.

**NITI Aayog Atal Innovation Mission launches ATL App Development Module for school children**

- The Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) of NITI Aayog has launched the ATL App Development Module for school children across the country, in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s vision of AtmaNirbhar Bharat.
- The ATL App is an online course by AIM and is completely Free. The course has been jointly developed by AIM and Indian startup, Plezmo.
- The innovative course will have six project-based learning modules and online mentoring sessions to enable the young innovators learn how to build mobile apps in various Indian languages and showcase their talent.

**All India Tiger Census 2018 sets new Guinness World Record for largest camera-trap wildlife survey**

- The fourth edition of the All India Tiger Estimation 2018 has created the Guinness World Record for being the world’s largest camera trap wildlife survey.
- The All India Tiger Estimation is conducted every four year since 2006, by the National Tiger Conservation Authority with technical support from the Wildlife Institute of India.
- These cameras surveyed an effective area of 121,337 square kilometres (46,848 square miles). A total of 34,858,623 photographs of wildlife were captured by the 26,838 camera traps installed. Of the total photographs 76,651 were tigers and 51,777 were leopards while the remaining were other native fauna.
White Paper launched for Recommendations on Immediate Technology and Policy Impetus to Make India ATMANIRBHAR

- At a virtual event, White Papers prepared by the Technology Information, Forecasting and Assessment Council (TIFAC) was launched by Dr. Harsh Vardhan (Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare) on 10th July 2020.
- India has set the target of achieving ‘Atmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India)’ by adopting appropriate technology and policy reforms that will provide a thrust to the ‘Make in India’ initiative in the post-C-19 era.
- The White Papers are on:
  1. a) Focused Interventions for Make in India: Post C-19.
  2. b) Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients: Status, Issues, Technology Readiness and Challenges

Govt launches AI-based ASEEM digital platform

- The Ministry of Skilled Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) on July 10 launched Aatamanirbhar Skilled Employee Employer Mapping (ASEEM) digital portal which will help skilled people find sustainable livelihood opportunities.
- The step will improve the information flow and will bridge the demand-supply gap in the skilled workforce market. The Artificial Intelligence (AI) based system apart from recruiting the skilled workforce will also help in exploring job opportunities.
- ASEEM is developed and managed by National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) in collaboration with the Bangalore based company, Betterplace which specializes in blue-collar employee management.

Asia’s Largest and World’s Second Largest Data Centre Inaugurated In Mumbai

- Union Minister for Communications, Electronics and IT, Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad and Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray jointly inaugurated the second-largest Tier IV data centre of the world in Mumbai.
- The world-class ‘Yotta NM1 data centre’ building has been set up at Mumbai’s Panvel data center park, to cater to the needs of engineering and real estate businesses.
- It is the largest of its kind data centre in India and Asia, as well as the second largest in the world. The Yotta NM1 facility has been developed and owned by the Hiranandani Group through its fully owned subsidiary, the Yotta Infrastructure Group. The Yotta NM1 offers 7200 racks and 50MW of power with 48 hour backup.

UP Cabinet approves State Startup Policy 2020

- Uttar Pradesh cabinet has approved the UP Startup Policy 2020 with an aim to invite new business ideas in the state. The policy aims to set up 100 incubators in all 75 districts.
- It is expected to generate over 1.5 lakh employment opportunities including around 50,000 direct jobs in the state. The cabinet meeting was chaired by CM Yogi Adityanath.
Tamil Nadu tops market borrowings among States
- According to data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Tamil Nadu has raised Rs. 30,500 crores in the fiscal 2020-21 and has topped market borrowings among States in the country.
- Tamil Nadu, which has accounted for 17% of the borrowings done through the issue of bonds (known as state development loans), has been followed by Maharashtra Rs. 25,500 crores (14%), Andhra Pradesh Rs. 17,000 crores (9%) and Rajasthan Rs. 17,000 crores (9%).

India Global Week 2020 to start from 9 July
- PM Narendra Modi will be addressing the audience worldwide on July 9 to mark the start of India Global Week 2020. The event will be held for three days during July 9 - July 11 with main focus on Trade and Investment prospects in India.
- The event will be held virtually and is expected to be attended by 5000 people.

Prakash Javadekar Participated in 4th edition of the Ministerial on Climate Action
- The 4th edition of international meeting named “Ministerial on Climate Action (MoCA)” was held on July 7, 2020, which was co-chaired by European Union (EU), China and Canada. From India, Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Prakash Javadekar participated in the meet.
- This meet was held virtually for the first time in view of the ongoing C-19. MoCA is held annually since 2017. Developed nations’ Target of USD 1m funding by 2020 for developing nations is not achieved yet.

Himachal Pradesh becomes first state with LPG connections in all households
- Himachal Pradesh has become the first state where all the households have LPG gas connections. The announcement regarding this was made by HP Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur.
- The gas connections were provided for free to women in the state. Over 1.35 lakh families have been benefitted under Pradhan Mantri Ujjawala Yojana in the state.

PM Modi to launch Asia’s largest Solar Power Plant
- PM Narendra Modi will on July 10, 2020 inaugurate the Asia’s largest solar power plant at Rewa district in Madhya Pradesh. PM Modi will dedicate 750 MW plant to the nation through the means of video conferencing.
- The plant is spread over 1,590 acres of land and is one of Asia's largest single-site solar power plant.

India’s 1st NPNT compliant Drone flight successfully completed
- India’s First No-Permission No-Takeoff (NPNT) compliant drone flight on the A200 Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS) has been completed successfully by Quidich Innovation Labs and Asteria Aerospace.
- This NPNT drone flight is under the Ministry of Civil Aviation MoCA& DGCA comprehensive policy on the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV), which came into
Quidich, in collaboration with the Drone Federation of India (DFI), has extended its services to Police Departments across multiple states, providing drones for crowd monitoring and surveillance operations.

Odisha Govt launches 'Balaram Yojana' to provide crop loan
- Odisha government has launched ‘Balaram Yojana’ to provide crop loans to landless farmers. Under the new scheme, the landless cultivators will get loans through joint liability groups (JLGs).
- This is a first-of-its type scheme in India, targeting landless farmers of the country. The scheme will provide agriculture credit worth Rs 1,040 crore to landless farmers of the state in the next two years.
- The scheme has been designed in collaboration with the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).

Elyments: Vice President launches first Indian social media super app
- Honorable Vice President of India, Shri M Venkaiah Naidu, launched an indigenous social media app ‘Elyments’ on 5th July 2020, through video conferencing.
- Elyments is a first Made-in-India social media super-app, developed by Bengaluru-based software company, Sumeru Software Solutions Pvt Ltd, in close competition with similar platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram.
- India has more than 500 million social media users, but most of these social media platforms are owned by companies outside India, which creates doubt regarding the privacy of data and data ownership.

Hardeep Singh Puri launched the 6th edition of the annual cleanliness survey of urban India 2021 Swachh Survekshan
- The Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA) Shri Hardeep Singh Puri launched the sixth edition of the annual cleanliness survey of urban India, the toolkit for Swachh Survekshan 2021.
- The survey was conducted by MoHUA.

Maharashtra Government and UKIBC signs MoU
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed virtually on 4th July 2020 between the non-profit organization UKIBC- UK India Business Council and the MIDC-Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation. MIDC is the Maharashtra Government’s premier agency for industrial infrastructure development.
- The MoU will help in strengthening the collaboration of Maharashtra Government with the businesses in the United Kingdom (UK), also it will proactively improve the business environment in the state.

PM Modi launches Atmanirbhar Bharat App Innovation Challenge
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on July 4 launched the ‘Atmanirbhar Bharat App Innovation Challenge’ to help the local developers to create indigenous apps.
The innovation challenge aims at encouraging tech & startup communities to create world-class Made in India Apps. Under the challenge, innovators are invited to develop apps in eight categories.

The App innovation challenge has been launched in the combined partnership of the Ministry of Electronics & IT and Atal Innovation Mission-Niti Aayog.

IIT Kanpur develops virtual classroom teaching setup ‘Mobile Masterjee’

- A team of engineers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kanpur has developed an innovative classroom-to-home teaching setup titled ‘Mobile Masterjee’, to overcome the disruption in normal classroom teaching caused due to C-19,
- The device is targeted at helping the rural schools to overcome the teaching and learning challenges posed by the C-19,
- This virtual classroom system has been designed to record the lectures/instructions by the teachers using smartphones.

Union HRD Minister launches “Drug Discovery Hackathon 2020”

- “Drug Discovery Hackathon” has been launched by the Union Minister for Human Resource Development Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’ and Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare and Ministry of Science and Technology Dr. Harsh Vardhan.
- The hackathon is a joint initiative of MHRD, AICTE and CSIR, and supported by partners such as CDAC, MyGov, Schrodinger and ChemAxon.

Government to purchase missile systems, fighter jets worth Rs 38900 crore

- The Union Defence Ministry has approved the procurement of missile systems, frontline fighter jets and other military equipment worth Rs 38,900 crore.
- With this procurement, Defence Ministry aims to boost the combat capability of the Armed Forces amid the rising tensions between India and China at LAC border.

SAP launches Global Bharat program for Indian MSMEs

- The Global Bharat program has been launched by the German technology firm SAP India. The programme has been designed to equip Indian micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) with digital technologies in order to make them globally competitive.
- SAP India will also provide MSMEs access to their enterprise resource planning (ERP) software under the Global Bharat program.

ICMR fast-tracking efforts to launch ‘COVAXIN’ for public use by 15th August

- In partnership with Hyderabad based Bharat Biotech, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has selected 12 institutes for the Phase-I and Phase–II clinical trials of the first indigenously developed C-19 vaccine BBV152 (commonly known as COVAXIN).
- After successful completion of human clinical trials, the ICMR has set a target to launch the COVAXIN for the public health uses, latest by August 15, this was reported in the media as per a letter by ICMR to the 12 selected institutes.
Health Minister launches Drug Discovery Hackathon
- Union Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan launched Drug Discovery Hackathon through video conferencing. The Union HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank also joined the launch ceremony.
- The Drug Discovery Hackathon has been launched to identify a drug to cure the C-19. The hackathon was visualised by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Kerala announces ‘Dream Kerala Project’ aimed at aiding returning expats
- The state government of Kerala decided to roll out the "Dream Kerala Project" to tap the potential and experience of those returning from foreign nations and other states after losing their jobs.
- The decision was taken during a cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on July 2, 2020. The project aims to support rehabilitation of the returning expats and the state’s overall development.

Gujarat Government launches Rs 1,369 crore “At One Click” online cash aid for MSMEs & textile industry
- Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani launched an online cash aid initiative titled "At One Click" for micro small and medium enterprises and textile industries in the state on 26 June 2020.
- The state government has announced total of Rs 1,369 crore in aid for around 13,000 MSMEs in Gujarat under the program.
- Out of the total 1,369 crore aid, Rs 768 crore have been transferred in bank accounts of 12,247 MSME units in Gujarat while Rs 601 crore aid has been given to bigger industrial units including textile industry.

Goa Govt Allocates 14,380 sqm land to set up India first Maritime Cluster
- The Government of Goa has allotted over 14,380 square metres of land at Verna industrial estate to 'Konkan Maritime Cluster' (Goa Maritime Cluster), a consortium of 49 Goan MSME units, to set up its Common Facility Centre.
- The Goa Maritime Cluster will be the first Maritime Cluster of India, providing a world-class common facility for manufacturing, design and other allied services for the shipbuilding industry.
- The project is likely to extend direct benefits to another 180 units.

Giriraj Singh launches the 1st Edition of “Matsya Sampada”
- Union Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Giriraj Singh has launched the 1st Edition newsletter “MatsyaSampada” fisheries and aquaculture published by the Department of Fisheries and the operational guidelines of Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY).
- This newsletter will be published on a quarterly basis.

PM extends “Pradhan Mantri Gareeb Kalyan Anna Yojana” till November 2020
- PM Narendra Modi on June 30, 2020 addressed the nation in the context of Unlock 2.0
that will be effective from July 1.

- Pradhan Mantri Gareeb Kalyan Anna Yojana will be extended till the end of November, an extension to cost over Rs 90 thousand crores. Over 80 cr people to get free food grain till Diwali and Chhathpooja.
- Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana, 20 crore accounts have received 31,000 crores in their Jan Dhan Accounts.
- PM urges the citizens to take the pledge of Vocal for Local and work for the betterment of the society and country at large.
- One Nation One Ration Card will be implemented on whole India. This will especially benefit those people who leave their native-place, native-state to find work in some other state.

DGCI approves Bharat Biotech’s vaccine for clinical trials

- The Drug Controller General of India (DGCI) has given its approval to the Indian vaccine manufacturer Bharat Biotech’s vaccine. Bharat Biotech can now initiate phase-I and Phase-II human clinical trials for the C-19 vaccine candidate.
- The vaccine has been developed in collaboration with the National Institute of Virology which is a part of the Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR).

Maharashtra launches largest plasma therapy trial “Project Platina”

- Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has launched the world’s largest plasma therapy trials “Project Platina” for C-19 patients. The state government has approved Rs 16.65 crore for the project from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund.
- There are 21 centres have been picked for the trial, including 17 medical colleges under the department of medical education and drugs, the government of Maharashtra and four BMC medical colleges in Mumbai.

SPORTS

Indian 4x400m relay squad’s Silver medal at 2018 Asian Games upgraded to Gold

- The silver medal which was won by the Indian 4×400 mixed relay quartet of Mohammed Anas, M.R. Poovamma, Hima Das and Arokia Rajiv at the 2018 Asian Games in Jakarta has been upgraded to gold.
- This decision was taken following the disqualification of original winners Bahrain on account of a four-year doping ban handed to Kemi Adekoya by the Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU) for failing a dope test.
- Additionally, with Adekoya’s disqualification, India’s Anu Raghavan has moved from fourth position to bronze medal position in the 400m hurdles final. Now India has become the first winner of the 4x400m mixed relay event, which was introduced in the Asian Games in 2018.

Haryana to host Khelo India Youth Games 2021

- Haryana Chief Minister, Manohar Lal Khattar, and the Union Minister of Youth Affairs
and Sports, Kiren Rijiju announced that Haryana will host the 4th edition of Khelo India Youth Games (KIYG). The Games will be held in Panchkula.

- The games are currently scheduled to take place after Tokyo Olympics.
- Haryana has a history of producing many elite athletes, such as, Bajrang Punia, Yogeshwar Dutt, Vinesh Phogat and Sakshi Malik, papa-athlete Deepak Malik, Boxer Amit Panghal and shooters Manu Bhakar, Sanjeev Rajput, Anish Bhanwala, who has represented and won medals for India at International Platform.
- Haryana has done well in all three editions of KIYG. While they came second in both 2019 and 2020 editions (200 medals in 2020 and 159 medals in 2019) Haryana won it in 2018 with 102 podium finishes.

**IPL 2020 Schedule announced: IPL to begin from September 19 & finals on November 8**

- The schedule of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2020 has been announced by IPL Chairman Brijesh Patel on July 24, 2020. As per the schedule, IPL will begin from September 19, 2020 in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The IPL finals will be held on 8th November 2020.
- The final details of the tournament will be finalised by IPL Governing Council next week.

**Ballon d’Or 2020 cancelled for first-ever time**

- Ballon d’Or will not be awarded this year due to lack of sufficient fair conditions amid C-19, announced France Football on July 20, 2020.
- France Football released an official statement, which read that the Ballon d’Or France Football will not be awarded in 2020 for the first time in its history due to lack of sufficient fair conditions under exceptional circumstances and exceptional provisions.

**ICC Men’s T20 World Cup 2020 postponed**

- The International Cricket Council (ICC) officially confirmed on July 20, 2020 that the ICC Men’s T20 World Cup to be held Australia 2020 has been postponed due to the ongoing C-19. The T20 World Cup is now likely to be held in October 2021.
- The ICC also decided to postpone two other ICC Men’s events to support the current rescheduling, including Men’s T20 World Cup 2022 and World Cup 2023.

**Lewis Hamilton wins 2020 Hungarian Grand Prix**

- Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes’ – Great Britain) won the 2020 Formula 1 Hungarian Grand Prix held on 19 July 2020. This is his straight second win of the season.
- Hungarian Grand Prix 2020 was the third race of the 2020 Formula One World Championship. Max Verstappen (Dutch-Red Bull) was second, followed by Valtteri Bottas (Mercedes- Finland) at third spot.

**2022 FIFA World Cup to be held in Qatar**

- The Federation International de Football Association announced that the 2022 World Cup is to be held in Qatar.
- The 2022 FIFA World Cup will be the first world cup to be held in Arab World and also the first in a muslim-majority country.
Indian National Team ranks 108 in the latest FIFA rankings that were released in 2019.

**Mercedes's Lewis Hamilton won Styrian Grand Prix 2020**
- Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes-Britain) has won the Styrian Grand Prix 2020 at the Red Bull Ring in Spielberg, Austria. Valtteri Bottas (Mercedes-Finland) finished second while Max Verstappen (Red Bull-Belgium) was third.
- It was the second race of the 2020 Formula One World Championship and the first running of the Styrian Grand Prix.

**Akash Become India’s 66th Grandmaster**
- The 23 year-old G. Akash from Chennai, Tamil Nadu becomes the country’s 66th Grandmaster with rating of 2495. The title was confirmed at the recent meeting of International Chess Federation (FIDE) Council
- M Pranesh, from Chennai, Tamil Nadu and Ameya Audi, from Goa earned International Master Titles.

**Valtteri Bottas wins Austrian Grand Prix 2020**
- Valtteri Bottas (Mercedes-Finland) has won the Austrian Grand Prix 2020.
- This was the first race of 2020 Formula One season and was held on 5th July 2020.
- Charles Leclerc finished second for Ferrari while McLaren’s Lando Norris came third.

**Two-time Olympic badminton champion Lin Dan retires**
- Former world number one badminton player and the two-times Olympic badminton champion from China, Lin Dan has announced his retirement from the sport.
- During his 20-year glorious national team career, he won the Olympics singles titles in Beijing in 2008 and the 2012 London Games.

**SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**NASA launches its Mars Mission; to reach Mars by February 2021**
- The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has its Mars mission named Mars Perseverance Rover 2020 on July 30. The Mars Rover aims to reach the Red Planet by the year 2021.
- The rover was launched aboard Atlas V-541 in Florida. The Mars Perseverance rover is a robot that will deploy first-ever interplanetary helicopter.

**ISRO to Launch Brazil’s Amazonia-1 Earth Observation Satellite on PSLV**
- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is set to launch the Amazonia – 1 onboard the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) as a primary payload by August 2020. Amazonia -1 is Brazil’s first satellite for Earth observation – designed, assembled and tested in Brazil.
- Amazonia – 1 will help in observing and monitoring the deforestation in the region of Amazon through the satellite images.
Google Rebrands its Social Networking App Google+ as Google Currents

- Internet search giant Google has officially relaunched its former social networking platform Google+ as Google Currents on 7th July 2020. The new app is targeted more towards businesses and enterprise users.
- The company launched Google Plus as a social network platform to compete with the likes of Facebook. However due to low usage and some security bugs that were recently discovered, Google+ was shut down in April 2019.
- The latest version of the app is available for download on Android and iOS system. However, the URL plus.google.com will continue to function and automatically redirect users to currents.google.com.

ISRO to release Space policy, Space Activities Bill soon

- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Chairman K Sivan announced recently that the space policy and space activities bill are in the final stages. A dedicated space policy was in making for some time now for legislation of space activities.
- The policy was fast-tracked after the government announced major reforms in the space sector, allowing the private sector to use ISRO’s services to carry out space activities such as building rockets and satellites.
- The space policy and the Space Activities Bill will help address legal issues in the space sector. A new navigation policy is also being proposed along with necessary changes in the Remote Sensing Data Policy and SATCOM policy.

Reliance launches unlimited free conferencing app Jio Meet

- Billionaire Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries has launched a video conferencing app, Jio Meet, with unlimited free calling facility. It is a close competitor of US-owned Zoom app. The Jio Meet video conferencing app is available to work across Android, iOS, Windows, macOS and web since July 2 after beta testing.
- Jio Meet supports HD audio and video call quality and allows up to 100 participants at a time. It offers features like screen sharing, meeting schedule feature and more.
- Unlike Zoom, it does not impose a 40-minute time limit. Calls can go on for as long as 24 hours, and all meetings are encrypted and password-protected.

ISRO’s Mars Orbiter captures image of largest moon of Mars

- ISRO’s Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM) has captured the image of ‘Phobos’, the largest and closest moon of Mars.
- The image was captured by Mars Colour Camera (MCC) aboard Mom on July 1, 2020 when the Mars orbiter was around 7,200 km from Mars and 4,200 km from Phobos.
- Phobos, the mysterious moon of Mars is believed to be made up of carbonaceous chondrites.
OBITUARY

Veteran Bollywood actor Kumkum passes away
- Veteran Bollywood actor Kumkum passed away. Her real name was Zaibunnissa. She has featured in over 100 Hindi films like Mother India, Kohinoor, Ek Sapera Ek Lootera, Naya Daur, Ujala, Raja Aur Runk, Lalkar, Aankhen, Geet, among others.

Bollywood action director Parvez Khan passes away
- Bollywood action director, Parvez Khan passed away. He had been working in the film industry since 1986. Some of his well-known films include Andhadhun, Badlapur, Bullett Raja, Fukrey, Ra-One, Johnny Gaddaar etc.

Child welfare activist Achyuta Rao passes away
- The founder and President of Balala Hakula Sangham, P Achyuta Rao passed away due to C-19. He was a well-known child rights activist and had founded Balala Hakula Sangham in 1984.
- He is known to have helped prevent child marriages, incidents of child sexual abuse, and child labour.

Two-Time Oscar Winner Olivia de Havilland passes away
- Two-Time Oscar Winner, Olivia de Havilland passed away at the age of 104. She was born on 1st July 1916, in Tokyo, Japan. The actress, who starred in blockbusters like Captain Blood (1935), The adventures of Robin Hood (1938), Gone with the Wind (1939), The Snakepit, The Heiress.
- She unchained the Hollywoods contract system which was later called as “De Havilland Law”.

Tanzania’s former president Benjamin Mkapa passes away
- Former President of Tanzania, Benjamin Mkapa, has passed away, due to heart attack. He was 81.
- Mr Mkapa served as the third President of Tanzania and was in office for one decade from 1995 to 2005.

Veteran Odia actor Bijay Mohanty passes away at 70
- Veteran Odia actor Bijay Mohanty has passed away following a prolonged illness. He was 70.
- Mohanty had started his career in Odia cinema in 1977.He was also honoured with National Award for his contribution to art and literature.

Veteran Odia Actor Bijay Mohanty passes away
- Veteran Odia Actor, Bijay Mohanty passed away. He started his career with theatre as a performer and directed many plays before venturing into movies. His performance in his debut film, Chilika Tire, earned him several accolades including the National Film
Former Australia Test cricketer Barry Jarman passes away
• Former Australian test wicketkeeper and ex-International Cricket Council match referee, Barry Jarman passed away.
• He made his test debut in 1959. He became the first-choice wicketkeeper for Australia only after the retirement of Grout in 1966.

MP Governor Lalji Tandon passes away
• Madhya Pradesh Governor Lalji Tandon passed away. He was undergoing treatment since June 11 and passed away after a prolonged illness.
• Due to MP Governor Lalji Tandon illness and his subsequent hospitalization, Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel has been given additional charge of Madhya Pradesh as well as interim Governor.

Eminent Mathematician Prof. C S Seshadri Passes away at 88
• One of the eminent Indian mathematician of the post-Independence era, Professor C S Seshadri, has passed away. He was 88.
• He was the founder and Director-Emeritus of the Chennai Mathematical Institute, an institute for the study of mathematics in India.
• Prof. Seshadri is known for his work in algebraic geometry. The Seshadri constant (in algebraic geometry) is named after him. He was a recipient of country's third highest civilian honor, Padma Bhushan in 2009.

Ace para-badminton player and Arjuna Awardee Ramesh Tikaram passes away
• Ramesh Tikaram, a former star para-badminton player and an Arjuna awardee has passed away of C-19. He was 51.
• Ramesh was the first para-badminton player in India to be honoured with an Arjuna award in the year 2002.

Civil rights leader Cordy Tindell Vivian passes away
• A civil rights veteran, The Rev Cordy Tindell Vivian who worked alongside the Rev Martin Luther King Jr, passed away.
• He also led the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and became its interim president in 2012.

Maharashtra’s first woman Election Commissioner, Neela Satyanarayan, passes away
• Former 1972 batch IAS officer and Maharashtra’s first woman State Election Commissioner (SEC) Neela Satyanarayan has passed away after she was diagnosed with C-19. She was 72.
• She was made the state election commissioner in 2009, and retired on July 5, 2014.

Padma Shri award winning journalist Nagindas Sanghvi passes away
• Padma Shri award winning veteran Gujarati journalist, columnist, writer and political
- He had written many books on Mahatma Gandhi, Gujarat and other subjects. Besides writing in Gujarati language, Sangvi also wrote in English and Hindi languages.

Renowned Gujarati Cartoonist Avad Bin Hassan Jami passes away
- One of the most senior and popular cartoonist of Gujarat, Avad Bin Hassan Jami, has passed away in Jamnagar. He was 77.
- He was popularly known as “Jami”. His cartoons were regularly published in leading Gujarati daily newspapers and news magazines for more than two decades.

Ivory Coast’s Prime Minister Amadou Gon Coulibaly passes away
- The incumbent Prime Minister of Ivory Coast, Amadou Gon Coulibaly, passed away on 8th July 2020. He was 61.
- Coulibaly was a candidate for president in a coming election, to be held in October. He took over as the 10th PM of the country in January 2017.

Legendary musician Charlie Daniels passes away
- Country Music Hall of Fame musician, Charlie Daniels passed away. He was country music and southern rock icon who entertained fans for decades with songs like “Long-Haired Country Boy,” “In America,” and his signature fiddle tune “The Devil Went Down To Georgia”, who won his only Grammy Award in 1979.
- He was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 2016.

Veteran bollywood actor Jagdeep passes away
- Veteran Bollywood actor-comedian, Jagdeep passed away. He was born as Syed Ishtiaq Ahmed Jafri, the legendary actor was popularly known as Jagdeep, his stage name.
- He was best known for his roles in films such as Sholay, Purana Mandir and Andaz Apna Apna.

Hollywood comedy legend Carl Reiner passes away
- Writer, director, actor and comedy legend Carl Reiner passed away of natural causes at an age of 98.
- Reiner was a recipient of nine Emmy awards, five of which were for ‘The Dick Van Dyke Show’.
- Some of his most popular films as a director are ‘Oh God,’ ‘The Jerk,’ and ‘All of Me.’

Veteran choreographer Saroj Khan passes away
- Ace Choreographer Saroj Khan has passed away at the age of 71 due to cardiac arrest in Mumbai. She was popularly known as Saroj Khan but her real name is Nirmala Nagpal.
- She joined the Indian film industry as a child artiste, playing the younger Shyama in Nazarana. She eventually became a background dancer in 1950s films like Bimal Roy’s “Madhumati” under the guidance of dance director B. Sohanlal.
- Among the Bollywood circles she was referred to as “The Mother of
Dance/Choreography in India”. In her career spanning over 40 years, she has choreographed over 2000 songs.

**APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS**

**Rating Agency ICRA appoints N. Sivaraman as MD and Group CEO**
- The board of directors of Indian credit rating agency ICRA Ltd has appointed N Sivaraman as the Managing Director & CEO of the Company and CEO of ICRA Group for a period of three years with effect from August 10, 2020.
- He will replace Naresh Takkar, whose service was terminated in August 2019 and the post was lying vacant since last one year.

**Archana Soreng named by UN chief to new advisory group**
- Indian climate activist, Archana Soreng has been named by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to his new advisory group comprising young leaders who will provide perspectives and solutions to tackle the worsening climate crisis, as the global body mobilizes action as part of the C-19 recovery efforts.

**Varun Sridhar appointed as CEO of Paytm Money**
- The investment & wealth management subsidiary of Paytm - Paytm Money, has appointed Varun Sridhar as the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the company on 29 July 2020.
- Sridhar will replace former MD and CEO Pravin Jadhav who resigned from the startup due to differences with the management of Paytm.

**Hichem Mechichi becomes new Prime Minister of Tunisia**
- Tunisia’s interior minister, Hichem Mechichi has been appointed as the new Prime Minister of the country.
- He succeeded Elyes Fakhfakh, who resigned over allegations of a conflict of interest.

**Riva Ganguly Das appointed as Secretary East in MEA**
- India’s High Commissioner to Bangladesh, Riva Ganguly Das is appointed by the Government as the Secretary East, in the Ministry of External Affairs.
- She will succeed Vijay Thakur Singh after her retirement on 30th September this year.

**Sahil Seth appointed as honorary adviser for BRICS CCI**
- Sahil Seth has been appointed as an honorary adviser to the steering committee for the BRICS Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) young leaders.
- He has been appointed for the period 2020-2023. Seth is presently serving as the Deputy Commissioner of Mumbai Customs.

**Tata AIA Life Ltd appoints Naveen Tahilyani as its MD & CEO**
- Naveen Tahilyani has been appointed by Tata AIA Life Limited as its Managing Director (MD) & Chief Executive Officer (CEO).
• He will take over from the current CEO Rishi Srivastava, who has been appointed as chief executive officer, group agency distribution, AIA Group, Hong Kong.

**Partha Pratim Sengupta becomes new MD & CEO of IOB**
- Government of India has appointed Partha Pratim Sengupta as the new Managing Director (MD) & Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Indian Overseas Bank (IOB).
- He will replace Karnam Sekar, who retired from the post of the MD and CEO at IOB on June 30, 2020.

**Alok Misra becomes new CEO & Director of MFIN**
- Microfinance Institutions Network (MFIN) has appointed Alok Misra as its new Chief Executive Officer & Director. The appointment will be effective from 1st August 2020.
- Dr Misra takes over from the present CEO, Harsh Shrivastava, who has put down his papers after spending over 2 years at MFIN.

**Arun Kumar nominated as Vice-Chairman of UIC**
- The Director General of Railway Protection Force (RPF), Arun Kumar has been nominated as the Vice-Chairman of UIC (Union International Des Chemins/International Union of Railways), Security Platform from July 2020 to July 2022.
- He will take over as Chairman of the Security Platform from July 2022 to July 2024.

**PC Kandpal appointed as MD & CEO of SBI General Insurance**
- SBI General Insurance – the non-life a subsidiary of State Bank of India has appointed Prakash Chandra Kandpal as its new managing director & chief executive officer.
- Kandpal has been with SBI General Insurance as the deputy CEO since June 2019.

**Rahul Bajaj steps down as Chairman of Bajaj Finance**
- Rahul Bajaj will step down as Non-Executive Chairman of Bajaj Finance on July 31, after being at the helm of the company for over three decades.
- He will be succeeded by Sanjiv Bajaj, currently Vice Chairman. Rahul Bajaj, however, will continue to serve the company as a non-executive non-independent director.

**Sumit Deb appointed as CMD of NMDC Limited**
- Sumit Deb has been appointed as the Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC).
- Deb is presently serving as Director (Personnel) in the NMDC.

**Karur Vysya Bank appoints Ramesh Babu Boddu as MD & CEO**
- Board of Directors of the Karur Vysya Bank has appointed Ramesh Babu Boddu as a Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer of the bank. He will succeed PR Seshadri who resigned on 31st March 2020.
- He has also been co-opted as an Additional Director. Ramesh Babu Boddu has earlier served as Deputy Managing Director in State Bank of India and retired in April 2020.
SAP appoints Kulmeet Bawa as new India MD
- Systems, Applications & Products in Data Processing (SAP) has announced the appointment of Kulmeet Bawa as President and Managing Director for SAP Indian Subcontinent.
- He will replace the incumbent Deb Deep Sengupta.

SBI Cards Appoints Ashwini Tewari as new MD, CEO
- SBI Cards and Payment Services has appointed Ashwini Kumar Tewari as its new Managing Director and chief executive officer. The new appointment will be valid for two years and his appointment will come into effect from August 1, 2020.
- He was nominated by parent State Bank of India for the position.

RBI Approves reappointment of Shyam Srinivasan as MD & CEO of Federal Bank
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved the reappointment of Shyam Srinivasan as the managing director and chief executive officer (MD & CEO) of the Kerala-based private sector lender, Federal Bank, till September 22, 2021.

Ossouka Raponda appointed as 1st woman PM of Gabon
- Rose Christiane Ossouka Raponda has been appointed as the first woman prime minister of Gabon. She is the 12th PM of the country and succeeds Julien Nkoghe Bekale.
- Prior to holding this position, Ossouka Raponda served as Defence Minister since February 2019.

ADB appoints Ashok Lavasa as new Vice President
- Election Commissioner Ashok Lavasa has been appointed as the Vice President of the Asian Development Bank. The development comes just a few months before Lavasa was scheduled to take over as the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC).
- In his new position, Ashok Lavasa will be looking after the Private Sector Operations and Public-Private Partnerships. Ashok Lavasa has more than two years left in his term at the Election Commission of India. He would have retired as the CEC in October 2022.

Hemang Amin appointed as interim CEO of BCCI
- The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has appointed Hemang Amin as its interim chief executive officer (CEO).
- He will replace Rahul Johri who recently resigned as the chief executive officer (CEO) of BCCI and his resignation was accepted by the BCCI office-bearers.

Lee HsienLoong became Prime Minister of Singapore
- Lee HsienLoong has become the Prime Minister of Singapore after the ruling People’s Action Party won the General Elections held in the country. PAP won 83 of the 93 seats contested in General Election.
- With this, Lee HsienLoong has won a fourth term as the Prime Minister of Singapore.
UKIBC appoints Jayant Krishna as Group CEO
- The UK India Business Council (UKIBC) has appointed Jayant Krishna as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the group. Jayant will replace the current Group CEO, Richard Heald.
- Prior to this, Jayant Krishna has served as the CEO of Prime Minister’s Skill India mission as well as the Executive Director & Chief Operating Officer of the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC).

Injeti Srinivas appointed as chairman of IFSCA
- Injeti Srinivas has been appointed as the Chairman of the International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA). His appointment is for a period of three years.
- Srinivas is a 1983 batch IAS officer from the Odisha cadre, who has previously served at the Corporate Affairs Ministry. He retired as the Corporate Affairs Secretary on May 31.
- The IFSCA was established on April 27 this year. It is a unified body to regulate all financial services in International Financial Services Centres (IFSCs) in the country.

GoI extends tenure of Sukhbir Singh Sandhu as NHAI Chairman
- The extension of Sukhbir Singh Sandhu’s tenure as the chairman of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has been approved by the Appointment Committee of the Cabinet (ACC).
- His tenure has been extended for a period of six months beyond 21st of July 2020 to 21st of January 2021.

India appoints Indra Mani Pandey as its Permanent Representative in UN, Geneva
- Indra Mani Pandey has been appointed as the Permanent Representative of India in the United Nations, Geneva. He is a 1990 batch Indian Foreign Officer and will succeed Rajiv K Chander on the position.
- He will represent India in more than 25 UN organisations which include the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC).

Karnam Sekar retires as MD & CEO of IOB
- The Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Indian Overseas Bank (IOB), Karnam Sekar has retired on 30th June 2020.
- He joined the State Bank of India (SBI) as the Probationary officer in December 1983.

Ravinder Bhakar becomes new CEO of CBFC
- Shri Ravinder Bhakar, a 1999 batch officer of Indian Railway Stores Service (IRSS), has taken over as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Central Board of Films Certification (CBFC) on 30 June 2020.
- Prior to this, Mr. Bhakar was posted as the Secretary & Chief Public Relations Officer of Western Railways.
- He succeeds Anurag Srivastava. Chairperson of CBFC – Shri Prasoon Joshi
Shrikant Madhav Vaidya becomes new chairman of IOC

- Shrikant Madhav Vaidya took charge as the new chairman of Indian Oil Corporation (IOC). Prior to this, he was the Director (Refineries) on the IOC Board, since October 2019.
- He will replace Sanjiv Singh, who retired on June 30.

Shashank Manohar quits as ICC Chairman

- International Cricket Council (ICC) Chairman, Shashank Manohar has stepped down as the head of the cricket body after two-year tenures. ICC Board has decided that Deputy Chairman Imran Khawaja will take the charge until Manohar’s successor is elected.
- The process for the Chairperson election is likely to be approved by the ICC Board within the next week.

KK Venugopal reappointed as Attorney General of India

- KK Venugopal has been reappointed as the Attorney General of India by President Ram Nath Kovind. Venugopal appointment has been extended for one year with effect from July 1, 2020.
- He was appointed as the Attorney General in July 2017 following the resignation of Mukul Rohatgi. Venugopal himself made the request for his reappointment.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Day Against Trafficking in Persons

- United Nations observes 30 July every year as World Day Against Trafficking in Persons. The 2020 theme for the World Day against Trafficking: “Committed to the Cause – Working on the Frontline to End Human Trafficking”.
- In 2013, the General Assembly designated July 30 as the World Day against Trafficking in Persons to raise awareness of the situation of victims of human trafficking and for the promotion and protection of their rights.

International Tigers day

- 29th of July observed as International Tiger Day. The Day is celebrated on every year across the globe to create awareness about tiger conservation.
- The day was created in 2010 at the Saint Petersburg Tiger Summit to put in place a global system for protecting the natural habitats of tigers and raise public awareness and support for tiger conservation issues.
- The Slogan for 2020 International Tiger Day celebration is “Their survival is in our hands”.

World Nature Conservation Day

- World Nature Conservation Day is observed on 28th July every year. World Conservation Day is celebrated internationally to increase awareness about the best practices to protect our natural resources.
• The Earth is supplied a limited amount of properties that we all rely upon each day like water, air, soil and trees.

**World Hepatitis Day**
• The World Hepatitis Day is observed on 28 July every year to raise global awareness of the burden of viral hepatitis, an inflammation of the liver that causes a range of health problems, including liver cancer.
• The day 28 July was chosen for World Hepatitis Day because it is the birthday of Nobel-prize winning scientist Dr Baruch Blumberg, who discovered hepatitis B virus (HBV). He also developed a diagnostic test and vaccine for the virus.
• Theme of World Hepatitis Day 2020: ‘Find the Missing Millions’.

**CRPF personnel celebrates its 82nd raising day of the paramilitary force on 27 July**
• Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel celebrated its 82nd raising day of the paramilitary force on 27th July 2020. CRPF is at the forefront of keeping the nation safe.
• Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu, and others greeted the CRPF personnel.

**Kargil Vijay Diwas**
• Kargil Vijay Diwas 2020: It is celebrated on 26 July to commemorate the victory of the Indian soldiers over the infiltrating Pakistani troops. This year is the 21st anniversary of Kargil Vijay Diwas.
• The day is dedicated to our Kargil War’s Heroes and is named after the successful Operation Vijay. It is celebrated to in view of Operation Vijay and Kargil War that ended on July 26, 1999. After this, India successfully took command of the high outposts which had been lost to Pakistan.
• ‘Operation Vijay’, was the code name given to India’s offensive against Pakistan to flush out the Pakistani infiltrators from the Indian territory in Kargil.

**National Parent’s Day 2020**
• National Parent’s Day is celebrated to promote the responsible parenting and to recognise positive parental role models. No doubt this day also observe the special bond of love and care between parents and their children.
• President Bill Clinton in 1994 signed a law and a resolution was adopted by the US Congress to establish fourth Sunday of every July as parent’s Day. This day is similar to Mother’s day and Father’s day.

**National Thermal Engineer Day**
• National Thermal Engineer Day is observed every year on 24 July to show the importance of advancing the thermal engineering industry and is provide the electronics industry with innovative, high-quality, and cost-effective thermal management and its packaging solutions.
National Broadcasting Day
- National Broadcasting day is celebrated on 23rd July since 1927. This day was recognized on when first ever radio broadcast went on air from Bombay Station under the Indian Broadcasting Company.
- It is observed to celebrate the first and last visit of the Mahatma Gandhi to the studio of All India Radio, Delhi in 1947.
- On June 8, 1936, the Indian State Broadcasting Service became All India Radio. At present, AIR is one of the largest broadcasting organisations in the world.

Space Exploration Day
- Every year on July 20, the Space Exploration Day is celebrated to mark the anniversary of man’s first historic landing on the moon.
- Neil Armstrong and Edwin Buzz became the first humans to land on moon’s surface. The Armstrong-Aldrin duo spent 21.5 hours on the surface of the moon. Also, they spent 2.5 hours outside of their capsules. The day is mainly celebrated in the United States.

World Chess Day
- The International Chess Day is celebrated annually on July 20, since 1966, to celebrate one of the most ancient and most popular games in history that promotes fairness, equality, mutual respect and understanding among nations.
- It was on this day that the International Chess Federation (FIDE) was founded, in 1924. The idea to celebrate the day as the international chess day was proposed by UNESCO.
- FIDE’s motto for 2020 celebrations is, “Teach someone how to play chess.” To celebrate the International Chess Day 2020 top chess personalities will participate in a high-level virtual event “Chess for Recovering Better”.

Nelson Mandela International Day
- The United Nations observes 18 July every year as Nelson Mandela International Day. The day acknowledges Nelson Mandela’s contribution to the struggle for democracy internationally and the promotion of a culture of peace throughout the world. Nelson Mandela Day is an occasion for all to take action and inspire change.
- This day marks the contribution to peace through his active involvement in resolving conflicts, promoting human rights, international democracy and reconciliation and in addressing racial issues.

World Emoji Day
- The World Emoji Day is celebrated every year on 17 July since 2014 to promote the use of emojis and spread the enjoyment that they bring to all of those around us.
- The Day was created by London-based founder of Emojipedia, Jeremy Burge.

World Day for International Justice
- The World Day for International Justice, (also known as Day of International Criminal
Justic or International Justice Day), is celebrated globally on July 17 to support and recognize the work of the International Criminal Court (ICC).

- The day marks the anniversary of the adoption of the Rome Statute on July 17, 1998, the treaty that created the International Criminal Court.

**World Youth Skills Day**

- United Nations celebrates World Youth Skills Day globally on 15 July every year. The theme of World Youth Skills Day 2020 is “Skills for a Resilient Youth”.
- The day is celebrated as an opportunity for young people, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions, and public and private sector stakeholders to acknowledge as well as celebrate the importance of equipping young people with skills for employment, decent work and entrepreneurship.

**World Population Day**

- World Population Day is observed globally on 11th July every year. Objective is to raise awareness among people about the impact of a growing population and issues including gender equality, the importance of family planning, poverty, maternal health, human rights, etc.
- This year theme of World Population Day 2020: Putting the brakes on C-19: Safeguarding the health and rights of women and girls.

**Malala Day Observed**

- July 12 was declared by the United Nations as World Malala Day on July 12, 2013 to honour the young activist, Malala Yousafzai.
- July 12 also marks the birth anniversary of Yousafzai, the Pakistani human rights activist, and the youngest Nobel Prize laureate.

**World Chocolate Day**

- World Chocolate Day (also known as International Chocolate Day) is an annual observance taking place globally on 7th July.
- The day is said to be chosen to celebrate the introduction of chocolate to Europe in 1550.

**Dhamma Chakra Day**

- President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated Dhamma Chakra Day 2020 celebrations on 4th July 2020.
- The day is celebrated to mark Buddha's First Sermon to his first 5 ascetic disciples at the Deer Park, Rsipatana in the present-day Sarnath near Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.
- Dhamma Chakra Day is celebrated by Buddhists across the world as the day of Dharma Chakra Parvattana or “Turning of the Wheel of Dharma”.
- It is celebrated by the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC), under the aegis of the Ministry of Culture.
**International Co-operative Day 2020**
- The International Co-operative Day is held annually on the first Saturday in July since 1923 by the International Co-operative Alliance to celebrate the co-operative movement and to increase awareness of cooperatives.
- The theme of International Co-operative Day 2020 is: “Cooperatives for Climate Action”.

**International Plastic Bag Free Day**
- The International Plastic Bag Free Day is held on July 3 around the world to spread awareness that a plastic bag free world is possible and that sound environmental alternatives to single use plastic bags are available.
- 2020 is the 11th edition of the celebrations.

**National Postal Worker Day**
- The National Postal Worker Day is marked every year on July 1 globally in recognition of the contribution made by postal workers in our society.
- The day is a unique opportunity to say ‘thank you’ not only to postmen but also to all delivery personnel, as online shopping has become a lifeline for many of us.
- The day was initiated by a popular postal service provider from Seattle, United States of America in 1997 to felicitate and honour the co-postal workers for their dedication.

**World UFO Day**
- World UFO Day is observed on 2nd July. It was founded by the UFO hunter Haktan Akdogan.
- The first World UFO Day was celebrated in 2001 and spread awareness among people to gaze at the heavens scanning for unidentified flying objects.

**National Doctor’s Day 2020**
- National Doctor’s Day 2020 will be celebrated on July 1st to thank physicians and doctors for their dedicated services to patients. Doctor’s Day 2020 is being celebrated for acknowledging the services of doctors and their huge contribution to the medical advancement in India.
- Every year, the theme for Doctor’s day is announced by Indian Medical Association. Last year it was ‘Zero tolerance to violence against doctors and clinical establishments.’ The theme of National Doctor’s Day 2020 is not announced yet.
- National Doctors’ Day is celebrated on July 1 all across India to honour the legendary physician and the second Chief Minister of West Bengal, Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy.

**National Charted Accountants Day**
- National Charted Accountants Day or CA Day is celebrated on July 1 every year. This day is celebrated to commemorate the finding of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) by the parliament of India in 1949.
- Every year on the day of the establishment of the ICAI, CA Day is celebrated to honour the Chartered Accountant.
SUMMITS AND MOU'S

PFC signs agreement with IIT-Kanpur in smart grid technology
- Power Finance Corporation (PFC) has signed an agreement with the Indian Institute of Technology- Kanpur for Training, Research, and Entrepreneurship Development in Smart Grid Technology.
- The agreement was on a virtual platform. The objective of the pact is to provide support to IIT-Kanpur in developing infrastructure for research and development on smart grid technology.
- Under the agreement, PFC will provide financial assistance of worth Rs 2, 38,97000 to IIT-Kanpur.

Flipkart announced the acquisition of Walmart India.
- Flipkart announced on July 23, 2020 that it has acquired parent company, Walmart Inc’s Best Price wholesale cash-and-carry business in India.
- The move will allow Flipkart to launch a digital marketplace called Flipkart Wholesale next month. The homegrown e-commerce major looks to tap into the USD 650 billion B2B retail market in India.
- Walmart India runs 28 Best Price wholesale stores in the country. Flipkart Wholesale is a new digital marketplace focusing on addressing the business-to-business (B2B) segment in India.
- This will also strengthen the e-commerce firm’s wholesale offerings, to compete better with Amazon.

CBIC signed MoU with CBDT to facilitate smoother bilateral exchange of data
- Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) and the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 21 July 2020 with immediate effect.
- According to the MoU, both the organisations will share data and information with each other on an automatic and regular basis. They will also share any information available in their respective databases which may be useful for the other organisation.

‘Ola Corporate’ ride service enters Australia, New Zealand, UK
- Ola has rolled out its enterprise offering ‘Ola Corporate’ to Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom.
- Ola Corporate offers enterprise customers reduced travel expenses, and centralised billing system that eliminates the need for paper-based reimbursement.
- The Bengaluru-based company operates in more than 250 cities across India, Australia, New Zealand, and the UK.
Defence Ministry signed contract with BEML for procurement of 1,512 Mine Plough for T-90 tanks

- Ministry of Defence (MoD) has signed a contract with Bharat Earth Movers Limited (BEML) for procurement of 1,512 Mine Plough (MP) for Tank T-90 S/SK. The move comes as a major boost to the Make in India initiative of the Government of India.
- The contract was approved by the Acquisition Wing of MoD. The procurement will cost approximately Rs 557 crore. These mine ploughs when fitted on T-90 Tanks will provide individual mobility to Tanks while negotiating mine field.

Shripad Naik e-inaugurates 5th Conference on Aerospace and Defence Manufacturing Technologies

- The Union Minister of State for Defence Shripad Naik inaugurated the 5th edition of the conference on Aerospace and Defence Manufacturing Technologies on 15 July 2020 in New Delhi, via video conferencing.
- The theme of the conference was Empowering India with ‘Aatmanirbhar Bharat Mission’.

Google-Jio partnership to 5G in India: Reliance Industries 43rd AGM 2020

- Reliance Industries Chairman and Managing Director, Mukesh Ambani has confirmed the Google will be Reliance Industries’ new strategic partner. The announcement was made during the 43rd Annual General Meeting on July 15, 2020.
- The new strategic partner was introduced by Mr. Ambani after he mentioned all the entities that have invested in Jio Platforms. He informed that Google will invest 33,737 crores for a 7.7 percent stake in Jio Platforms.
- Reliance Jio in partnership with Google will develop an android-based smartphone operating system to increase access to smartphones. The main objective is to accelerate India’s digital economy.

Visa Partners With Federal Bank For Rolling Out Visa Secure For E-Commerce

- Visa, a global leader in payments technology has tied-up with Federal Bank to launch “Visa Secure” to the bank’s cardholders. The upgraded technology provides a quicker and frictionless checkout experience to consumers.
- “Visa Secure” is a global authentication program that uses the latest standards of the EMV 3DS (3D Secure) protocol.

Qualcomm Ventures to invest Rs. 730 crore in Jio Platforms

- Qualcomm Ventures announced on July 12 that it has decided to invest Rs. 730 crore in Jio Platforms. Qualcomm Ventures which is an investment arm of Qualcomm Incorporated will make an investment for a 0.15% stake.
- With an announced investment, Qualcomm Ventures has become a 12th investor in Reliance Industries Ltd’s digital and telecom business in less than a time period of two months.
- The new investment by Qualcomm Ventures will take the total investments in Jio Platforms to Rs. 1,18,318.45 crore for a combined 25.24% holding.
15th meeting of the India-European Union Summit

- The 15th meeting of the India-European Union Summit will be held in virtual mode. The summit will deliberate on India-EU cooperation by covering various aspects such as political and security relations, trade and investment and economic cooperation.
- Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, President of European Commission Ursula von der Leyen, and President of European Council Charles Michel will co-chair the 15th meeting of the India-European Union Summit to be held virtually.

CBDT, SEBI signs MoU for data exchange between the organizations

- Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) and the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for data exchange between the two organizations.
- The MoU was signed by Smt. Anu J. Singh, Pr. DGIT (Systems), CBDT, and Smt. Madhabi Puri Buch, Whole Time Member, SEBI in the presence of senior officers from both the organizations via video conference.

BDL signs licence agreement & ToT with DRDO

- Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) has signed License Agreement and Transfer of Technology (ToT) with Defence Research and Development Organisation–Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDO–DRDL) for Akash Missile Weapon System (Indian Army Variant).
- Akash Missile is the first medium-range Surface to Air missile produced in India which can engage multiple targets from multiple directions.

Microsoft partners NSDC to provide digital skills

- Microsoft has partnered with the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) to offer digital skills to India’s youth in the next 12 months.
- This partnership will help in creating a digital skills ecosystem which will prepare India’s workforce for jobs of the future.
- As a part of the partnership, “Microsoft Learn” a learning resource center of Microsoft will be integrated with the eSkill India digital platform and offer access to personalized learning paths and resources that are required in today’s economy and expected to continue to grow in the future. e-skilling events, webinars and virtual sessions would be co-hosted across the country by eSkill India and Microsoft in order to support students, training partners and higher-education trainees enrolled under NSDC’s skill training programs.

India, Indonesia Coast Guards sign MoU to boost maritime relations

- The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) and Bakamla RI (Indonesian Coast Guard) have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on ‘Maritime Safety and Security’ to boost maritime relations.
- India and Indonesia are historically connected through the Indian Ocean and it has been the resolve of both nations to ensure safe and secure sea passage for all seafarers.
in the region.

**CBSE tie-up with Facebook to introduce curriculum on digital safety**
- The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has partnered with social media giant Facebook to launch free and comprehensive training program in virtual mode for teachers and students of its affiliated schools. Schools have to online nominate their teachers and students for the training programs.
- The first phase of the training program is scheduled from August 2020 to November 2020. The registration process for the first phase of the training program will be held from 6th to 20th July 2020.

**Intel Capital Invests Rs 1894.50 crore in Jio Platforms**
- United States-based Intel Corporation’s investment arm Intel Capital will invest Rs 1,894.50 crores in Reliance Industries Limited's (RIL's) subsidiary company Jio Platform.
- With this investment, equity value in Jio Platforms rose to Rs 4.91 lakh crore, while Rs 5.16 lakh crore its enterprise value.
- Rs 1894.50 of investment will translate to 0.39 percent of an equity stake for Intel Capital in Jio Platforms. This was the 12th foreign investment in Jio Platforms.
- The 12 investments make a total of Rs 1,17,588.45crores that have been raised in Jio Platforms.

**AWARDS AND RECOGNITION**

**Ministry of Earth Sciences announces National Awards for excellence in Earth System Science**
- The Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) has announced the National Awards for excellence in Earth System Science for the year 2020. The Awards are given every year on the occasion of Earth Sciences Foundation Day of the Ministry for the outstanding contribution of each winner in their respective field.
- The award is presented annually in the following three categories:
- Life Time Excellence Award in the sphere of Earth System Sciences
- National Awards in the field of:
  - Ocean Science & Technology
  - Atmospheric Science & Technology
  - Geoscience & Technology
  - Science & Cryosphere
- Young Researcher/Achiever Award in the field of Earth System Science

**Winners for 2020**
- Life Time Excellence Award – Professor Ashok Sahni for his significant contribution in the field of Geology, Vertebrate Paleontology and Biostratigraphy.
- National Awards
- Ocean Science and Technology – Dr. V. V. S. Sarma and Dr. M. Ravichandran
- Atmospheric Science and Technology – Dr. S. Suresh Babu
- Geoscience & Technology – Dr. N. V. Chalpathi Rao
- Polar Science & Cryosphere – Dr. Atmanand
- Young Researcher/Achiever Award – Dr. Indra Sekhar Sen and Dr. Arvind Singh

Sunil ydv SS Honored with Karamveer Chakra Award of United Nations and ICONGO
- Sunil ydv SS, founder & CEO Of SS Motivation, which is the most Subscribed Motivational Channel on Telegram, has been honoured with “Karamveer Chakra Award” instituted by United Nations and International Confederation of NGO (iCONGO).
- He received the award for his relentless contribution to society through his Telegram channel “SS Motivation.”

India’s first solar ferry “Aditya” wins Gustave Trouve Award
- India’s first solar-powered ferry, Aditya has won the prestigious Gustave Trouve Award for Excellence in Electric Boats and Boating. The ferry was adjudged the world’s best electric boat in the category of ferries designed for paid passenger service.
- The ferry belongs to the Kerala State Water Transport Department (KSWTD) and has been plying on the Vaikkom-Thavanakkadavu route in Alappuzha district since January 2017.

Liverpool’s Jordan Henderson wins 2020 FWA Footballer of the Year award
- Jordan Henderson, the captain of Premier League club Liverpool has been named the 2019-20 Footballer of the Year by the Football Writers’ Association (FWA).
- The Football Writers’ Association Footballer of the Year is an annual award given since the 1947–48 season, to the player who is adjudged to have been the best of the season in English football.
- The 30-year-old Henderson has played in 30 of Liverpool’s league matches so far this season and scored four goals.

Greta Thunberg named winner of Gulbenkian Prize for Humanity
- The 17 year old climate activist from Sweden, Greta Thunberg has been named winner of the inaugural Gulbenkian Prize for Humanity. She will receive a prize money of 1 million euro. She has been awarded for her efforts to mobilise younger generations to tackle climate change.
- She commenced a protest outside the Swedish parliament in 2018 and risen to global prominence, becoming the figurehead for a series of school strikes by children around the world.

Arnab Chaudhuri to receive Toonz Media Award
- The ‘Legend of Animation’ award instituted by the Toonz Media Group (TMG) as part of the Animation Masters Summit (AMS) 2020 – Digital Edition will be posthumously conferred to the legendary animation director Arnab Chaudhuri.
- The award is being presented for his invaluable contribution to the animation and...
Morissana Kouyate and Marianna Vardinoyannis wins 2020 Nelson Mandela Prize

- Guinean doctor Morissana Kouyate and Marianna Vardinoyannis of Greece are the winners of the 2020 Nelson Mandela Prize. The President of the United Nations General Assembly, Tijjani Muhammad-Bande has made the announcement of the winners of the award which recognizes persons who dedicate their lives to the service of humanity.
- The Nelson Mandela Prize, which is awarded every five years and recognizes those who dedicate their lives to the service of humanity, by promoting the purposes and principles of the United Nations, while honouring Nelson Mandela’s life, and legacy of reconciliation, political transition, and social transformation. The Mandela Prize was established by a UN General Assembly resolution in June 2014.

CPJ International Press Freedom Award 2020 announced

- The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) has announced the recipients of the International Press Freedom Awards 2020 include Shahidul Alam from Bangladesh, Mohammad Mosaed from Iran, Dapo Olorunyomi from Nigeria and Svetlana Prokopyeva from Russia.
- All four journalists have faced arrests or criminal prosecution in reprisal for their reporting. In addition to them, lawyer Amal Clooney will be honoured with the Gwen Ifill Press Freedom Award 2020.

ISRO Chief K Sivan named for Von Karman Award 2020

- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Chief, Kailasavadivoo Sivan has named for Von Karman Award 2020 by the International Academy of Astronautics (IAA).
- The Von Karman Award is known as the highest distinction of the IAA. Dr K. Sivan is going to receive an award in March 2021 at Paris France.
- Udupi Ramachandra Rao was the first Indian to receive the von Karman award. The award was presented to him in 2005 and Dr Krishnaswamy Kasturirangan received the Von Karman award in 2007.

Kezang D Thongdok bags Dada Saheb Phalke Award 2020

- Arunachal Pradesh filmmaker Kezang D Thongdok has bagged the Dada Saheb Phalke Award 2020 for a short documentary “Chi Lupo”. Chi Lupo, documented by Kezang D Thongdok is a short documentary on honey hunting.
- Chi Lupo sketches the tradition of honey hunting practised in the Shertukpen community in which “Chi” means honey while “Lipo” means hunters.

NTPC Limited wins prestigious CII-ITC Sustainability Award 2019

- The centrally-owned, National Thermal Power Corporation, (NTPC) Limited, under the Ministry of Power has won the prestigious CII-ITC Sustainability Award 2019, under Outstanding Accomplishment in Corporate Excellence Category.
- The company has also received Commendation for Significant Achievement in the category of CSR in the 15th CII-ITC Sustainability Award.
The CII-ITC Sustainability Awards recognise and reward excellence in businesses that are seeking ways to be more sustainable and inclusive in their business.

IOC receives EU Green Building Leadership Award 2020
- The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has announced that its new headquarters in Lausanne has been awarded the European 2020 US Green Building Council (USGBC) Leadership Award.
- Olympic House, which also holds the rigorous LEED Platinum certification, is one of the most sustainable buildings in the world.
- The Olympic House is the first international headquarters and the second building overall to obtain the highest (Platinum) level of the Swiss Sustainable Construction Standard (SNBS).

Pulitzer winner Siddhartha Mukherjee and Prof. Raj Chetty are named among ‘2020 Great Immigrants’ Honorees
- The Carnegie Corporation of New York has named Pulitzer Prize winner Siddhartha Mukherjee and Prof. Raj Chetty among the ‘2020 Great Immigrants’ Honoree. Through this honor, Carnegie Corporation recognizes an eminent group of citizens who have been making a difference in the American Society.
- The honorees will be recognized on America’s Independence Day which is on the Fourth of July.

Popstar Beyonce honored with BET 2020 Humanitarian Award
- Popstar Beyonce has been honored with the BET 2020 Humanitarian Award for her longstanding philanthropic work with her BeyGOOD Foundation, including her recent C-19 relief efforts such as #IDIDMYPART, a mobile testing initiative.
- The award was presented by the former First Lady Michelle Obama.

RANKING

Hyderabad Ranked 16th in World’s most Surveilled Cities
- As per the new analysis by Comparitech on the World’s Most Surveilled Cities, in 150 major cities across the globe, Hyderabad has positioned in 16th rank among the list of top 20 cities with the maximum number of Closed-circuit television (CCTV) surveillance cameras. The research is based on the number of cameras per 1,000 people.
- It has most CCTV surveillance in India. The List was topped by Taiyuan, China. Chennai(21st rank) and Delhi (33rd rank) made into the top 50 list. Delhi ranked 2nd, Tokyo tops in the 20 most populated cities in the world.

India Ranks 3rd among top 10 countries gaining forest area in the world
- India has been ranked third among the top 10 countries that have gained in forest areas in the last decade (2010-2020) as per the latest Global Forest Resources
Assessment (FRA) released by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

- FRA is a comprehensive assessment brought out by FAO after every five years since 1990 to assess the state of forests, their conditions and management for all member countries.

India Among 10 Worst Countries For Working People

- India has been ranked among the 10 worst countries for working people. It is rated with 5 on the scale. The ten worst countries for workers in 2020 are Bangladesh, Brazil, Colombia, Egypt, Honduras, India, Kazakhstan, the Philippines, Turkey and Zimbabwe.
- The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) has released its Global Rights Index for the year 2020, which ranks countries on the degree of respect for workers' rights. This is the seventh edition of the annual report and ranks 144 countries.
- Austria, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Slovakia, Sweden, Uruguay are the best countries with rating of 1.

World Bank Retains India's Classification as Lower-Middle Income Group Economy for 2020-21

- India has retained its position as lower-middle income group economy in the new World Bank Country Classifications by Income Level 2020-2021. India became a lower-middle-income nation from low-income in the fiscal year 2009.
- Every year, the World Bank classifies the world’s economies in four income groups, which includes low, lower-middle, upper-middle, and high-income countries based on the country’s GNI (Gross National Income) per capita in current USD.
- A country’s GNI per capita, changes with economic growth, inflation, exchange rates, and population, revisions to national accounts methods and data. Out of these total 218 economies, 83 are in the high-income group, 56 in the upper-middle group, 50 in the lower-middle income group and 29 in the low-income group.
- The GNI per capita range to classify countries in the four different groups are given below:
  1. Low income – GNI per capita < $1,036 (means GNI per capita, of this group is $1,035 or less in 2019)
  2. Lower-middle income – GNI per capita between $1,036 – $4,045
  3. Upper-middle income – GNI per capita between $4,046 – $12,535
  4. High income – GNI per capita > $12,535

India ranks among top ten nations in intellectual property filings

- India has emerged as the top tenth nation in the ranking of the total (resident and abroad) Intellectual Property (IP) filing activity, as per World Intellectual Property Indicators-2019 Report.
- The overall ranking has been topped by China as was followed by United States, Germany, Japan, and Republic of Korea as the top five nations in the list.
Mukesh Ambani becomes world's seventh richest, overtakes investor tycoon Warren Buffett

- Reliance Industries Chairman Mukesh Ambani has become the world’s 7th richest person after overtaking legendary investor tycoon Warren Buffett in terms of net worth.
- The Indian billionaire's net worth currently stands at $69.9 billion, while Warren Buffett’s net worth stands at $69.1 billion. Amazon founder Jeff Bezos is ranked at the top of the world’s richest individuals list with a net worth of $189.2 billion.

India Ranked 31st in INFORM Risk Index 2020 for Humanitarian crises & C-19s

- In accordance with the “INFORM Report 2020: Shared evidence for managing crises and C-19s” released by research centre INFORM, operating under European Commission (EU), India has ranked at 31st place with an inform risk of 5.4, means risk of humanitarian crises and C-19s.
- The report ranked the countries based on “INFORM Risk Index” which has been topped by Somalia with an inform risk of 8.9.
- The report has analyzed 191 countries. This report is produced by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN-OCHA).

India’s Forex Reserves 5th largest in the world

- The foreign exchange reserves of India is the fifth largest in the world at more than USD 500 billion. The first four Forex Reserves on the list are China, Japan, Switzerland and Russia, as per the report released by IMF - International Monetary Fund.
- The foreign exchange reserves of India are almost equal to one fifth of India’s GDP.

India stands third largest contributor to e-waste in 2019

- A United Nations led report has found that India is the third largest contributor to e-waste in the world in 2019.
- As per the report titled ‘Global E-waste Monitor 2020’, the world dumped a record 53.6 million tonnes of e-waste in 2019. Of this, just 17.4 percent was recycled.
- China was the biggest contributor to e-waste in the world, contributing 10.1 million tonnes of e-waste. United States was second with 6.9 million tonnes. India, with 3.2 million tonnes, was third.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

Former RBI Deputy Governor pens book ‘Quest for Restoring Financial Stability in India’

- The former Deputy Governor of Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Viral Acharya has come up with a book titled “Quest for Restoring Financial Stability in India”, which is a collection of his comments, speeches, and research as a member of the RBI’s Monetary Policy Committee (MPC).
Through this book, Dr Acharya shares a feasible plan to address the recapitalization needs of public sector banks, offering solutions on how to improve credit allocation by credit intermediaries and establish viable and efficient capital markets.

The book has been published by SAGE Publications India Pvt Ltd.

“The India Way: Strategies for an Uncertain World”
- The former diplomat, and current Minister of External Affairs in the Government of India, S. Jaishankar, is releasing his new book “The India Way: Strategies for an Uncertain World”.
- The book was published under the HarperCollins India publications.

A book titled “Suraj Kade Marda Nahi” authored by Baldev Singh Sadaknama
- Sahitya Akademi Award winner, Baldev Singh Sadaknama has authored a book ‘Suraj Kade Marda Nahi’ (sun never dies). The book portrays many aspects of freedom fighter Udham Singh.
- The book is published by Unistarbooks. The book has been released and will be formally launched on July 31, 2020. Udham Singh 80th death anniversary will fall on July 31, 2020.

“The Endgame”- Authored by S Hussain Zaidi
- Veteran Crime and Terror writer S Hussain Zaidi has penned a new novel titled “The Endgame” which talks of politics, betrayal and unimaginable terror.
- The book explores the challenges that the security of a country faces from within and without at the same time. “The Endgame” has been published by HarperCollins India.

A book titled “If It Bleeds” authored by Stephen King released
- A new book titled “If It Bleeds”, a collection of four stories, authored by Stephen King has been released. The book published by Hachette India.
- The book has the story centres around a bomb at Albert Macready Middle School. It is a sequel to his bestselling work, “The Outsider”.

A book titled ‘A Song of India’ authored by Ruskin Bond to be released
- The book titled ‘A Song of India’ authored by Ruskin Bond to be released on July 20, 2020. This book will mark the 70th year of the author's literary career. The book has been published by Puffin Books, an imprint of Penguin Random House India.

A book on Dalai Lama’s biography to release in 2020
- The biography of the current Dalai Lama titled “His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama: An Illustrated Biography”, is set to hit the stands in October 2020.
- The 352-page book has been written by Tenzin Geyche Tethong, one of the Dalai Lama’s closest aides and advisor of over 40 years. The book is published by Roli Books.
The book features nearly 400 never seen before photographs and documents from the life and times of the Tibetan spiritual leader. It also has a personal message by the spiritual leader, along with a foreword by his younger brother, Tenzin Choegal.

A Book Titled ‘Mahaveer 'The Soldier Who Never Died’
- The book, titled ‘Mahaveer: The Soldier who never died’ is authored by award winning author A.K. Srikumar and his wife, Rupa Srikumar.
- The book is a patriotic story about the courage and selfless love of Jaswant Singh Rawat who is one of the legendary Garhwali soldiers fought in Indo-Chinese battle of Nuranang in 1962.
- The book is published by Rupa Publications and represented by The Book Bakers.

Former RBI governor U. Patel pens book ‘Overdraft: Saving the Indian Saver’
- Former RBI Governor, Urjit Patel, has written a book titled ‘Overdraft: Saving the Indian Saver’ which focuses on the non-performing assets (NPAs) issue that has afflicted Indian banking in recent years, its causes and Patel’s efforts as the RBI Governor in dealing with it.
- The book is likely to be released on 31 July 2020. It has been published by HarperCollins India.

Getting Competitive: A Practitioner’s Guide for India” authored by R C Bhargava
- The Chairman of Maruti Suzuki, RC Bhargava has authored the book “Getting Competitive: A Practitioner’s Guide for India” from his experience as a policymaker and a leading industrialist.
- The book published by HarperCollins India.

A book titled “The Future of Higher Education” released by M Venkaiah Naidu
- Vice President of India, M Venkaiah Naidu has virtually released a book titled “Future of Higher Education – Nine Mega Trends”. The book is authored by CA V Pattabhi Ram. The Virtual event was hosted by ICT Academy.
- The book is based on a survey of about 5000 educators across India who were part of ICT Academy’s “SkyCampus” Digital Knowledge Series.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

ADB approves USD 3 million grant to India
- Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved USD 3 million (about Rs 22 crore) grant to India from its Asia Pacific C-19 Response Fund to further support the government’s emergency response to C-19.
- The grant will be used to procure thermal scanners and essential commodities to strengthen India’s C-19 response.
ADB partnered with GCF to Boost Green Recovery
- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF) agreed to partner toward a ‘green recovery’ for members confronting the harsh economic impact of the Chinese virus C-19.
- Under Strategy 2030, ADB will ensure that 75 percent of its committed projects will support climate change mitigation and adaptation by 2030.
- Climate finance from ADB’s own resources will reach USD 80 billion cumulatively from 2019 to 2030.

IRCTC & SBI Card launches Co-branded Contactless Credit Card
- The IRCTC and SBI Card together have launched their new co-branded contactless Credit Card on RuPay Platform. The Railway Minister Piyush Goyal dedicated this new card to the Nation on July 28, 2020.
- The new RuPay credit card is equipped with Near Field Communication technology, using which the users can expedite their transactions at the POS machines by just tapping the card on the machines.
- The launch of the card is a part of the many ‘Make in India’ initiatives undertaken by the Railways.

RBI signs $400 mn currency swap with Sri Lanka
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has signed an agreement for extending a $400-million currency swap facility to Sri Lanka. This currency swap is used to boost the foreign reserves and ensure the financial stability of the country.
- Sri Lanka was set to enter into an agreement with the RBI for a currency swap worth $400 million under the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) framework.
- The currency swap arrangement will remain available till November 2022.

RBI releases the Financial Stability Report, July 2020
- The Reserve Bank of India has released the 21st Issue of the Financial Stability Report (FSR). The FSR reflects the collective assessment of the Sub-Committee of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) on risks to financial stability and the resilience of the financial system.
- The Report also discusses the issues relating to the development and regulation of the financial sector.

Nomura estimates India’s GDP to contract by 6.1% in FY21
- The Indian economy is expected to contract by 6.1 percent in the current fiscal (2020-21), as per the Japanese financial services firm Nomura.
- The contraction in the GDP is due to the C-19 C-19, which has impacted both supply and demand forces in the economy since March 2020.
EPFO registers 3.18 lakh new subscribers in May 2020
- The subscriber base for Employees’ Provident Fund Organization- EPFO has grown by 3.18 lakh new net members during May 2020. It has registered 218 per cent month on month growth.
- The subscriber base growth is on account of increased number of new subscribers, lower exits and higher re-joining by exited members.
- The new subscriber joining increased by 66 per cent from 1.67 lakh in April to 2.79 lakh in May 2020.

ICRA Predicts India’s GDP to Contract 9.5% in FY21
- Credit Rating agency ICRA has sharply revised the GDP forecast for India and expects the Indian economy to contract by 9.5% (-9.5%) in 2020-21. Earlier it had projected the GDP at -5% for FY21.
- The increasing C-19 infections, leading to localised C-19s in some states and cities, affecting the economic activities is the main reason for this sharp revision.

Reliance Industries becomes first Indian company to hit Rs. 12 lakh crore market cap
- Mukesh Ambani led Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) has become the first Indian firm to hit a market capitalisation mark of Rs. 12 lakh crore. The shares price of the company surged to a record high of Rs. 1,947 on 13 July 2020, after which the Market cap of the firm rose to Rs 12.32 lakh crore.
- The increase in Reliance Industries m-cap comes after it secured deal with Qualcomm Ventures to invest in Jio Platforms for a 0.15 percent equity stake. This is the 13th deal secured by Jio Platforms in a span of 12 weeks, bringing the total funds raised by the company to Rs 1.18 lakh crore.

NABARD organised ‘Digital Choupal’ to mark its 39th foundation day
- National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) organised its first ‘Digital Choupal’ to mark its 39th foundation day. During the ‘Digital Choupal’ session, NABARD also announced Rs 5,000 crore of refinance scheme for banks and financial institutions.
- “Digital Choupal” was conducted in the form of a video conference which was attended by participants of different projects initiated by NABARD, to share their experiences about the projects they are involved in.

Google for India Digitization Fund of USD 10 billion launched
- Google CEO Sundar Pichai has announced the launch of ‘Google for India Digitization Fund’. Through this fund, Google will be investing USD 10 billion or Rs. 75,000 crore in India over next 5-7 years.
- The investment comes amid the C-19 crisis that has deeply impacted the economy of India. The investment will be made through a mix of partnerships and equity investments.
- Google Investment will focus on four areas important to India’s digitization
  1. Enabling affordable access and information to every Indian in their own language.
2. Building new services and products that are deeply relevant to India's unique needs.
3. Empowering businesses as they continue on digital transformation.
4. Leveraging technology in AI- Artificial Intelligence for social good in areas like education, health, and agriculture.

**FICCI survey predicts India’s GDP to contract by 4.5% in FY21**
- Industry body FICCI has projected the Indian economy to contract by (-) 4.5 percent in 2020-21, as per its latest Economic Outlook Survey released on 12 July 2020.
- The minimum and maximum GDP growth estimate stood at (-) 6.4 percent and 1.5 percent, respectively, for FY21.

**Global economy to contract by 5.2 pc in 2020: D&B Report**
- The global economy is likely to contract by 5.2 percent in 2020, according to Dun and Bradstreet's (DNB) Country Risk and Global Outlook Report that covered 132 countries.
- The reason behind this decline is the C-19, which is still spreading, and the economic prospects of countries across the world are uncertain.

**SEBI Revamps advisory committee on mutual funds; Usha Thorat new head**
- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has re-constituted its advisory committee on mutual funds that advises the capital markets regulator on matters related to regulation and development of mutual fund industry.
- The revamped advisory committee on mutual funds has 20-member and will be headed Usha Thorat, former deputy governor of Reserve Bank of India (RBI)

**India’s GDP to contract by 3% in FY21: BofA**
- The US brokerage firm BofA Securities has projected the India's GDP to contract by 3 percent in FY21 because of the C-19 C-19, assuming the economy is opened up fully from August 2020.
- The GDP is likely to grow at 9 percent in FY22, expects BofA, the multinational investment bank division under the auspices of Bank of America.

**AIIB provides USD 50 mn to L&T Infra Finance for renewable energy**
- L&T Infrastructure Finance Company Ltd (LTIFCL) has received USD 50 million from the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), for funding Renewable Energy projects in the country.
- The loan amount is first tranche of the total USD 100-million ECB (External Commercial Borrowing) loan approved by Beijing-based AIIB.
- The fund will be used for on-lending large and mid-scale wind and solar power infrastructure projects in India. Also, this is the first loan by AIIB to a non-banking financial company (NBFC) in India.

**Fino Payments Bank launches 'Bhavishya' Savings Account for minor children**
- Fino Payments Bank Limited (FPBL) has launched a savings bank account ‘Bhavishya’
for minor children aged between 10 and 18 years on 7th July 2020 to make children banking ready from early age and inculcate a savings habit among them.

- Bhavishya is an annual subscription-based savings account, which can be opened with just Rs. 349 (inclusive of GST).
- Initially, the bank is introducing the Bhavishya Savings Account in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh and gradually it will launch in other states.

**World Bank approves $400 mn for rejuvenation of river Ganga**
- The World Bank has signed a loan agreement of $400 million with Government of India to enhance support for the Namami Gange programme. The loan agreement aims to make the Ganga a clean and healthy river.
- The loan amount of $400 million comprises a loan of $381 million and a proposed Guarantee of up to $19 million.
- The new project will aim to stem the pollution levels in the iconic river and work towards strengthening the management of the river basin which is home to more than 500 million people.

**SBM Bank India, Mastercard to facilitate cross border transactions, remittances**
- SBM Bank India (promoted by Government of Mauritius) and Mastercard have joined hands to facilitate cross-border payments and remittances services by using ‘Mastercard Send’.
- Mastercard Send is a secured and innovative solution – crafted to modernize domestic and cross-border payments and remittances.
- SBM Bank India is the first bank to receive universal banking licence from the RBI to set up and operate as a scheduled commercial bank through the wholly-owned subsidiary mode.

**ADB becomes “Observer” for Network for Greening the Financial System**
- The Central Banks and Supervisors Network for Greening the Financial System (NGFS) has been joined by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) as an observer.
- ADB has joined the network to fulfill its corporate strategy “the Strategy 2030” goals such as building climate and C-19 resilience, enhancing environmental sustainability, fostering regional cooperation and integration, tackling climate change, and strengthening governance and institutional capacity.
- With this, ADB has joined the ranks of the International Monetary Fund, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, World Bank and the International Finance Corporation as NGFS observers.

**Care Ratings Forecast India's GDP to contract by 6.4% in FY21**
- Care Ratings has revised India’s GDP growth forecast for the current financial year 2020-21 to (-) 6.4 percent.
- The rating agency had earlier projected a decline in GDP growth of 1.5-1.6 per cent in FY21.
Fitch slashes India’s GDP Growth Projection to 8% from 9.5% for FY22
- Fitch Ratings has cut India’s growth forecast for the fiscal year 2021-22 to 8 percent from its earlier projection of 9.5 percent, in its June update of Global Economic Outlook released on 30 June 2020.
- However, the rating agency has retained its projection for the current fiscal which is expected to contract by 5 percent in the 2020-21. Fitch projected Indian economy to grow 5.5 percent in 2022-23.

Banks sanction over Rs 1 lakh cr loans to 30 lakh MSMEs under ECLGS
- As per the data by the Ministry of Finance on 30 June 2020, banks from public and private sectors have sanctioned over Rs 1 lakh crore loans under the Rs 3-lakh crore Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) for the MSME sector as of June 26, 2020.
- Out of this, more than Rs 45,860 crore has already been disbursed under the 100 percent ECLGS for the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).
- The top lenders under the scheme are State Bank of India, Bank of Baroda, Punjab National Bank, Canara Bank and HDFC Bank.

World Bank approves $750 mn emergency response fund for India’s MSME sector
- The World Bank has approved loan worth $750 million to address the immediate liquidity and credit needs of India’s micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), severely impacted by the C-19 crisis.
- The World Bank’s MSME Emergency Response program will provide financial support to some 1.5 million viable MSMEs.
- With this, the World Bank’s total commitment has reached to $2.75 billion to support India’s emergency C-19 response.