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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

US joins G7 Group’s Partnership on Artificial Intelligence to counter China
- United States has finally joined the rest of the G7 countries in the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (AI), in an effort to contain China’s influence on AI.
- The Trump administration had been the only nation among leaders of the Group of Seven which was not the part of the Global Partnership on AI, set up by France and Canada in 2019.
- The Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence aims to guide the responsible adoption of AI based on shared principles of “human rights, inclusion, diversity, innovation and economic growth”, among the member nations.
- G7 Members: France, Canada, Italy, Germany, Japan, UK and US.

US President Trump regulates social media platforms under Section 230
- US President Donald Trump recently signed an order to regulate the social media platforms under Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act (CDA). The move is aimed at defending free speech in the states.
- The order came after Twitter labeled Trump's tweets as misleading. Section 230 is the Internet legislation of the US that paved the way of social media giants like Google, Facebook and Twitter.

Trump says US terminating relationship with World Health Organisation
- Accusing the World Health Organisation (WHO) of being “totally controlled” by China, US President Donald Trump late Friday announced the country will permanently “terminate” its relationship with the organisation and will redirect funds from the WHO to other organisations.
- The Trump administration had on Wednesday taken the significant step of saying it could no longer certify Hong Kong’s autonomy from China, which was promised before the British handed the city back in 1997.

European Union announces Euros 750 billion recovery fund
- European Union (EU) Commissioner Paolo Gentiloni recently announced that the EU has proposed a recovery fund of 750 billion euros to revive the economy of member countries.
  The proposal came as the 27-nation group has gone into deep recession, which is ravaging the economies of the nations worldwide.

Facebook Launches its Audio-only Calling App ‘CatchUp’
- The internal R&D group of Facebook, the NPE (New Product Experimentation) Team, has come up with a calling application called Catch-Up.
- This audio-only unique app has been developed to coordinate call timings with
friends and family members and enables to set up group calls with up to 8 people. The CatchUp app has currently been launched in the United States for testing purpose.

- CatchUp won’t need a Facebook account to use the service and the app works with your phone's contacts list. Through this app, user will get to know who all in their contact list are free to talk, and which contact is offline.

**Thomas Thabane resigns as Lesotho's prime minister**

- Lesotho Prime Minister Thomas Thabane has formally resigned more than a week after his coalition government fell apart, in a move that could help end a long-running political crisis in the country.
- Lesotho's Finance Minister MoeketsiMajoro has been named by parliament as the interim PM of the country.

**Japan launches new unit to boost defense in space named Space Operations Squadron**

- Japan launched a new space defense unit that will monitor and counter threats to the satellites of Japan.
- The unit is named Space Operations Squadron and is a part of Japan’s Air Self-Defense Force. It has started will 20 members and will become fully operational by the year 2023.
- The role of Space Operations Squadron is to monitor and protect Japanese satellites from enemy attacks or space debris.

**PM of Israel Benjamin Netanyahu sworn-in for the 5th time**

- Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu finally swore in his new government on 17 May for the fifth time.
- The ceremony of the swearing-in of Israel’s new government, the Knesset, was held in accordance with directives.
- Netanyahu will be in power until 13 November 2021. This ended the 18-month political crisis in the country.
- Benny Gantz will serve in the specially created role of alternate Prime Minister and Defense Minister.

**Cyclonic Amphan (Um-Pun) intensifies into a very severe cyclonic storm**

- Severe Cyclonic storm ‘Amphan’ over southeast bay and adjoining southwest bay has intensified into a very severe cyclonic storm as it moved northwards.
- It is likely to intensify further and move in a north-northwesterly direction before turning towards Bangladesh. It may cross Bangladesh coast between Khulna-Chattogram.
Indian-origin Hinduja-Reuben Brothers Shares Second Spot in Annual UK Rich List 2020

- The pair of Indian-origin siblings, Reuben and the Hinduja brothers, shares the second spot in the Britain’s annual rich list, with a fortune of 16 billion pounds each.
- ‘The Sunday Times Rich List 2020’ has been topped by British inventor-entrepreneur James Dyson tops with 16.2 billion pounds.
- Srichand and Gopichand Hinduja, the Hinduja Group of companies owner in UK, lost 6 billion pounds to slip to second position from the top slot in 2019.

Rate of Forest Loss Globally Declined Between 2015 and 2020: FAO report

- The Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020 (FRA 2020) was released by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) on 13 May 2020.
- As per the report, the rate of forest loss during 2015-2020 declined to an estimated 10 million hectares (mha), compared to 12 million hectares (mha) loss in 2010-2015.
- The FRA 2020 report is based on more than 60 forest-related variables in 236 countries and territories in the period 1990–2020.

US CDC Commits USD3.6 mn to Assist India’s fight

- The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has committed $3.6 million to the Government of India to support the country in prevention, preparedness, and response activities.
- The first tranche of funding will be utilised to further strengthen and support the Government of India’s efforts to increase laboratory capacity for SARS-COV-2 testing, including molecular diagnostics and serology.

WHO & UN’s Postal Agency Release Commemorative Stamp on 40th Anniversary of Smallpox Eradication

- The World Health Organisation (WHO) and United Nations Postal Administration – the postal agency of UN, have released a commemorative postage stamp to mark the 40th anniversary of the eradication of smallpox on 9th May 2020.
- The stamp recognises the global solidarity in fighting smallpox and honours millions of people working together to eradicate smallpox.

Saudi Arabia triples taxes

- Saudi Arabia announced on May 11, 2020 that it was tripling the taxes levied on basic goods, raising them to 15 percent and cutting spending on major projects by around $26 billion.
- The Gulf Nation is reeling with the blow on its economy due to low oil prices as a result of the imposed across the world.
Iran changes national currency from 'rial' to 'toman'
- Iranian lawmakers voted on May 4, 2020 to change Iran's national currency from 'rial' to 'toman'. The lawmakers approved an amendment to Iran's Monetary and Banking Act of Iran to make the change.
- Under the amended law, the existing currency of Iran will continue to remain valid alongside "toman" for two years, during which the old coins and bills will be gradually collected to replace them with new ones.
- The new currency is equal to 10,000 rials, marking a reduction of four zeros. The new currency has been introduced amid the sharp fall in the value of Iranian currency as a result of crippling sanctions imposed by the United States.

Mustafa Al Kadhimi chosen as Iraq’s new Prime Minister
- Mustafa Al Kadhimi has been chosen as Iraq's new Prime Minister, ending months of political deadlock. Iraq's Parliament voted on May 7, 2020 to chose Mustafa Kadhimi as the nation's new prime minister.
- Mustafa Kadhimi has become Iraq's first proper Prime Minister after Adel Abdul Mahdi resigned in November 2019 due to massive anti-government protests. Kadhimi is a former intelligence chief.

China launches large rocket ‘Long March 5B carrier’
- China's new Long March 5B carrier rocket took its maiden flight on May 5, 2020 carrying the trial version of the country's new-generation manned spaceship and a cargo return capsule for test into space.
- The large white rocket blasted off from Wenchang Space Launch Centre in China’s island province of Hainan.
- The successful launch of the spacecraft is the third step towards China’s manned space program, which includes the construction of a space station.

US to host world's largest maritime exercises this year
- The US Navy announced recently that it will host the world’s largest maritime exercises in Hawaii again this year. The drills will be held only at sea.
- The US Navy has hosted the Rim of the Pacific exercises in Hawaii every two years since the early 1970s.
- The military exercise is aimed at being a meaningful exercise with maximum training value and minimum risk to the force, allies and partners, and the people of Hawaii.

NATIONAL NEWS
MP govt starts ‘RozgarSetu’ scheme for skilled workers
- Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has launched a scheme ‘RozgarSetu’ for skilled workers who have returned from other states.
As per the state government, Madhya Pradesh is the first to devise such a work plan, to provide work to the maximum number of returned skilled workers.

The State government will act as a setu [bridge] between workers and employers so that both are benefited.

The scheme will provide a platform to the workers and connect them with those needing them, thus fulfilling the manpower requirement of industries as well as provide employment to workers.

India’s GDP growth slows to 11-year low of 4.2%

India’s gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 4.2 per cent in 2019-20 as compared to 6.1 per cent expansion in 2018-19, the slowest growth in GDP in 11 years. The earlier estimate by various arms of the government was 5 per cent growth in ‘19-20.

The government imposed on March 25. However, slowing down of business activities across the world in January-March impacted the Indian economy.

The Reserve Bank had pegged the GDP growth for 2019-20 at 5 per cent as projected by the NSO in its first and second advance estimates released earlier this year in January and February respectively.

Foundation Stone for Missile Park ‘Agneeprastha’ Laid at INS Kalinga, Visakhapatnam

The foundation stone for setting up a Missile Park named ‘Agneeprastha’ was laid at INS Kalinga, Naval base in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, by Commodore Rajesh Debnath, Commanding Officer Eastern Naval Command (ENC), on 28 May 2020.

Once completed, the Missile Park will be dedicated to all the officers, sailors and support staff of the INS Kalinga, who have served in this premier naval base of the ENC since its establishment in 1981.

‘AGNEEPRASTHA’ will have glimpses of Missile History of INS Kalinga since 1981 till date. A 2 megawatt solar photovoltaic plant was also commissioned at INS Kalinga by Vice Admiral Atul Kumar Jain.

Boycott Chinese products, apps, including TikTok: Sonam Wangchuk

Educator and innovator Sonam Wangchuk has created a buzz online after his message to boycott Chinese goods went going viral amid the escalating tension at LAC in Ladakh. In an appeal, he urged the countrymen to snub products made in China and uninstall Chinese apps.

Wangchuk, who inspired Phunsukh Wangdu’s character essayed by Aamir Khan in the film 3 Idiots, recently released a YouTube video titled ‘China Ko Jawaab Sena Degi Bullet Se, Naagrik Dengey Wallet Se’, explaining how people can help the country in this situation.
NPCI Launches AI virtual assistant ‘PAi’ to create product awareness

- The National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI) has launched an artificial intelligence (AI) based chatbot called PAi, to create awareness around its products like FASTag, RuPay, UPI, AePS on a real time basis.
- PAi is developed by Bengaluru based startup CoRover Private Limited. The AI virtual assistant, PAi will be available round the clock to provide accurate information on NPCI products.

FM Nirmala Sitharaman chairs 22nd Meeting of FSDC

- The 22nd Meeting of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) was chaired by the Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs Nirmala Sitharaman in New Delhi.
- The FSDC meeting featured the participation of senior officers of the Government of India as well Financial Sector Regulators. The participants of the meeting reviewed the measures taken by the Government of India and the regulators in the recent months to maintain the financial stability.

AarogyaSetu becomes open source

- The Government has decided to make the AarogyaSetu app an open source to show its commitment towards the core design principles of AarogyaSetu - which are transparency, privacy and security.
- Making the AarogyaSetu app open source means that the government will publish it on a public code repository and release the source code in the public domain. This move will allow developers to inspect the source code of the app and modify it for changes.
- The announcement was made by NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant on May 26, 2020.

NitinGadkari inaugurates tunnel under ChardhamPariyojana in Chamba

- Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways of India NitinGadkari inaugurated the 440 metre-long tunnel, constructed below the busy town of Chamba, on Rishikesh-Dharasu road Highway(NH 94) as part of the Chardham Connectivity Project.
- The tunnel has been developed by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO). Of this BRO is constructing 250 Km of National Highways leading to holy shrine Gangotri and Badrinath.
- The Rs 12,000 crore Chardham Project includes construction of National Highway with approximate length of 889 Km, to connect Gangotri, Kedarnath, Yamunotri and Badrinath.

Army Commanders’ Conference begins in New Delhi
The Army Commanders’ Conference has commenced in New Delhi. This is the first phase of the conference which has been scheduled from 27 to 29 May 2020. The Army Commanders’ Conference is an apex level biannual event that was earlier scheduled to be held in April 2020.

PFC signs MoU with NBPLC to fund various projects in Madhya Pradesh
- Power Finance Corporation (PFC), the central PSU under Ministry of Power has signed an MoU with Narmada Basin Projects Company Ltd. (NBPLC), a wholly-owned company of Govt. of Madhya Pradesh, to fund various power projects to be executed in the State of Madhya Pradesh.
  The funds of worth Rs 22,000 crore will be deployed by NBPLC for setting up hydroelectric projects of 225 MW along with power components of 12 other major multipurpose projects to be executed in Madhya Pradesh.

Fintech startup Zaggle joins hands with Visa to launch payment solutions for SMEs, startups
- In order to launch innovative payment solutions for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and startups, a Fintech startup Zaggle has partnered with payments technology major “Visa”.
- Both the companies will work towards enhancing the productivity and efficiency of the SMEs and startups. They will also automate the processes and reduce the costs simultaneously focusing on easy and faster credit.

India hands over war game centre named as “INDIA” to UPDF
- The Indian Association Uganda (IAU) and Indian Military Advisory and Training Team for Uganda Peoples Defence Forces (UPDF) have jointly set up military war game centre called ‘INDIA’ at the Uganda Senior Command and Staff College in Kimaka in Jinja District of Uganda with a cost of over 1 billion Ugandan shillings or $2,65,000.
- The centre was inaugurated by the Ugandan President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni.

Prakash Javadekar launched major initiatives on International Biodiversity Day
- The Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Prakash Javadekar virtually launched five key initiatives towards conservation of biodiversity on the occasion of International Day for Biological Diversity on 22 May 2020.
- National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) ‘Biodiversity Samrakshan Internship Programme which proposes to engage 20 students with postgraduate degrees for a period of one year through an open, transparent, online competitive process.
Launch of UNEP Campaign on Illegal Trafficking of Endangered Species: ‘Not all Animals Migrate by Choice’.

A Webinar Series on ‘Biodiversity Conservation and Biological Diversity Act, 2002’

WWF Model Conference of Parties (MCoP), to involve the younger generation so they engage in conversations around impact of humanity’s footprint on biodiversity.

An awareness campaign supported by WWF to highlight the crucial role played by nature through its free ecological services provided for humankind.

Andhra Pradesh Launches Rs 1,110 crore Mega ReSTART Package for MSMEs

In Andhra Pradesh, Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has announced Rs 1,110 crore ReSTART package for MSMEs to strengthen the sector during this emergency situation as well as create employment.

The government immediately released Rs 450 crore as the first instalment under the scheme, which would benefit nearly 98,000 units. These units employ more than 10 lakh people who were facing hardships.

MoHFW constitutes committee to reform Drug Regulatory System

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) has constituted a committee to reform the Drug Regulatory System. The committee comprises of 11 members including the senior health officials, scientists and representatives of the pharmaceutical industry. The committee is being headed by Rajesh Bhushan, Officer on Special Duty to the Union health minister.

LokSabha Passed Mineral Law Amendment Bill


Commercial mining will completely be open up in the coal sector by this bill. Another important feature of this bill is that it intends to remove end-use restrictions to participate in coal mine auction.

UP Government Signs MoU with SIDBI for ‘UP Start-up Fund’ to Boost Employment

The Uttar Pradesh government under Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has launched the ‘UP Start-up Fund’ on 20 May 2020, to boost job creation in the state.

The fund will motivate more and more youths to establish their own startups in the state as well as provide employment opportunity to large number of migrant, coming to the state, as per their skill.

The fund has been set up under the UP Information Technology and Start-up Policy 2017. The ‘UP Start-up Fund’ will be in the form of Fund of Funds. CM Adityanath
handed over cheque of the initial contribution of Rs 15 crore towards the Fund, while signing the MoU with SIDBI.

- The Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) will be the fund manager.

**Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana launched in Chhattisgarh**
- Chhattisgarh CM Bhupesh Baghel has launched the Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana to mark the 29th anniversary of former PM Rajiv Gandhi. The scheme launched with financial outlay of Rs. 5,700 crore aims to stimulate the economy of rural areas of the state amid the situation.
- The scheme was announced in the Chhattisgarh Budget 2020-21.

**Beneficiaries under Ayushman Bharat crosses 1 crore mark**
- The number of beneficiaries under the ‘Ayushman Bharat’ scheme has crossed the one crore mark. This was informed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana-Ayushman Bharat was launched in 2018 by PM Modi as the biggest government-sponsored healthcare scheme in the world.

**Union HRD Ministry launches new mobile app “National Test Abhyas”**
- The Ministry of Human Resources Development has launched a new mobile application called “National Test Abhyas”. The application was developed by the National Testing Agency.
- The application is powered by Artificial Intelligence and therefore the students will get instant results after taking the tests. The main aim of the application is to help students during the closure of educational institutions.

**Cabinet approval proposal to launch Special Liquidity Scheme for NBFCs & HFCs**
- Union Cabinet given approval to the proposal of the Ministry of Finance to launch a new Special Liquidity Scheme for Non-Banking Financial Companies, NBFCs and Housing Finance Companies, HFCs to improve liquidity position of the NBFCs or HFCs.
- The direct financial implication for the Government is five crore rupees, which may be the equity contribution to the Special Purpose Vehicle, SPV.

**Government declares six cities as 5-star garbage-free cities**
- The central government has declared six cities- Ambikapur, Rajkot, Surat, Mysore, Indore and Navi Mumbai as five-star garbage-free cities.
- The star rating of garbage-free cities was announced by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs on May 19, 2020. Overall, six cities were rated 5-star, 65 cities were rates 3-star and 70 cities were rated with one star.
- The Housing and Urban Affairs Minister, Hardeep Singh Puri also launched the
revised protocol for the star rating of garbage free cities. The Ministry has now brought importance of sanitation and effective solid waste management to the forefront due to the situation.

- The star rating protocol was launched by the Ministry in January 2018 to institutionalize a mechanism for cities to achieve garbage free status and motivate other cities to achieve higher degrees of cleanliness.

**SCR develops ‘Rail-Bot’ to provide better health care**

- South Central Railway zone has developed a robotic device, “RAIL-BOT” (R-BOT) to assist in the functions of hospital management to provide better health care to the patients.
- The R-BOT can be operated by using Android mobile app and radio frequency (RF) remote control. R-BOT is being used to provide medicines, medical accessories, and to serve food to the patients, taking away the need for human contact in such activities.

**National Migrant Information System launched to track movement of migrants**

- The central government has launched the ‘National Migration Information System’ to track the movement of migrant workers in India. The portal will ensure smooth movement of migrants who have been stranded in different states/UTs.
- The system has been developed by the National Management Authority (NDMA).

**Madhya Pradesh launches Charan Paduka initiative for migrant labourers**

- In Madhya Pradesh, in a first of its kind of initiative, Charan Paduka campaign has been started for the migrant labourers passing through the state.
- Under this campaign, the migrant labourers going barefoot are being providing shoes and slippers to reduce their pain.

**FM announces 5th tranche of measures for “Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan”**

- The 5th tranche is focussed on Government Reforms and Enablers for providing employment, support to businesses, Ease of Doing Business, and State Governments as well sectors such as Education and Health. Seven measures have been announced under this.

Allocation for MGNREGS increased by Rs 40,000 Crore to provide employment boost- Will help generate nearly 300 crore person-days in total.

2. Health Reforms & Initiatives- Public Expenditure on Health will be increased by investing in grass-root health institutions. National Institutional Platform for One health by ICMR will encourage research. And the implementation of National Digital Health Blueprint under the National Digital Health Mission.

3. Technology Driven Education with Equity post-
PM eVIDYA– A programme for multi-mode access to digital/online education to be launched immediately; consisting of:
DIKSHA for school education in states/UTs: e-content and QR coded Energized Textbooks for all grades (one nation, one digital platform)
One earmarked TV channel per class from 1 to 12 (one class, one channel)
Extensive use of Radio, Community radio and Podcasts
Special e-content for visually and hearing impaired.
Top 100 universities will be permitted to automatically start online courses by 30th May, 2020.
Manodarpan– An initiative for psychosocial support of students, teachers and families for mental health and emotional wellbeing to be launched immediately.
National Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Mission for ensuring that every child attains Learning levels and outcomes in grade 5 by 2025 will be launched by December 2020.

4. Further enhancement of Ease of Doing Business through IBC related measures-
Minimum threshold to initiate insolvency proceedings raised to Rs. 1 crore (from Rs. 1 lakh, which largely insulates MSMEs).
Suspension of fresh initiation of insolvency proceedings up to one year, depending upon the pandemic situation.

5. Decriminalisation of Companies Act defaults - The Amendments will de-clog the criminal courts and NCLT. 7 compoundable offences altogether dropped and 5 to be dealt with under alternative framework.

6. Ease of Doing Business for Corporates- Direct listing of securities by Indian public companies in permissible foreign jurisdictions. Power to create additional/specialized benches for NCLAT.Lower penalties for all defaults for Small Companies, One-person Companies, Producer Companies & Start Ups.

7. Public Sector Enterprise Policy for a New, Self-reliant India- There is a need for a new coherent policy—where all sectors are open to the private sector while public sector enterprises(PSEs) will play an important role in defined areas. Accordingly, the government will announce a new policy whereby.

NRAI tie-up with DotPe to build tech platform
- National Restaurants Association of India (NRAI) has partnered with DotPe (a fintech start-up) to build its own tech platform that would enable them with online payments for digital ordering, bill settlements, and contactless dining.
- NRAI is the apex body of the Food and Beverage Industry in India.
- This would be in direct take on with existing food-tech aggregators, Zomato and Swiggy. It is also exploring synergies with social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram to provide and ordering facilities and visibility for restaurant partners who could potentially be its members.

Centre launched ‘National Migrant Information System’ to track movement
of migrants

- The online dashboard has been developed by National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on the existing NDMA-GIS portal. It will help in capturing the information regarding the movement of workers who have been stranded in different states.
- The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has informed the states to upload data on NMIS to ensure better coordination, contact tracing, and movement monitoring of the migrant workers.

e-NAM reaches milestone of 1000 Mandis across 18 States, 3 UTs

- 38 new mandis were integrated with the e-NAM platform.
- With this move, the pan-India electronic agriculture trading portal, e-NAM has reached the milestone of 1,000 Mandis across 18 States and 3 Union Territories (UTS).
- The information was announced by the Agriculture Ministry.

FM announces 4th tranche of economic support under the AatmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan

- The announcement focusses on reforming 8 sectors which are (1) coal, (2) minerals, (3) defence production, (4) airports and airspace management, (5) MRO, (6) power distribution of companies in UTs, (7) space and (8) atomic energy.
- Coal- Commercial mining of coal on a revenue-sharing basis is being introduced. Government will introduce competition, transparency and private sector participation through revenue sharing mechanism instead of the current fixed rupee per tonne. Coal Bed Methane will also be auctioned.
- Mineral- To enhance private investments in the mineral sector, a seamless composite exploration -cum-mining – cum production regime will be introduced. 500 mining blocks will be offered through an open and transparent auction process immediately.
- Make in India for Defence Production- Foreign Direct Investment limit in defence manufacturing under automatic route is being raised from 49% to 74% to boost indigenous defence production.
- Airports and airspace- 6 airports will be put up for bidding by the Airports Authority of India for operation and maintenance on PPP mode.
- Maintenance- Repairs and Operations (MRO)- Tax regime for MRO ecosystem has been rationalised. Convergence between defence sector and the civil MROs will be established to create economies of scale
- Power Sector- Power distribution companies in Union Territories will be privatised.
- Social Infrastructure Projects- Boosting private sector investment in social infrastructure projects through revamped viability gap funding scheme of Rs 8,100 crore. The govt will enhance the quantum of viability gap funding up to 30 per cent each of total project cost as VGF by Centre and state
• Space & Atomic Energy- Private sector will be allowed to use ISRO facilities and other relevant assets to improve their capacities. India to establish a research reactor in PPP mode for production of medical isotopes.

**Government of India & AIIB signs agreement to improve irrigation services in West Bengal**

- The Government of India, the Government of West Bengal and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has inked a loan agreement worth US$145 million to improve irrigation services and flood management in the Damodar Valley Command Area (DVCA) in West Bengal.
- The loan sanctioned under West Bengal Major Irrigation and Flood Management Project will benefit about 2.7 million farmers from five districts of West Bengal across 393,964 ha area.
- It will provide better irrigation services and improved protection against annual flooding to mitigate the impact of climate change.

**AYUSH ministry & CSIR India to Begin Clinical Trial for 4 Ayurvedic Drugs**

- Minister of State (Independent/Charge) for ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH), Shripad Yesso (Y) Naik has announced that AYUSH ministry & Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) are working together to validate 4 Ayush formulations Ashwagandha, Yashtimadhu (Mulethi), Guduchi Pippali (Giloy) and AYUSH-64 (poly herbal formulation).

**Finance Minister announced third Tranche of Rs.20 lakh Economic Package**

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced the third Tranche of Rs.20 lakh Economic Package on 15 May in New Delhi. On 12 May, Prime Minister Modi announced an Economic relief Package of Rs.20 lakh crore with an aim of making it “AtmaNirbhar” or self-reliant.

**Highlights:**

- GoI is to create a facilitative legal framework to enable farmers to engage with processors, aggregators, large retailers, exporters in a fair and transparent manner.
- Centre will formulate a law to provide adequate choices to the farmers to sell produce at an attractive price, barrier-free interstate trade, and framework for e-trading of agricultural produce. GoI will implement a Rs.500 crore scheme of infrastructure development related to integrated beekeeping development centres, collection, marketing & storage centres, post-harvest, and value addition facilities. It is expected to lead to an increase in income of 2 lakh bee-keepers.
- The National Medicinal Plants Board will bring an 800-hectare area by developing a corridor of medicinal plants along the banks of river Ganga.
- Centre allocated Rs.4000 crore for the promotion of herbal cultivation. Under this, 10,00,000 hectares will be covered in the next 2 years.
- Government has decided to amend the Essential Commodities Act. It will enable
better price realization for farmers and attract investments that will lead to
deregulation of prices for cereals, edible oils, oilseeds, pulses, onions, and potatoes.
- Centre also announced the Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund of
  Rs.15,000 crore to support investment in dairy processing.
- Centre announced Rs.4,000 crore for promotion of herbal cultivation to bring 10
  lakh hectares of land under herbal growing in the next 2 years.
- A total outlay of Rs.13,343 crore has been allocated for the National Animal Disease
  Control Programme for Foot and Mouth Disease and Brucellosis. Pradhan Mantri
  Matsya Sampada Yojana for the development of marine and inland fisheries will be
given Rs.20,000 crore. It is expected to generate job opportunities for 55 lakh
  people.
- All related deadline extensions relating to fisheries activities which are aimed to
  help marine and coastal farmers will be undertaken.
- Government is to introduce a Rs.10,000 crore scheme for the formalization of
  Micro Food Enterprises (MFE).
- Government aims to create an Rs.1 lakh crore Agri-Infrastructure Fund for farm gate
  infrastructure for Indian farmers.
- As an additional step for agriculture during the , Centre has announced an amount
  more than Rs.74,300 crore for Minimum Support Price purchases and Rs.18,700
  crore for Kisan fund transfer.

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**Himachal Chief Minister inaugurates e-udyan portal**
- Himachal CM inaugurated the e-udyan portal and IHSMS application developed
  under World Bank funded Himachal Pradesh Horticulture Development Project for
  providing services of Department of Horticulture.
- The Management Information System (Integrated Horticulture Sector Management
  System) has been developed for all G2C services of the Horticulture Department
  through this portal.

**Tribal Affairs Minister launches 'GOAL' programme**
- Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda launched the “GOAL” - Going Online As Leaders
- The programme is designed to provide mentorship to tribal youth through digital
  mode.
- The programme aims to act as a catalyst to explore hidden talents of the tribal
  youth, which will help in their personal development as well as contribute to all-
  round upliftment of their society.

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**FM Nirmala Sitharaman announces second tranche of economic stimulus for farmers, migrant workers, traders under Aatma-Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan**
In continuation to PM Modi’s announcement of Rs 20 lakh crore boost to the economy, and the announcement made by her on May 13, 2020 the Finance Minister of India, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman has made the announcement of the second tranche of economic support the Indian Economy.

These are the announcements made on May 14, 2020.

- The announcement focuses on short term and long-term measures for supporting the poor, including migrants, farmers, tiny businesses and street vendors.
- 2% Interest Subvention for 12 months for Shishu MUDRA loanees- Relief of Rs. 1,500 crore- Government of India will provide Interest subvention of 2% for prompt payees for a period of 12 months to MUDRA Shishu loanees, who have loans below Rs 50,000. The current portfolio of MUDRA Shishu loans is around Rs 1.62 Lakh crore. This will provide relief of about Rs 1,500 crore to Shishu MUDRA loanees.
- Free food grains supply to migrants for 2 months (i.e. May and June, 2020)
- Scheme for Affordable Rental Housing Complexes for Migrant Workers and Urban Poor to be launched
- Technology system to be used enabling Migrants to access PDS (Ration) from any Fair Price Shops in India by March, 2021
- Rs 5,000 crore Credit facility for Street Vendors- Under this scheme, bank credit facility for initial working capital up to Rs. 10,000 for each enterprise.
- Rs 70,000 crore boost to housing sector and middle income group through extension of Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme for MIG under PMAY(Urban)- The Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme for Middle Income Group (annual Income between Rs 6 and 18 lakhs) will be extended up to March 2021.
- Rs 6,000 crore for Creating employment using CAMPA funds- Compensatory Afforestation Management & Planning Authority (CAMPA)
- Rs 30,000 crore Additional Emergency Working Capital for farmers through NABARD- NABARD will extend additional re-finance support of Rs 30,000 crore for meeting crop loan requirement of Rural Cooperative Banks and RRBs. This refinancing will be front-loaded and available on tap. This is in addition to Rs 90,000 crore that will be provided by NABARD to this sector in the normal course.
- Rs 2 lakh crore credit boost to 2.5 crore farmers under Kisan Credit Card Scheme- A special drive to provide concessional credit to PM-KISAN beneficiaries through Kisan Credit Cards. 2.5 crore farmers will be covered.

ICCR launches song “United we Fight” to Strengthen India’s Fight

- The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), an autonomous body under MEA, has unveiled a new song titled “United we Fight” to motivate people to be united, think positive and have never say die attitude in our collective fight.
- The musical creation has been dedicated to the world by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) of India, to spread India’s message of hope, resilience and ‘VasudhaivaKutumbakam’ (the world is one family).
The 3.33 minutes long song 'United We Fight' is written and composed by Joe Alvares.

Economic Relief Package announced for “Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan”

- In continuation to PM Modi’s announcement of Rs 20 lakh crore boost to the economy, the Finance Minister of India, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman has made certain announcements for relief and credit support related to businesses, especially MSMEs to support the Indian Economy. These are the announcements made on May 13, 2020.
- Rs 3 lakh crore Emergency Working Capital Facility for Businesses, including MSMEs - This will be available to units with upto Rs 25 crore outstanding and turnover of up to Rs 100 crore whose accounts are standard.
- Rs 20,000 crore Subordinate Debt for Stressed MSMEs - Provision made for Rs. 20,000 cr subordinate debt for two lakh MSMEs which are NPA or are stressed. Government will support them with Rs. 4,000 Cr. to Credit Guarantee Trust for Micro and Small enterprises (CGTMSE). Banks are expected to provide the subordinate-debt to promoters of such MSMEs equal to 15% of his existing stake in the unit subject to a maximum of Rs 75 lakhs.
- Rs 50,000 cr reseeds equity infusion through MSME Fund of Funds - Govt will set up a Fund of Funds with a corpus of Rs 10,000 crore that will provide equity funding support for MSMEs. The Fund of Funds shall be operated through a Mother and a few Daughter funds.
- New definition of MSME - Definition of MSME will be revised by raising the Investment limit. Additional criteria of turnover also being introduced. MSME receivables from Government and CPSEs will be released in 45 days
- Employees Provident Fund Support for business and organised workers - The scheme introduced as part of PMGKP under which Government of India contributes 12% of salary each on behalf of both employer and employee to EPF will be extended by another 3 months for salary months of June, July and August 2020. Total benefits accrued is about Rs 2500 crores to 72.22 lakh employees.
- EPF Contribution to be reduced for Employers and Employees for 3 months - Statutory PF contribution of both employer and employee reduced to 10% each from existing 12% each for all establishments covered by EPFO for next 3 months. This will provide liquidity of about Rs.2250 Crore per month.
- Rs 30,000 crore Special Liquidity Scheme for NBFC/HFC/MFIs - Government will launch Rs 30,000 crore Special Liquidity Scheme, liquidity being provided by RBI. This will be 100 percent guaranteed by the Government of India.
- Rs 45,000 crores Partial credit guarantee Scheme 2.0 for Liabilities of NBFCs/MFIs - Existing Partial Credit Guarantee scheme is being revamped and now will be extended to cover the borrowings of lower rated NBFCs, HFCs and other Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs). Government of India will provide 20 percent first loss sovereign guarantee to Public Sector Banks.
• Rs 90,000 crore Liquidity Injection for DISCOMs- Power Finance Corporation and Rural Electrification Corporation will infuse liquidity in the DISCOMS to the extent of Rs 90000 crores in two equal instalments. This amount will be used by DISCOMS to pay their dues to Transmission and Generation companies. Further, CPSE GENCOs will give a rebate to DISCOMS on the condition that the same is passed on to the final consumers as a relief towards their fixed charges.
• The TDS rates for all non-salaried payment to residents, and tax collected at source rate will be reduced by 25 percent of the specified rates for the remaining period of FY 20-21. This will provide liquidity to the tune of Rs 50,000 Crore.
• Tax related measures- The due date of all Income Tax Returns for Assessment Year 2020-21 will be extended to 30 November, 2020.

Telangana becomes first Indian state to regulate crop cultivation
• Telangana recently became the first Indian state to tell farmers what to grow as a part of its pilot project. The government will now be regulating the cultivation of crops and will limit the growing of paddy crops to just 50 lakh acres.
• The state government has also regulated the cultivation of Red Gram to 10 lakh acres.

Prime Minister announces Economic Package of Rs 20 Lakh Crore
• Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi addressed his countrymen and announced an Economic Package of Rs 20 Lakh crore, giving stress on land, labour, liquidity and law.
• Details of the Economic Package will be revealed very shortly by the Ministry of Finance. This package will intend to support farmers, labourers, fishermen, migrants and the industry of the country.
• The Prime Minister announced 5 pillars of a self-reliant India, which will lead the world into the 21st century:
  • Economy that will bring quantum jump, not just incremental change.
  • Infrastructure that becomes a symbol of modern India.
  • System which is technology-driven and fulfill the dreams of the 21st century and is not based on the policy of the past century.
  • Demography which is our strength and source of energy for self-reliant India.
  • Demand: Cycle of Supply and Demand to boost economy and provide the power to harness its full potential.

MSME Ministry launches CHAMPIONS Portal
• The Ministry of MSMEs launched the CHAMPIONS portal (www.Champions.gov.in) on May 12, 2020 to assist Indian MSMEs to become national and global champions.
• The Champions portal is a technology-driven Control Room-Cum-Management Information System. The name Champion stands for Creation and Harmonious Application of Modern Processes for Increasing the Output and National Strength.
The technology is fully integrated on a real-time basis with GOI’s main grievances portal CPGRAMS and MSME Ministry’s own other web-based mechanisms. It is based on modern ICT tools.

**SwasthVayu: Non-invasive ventilator developed by CSIR-NAL**
- A Non Invasive BiPAP Ventilator “SwasthVayu” has been developed by CSIR-National Aerospace Laboratories, Bangalore. The unique features of the Non Invasive BiPAP Ventilator “SwasthVayu” helps to alleviate the fear of the virus spread.
- The ventilator is basically a microcontroller-based precise closed-loop adaptive control system. It has a built-in biocompatible manifold and coupler that is 3D printed, along with HEPA filter (Highly Efficient Particulate Air Filter).

**PravasiRahatMitra app launched in UP**
- Uttar Pradesh Government recently launched the ‘PravasiRahatMitra’ app to help migrant workers return safely. The app has been developed by UP Revenue Department in collaboration with UNDP - United Nations Development Programme.
- The App was launched by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

**NIV Pune Develops India's First Anti-body Test Kit ELISA**
- India’s first indigenous antibody testing kit “ELISA” has been successfully developed by the National Institute of Virology, Pune. This antibody testing kit will help in surveillance of proportion of the population exposed to SARS-CoV2 infection.
- For mass scale production of the ELISA test kits, ICMR has tied-up with ZYDUS CADILA.

**HRD Minister launches Central Univ. of Odisha Helpline “Bharosa”**
- Union HRD Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’ has launched Central University of Odisha Helpline “Bharosa”. This helpline has been launched with an objective of relieving the student community from the distress caused during the troubled time.
- All University Students of Odisha will be offered Cognitive Emotional Rehabilitation Services via this helpline.

**India starts “Mission Sagar” to assist island nations in EIO**
- The Government of India has launched Mission Sagar on 10 May 2020 as part of it’s outreach initiative towards assisting five Island nations in the Indian Ocean amidst the ongoing current situation.
- Under the mission, Indian Naval Ship (INS) Kesari has been deployed, carrying on board two medical assistance teams, essential Food Items and Medicines and Special Ayurvedic Medicines five to Island countries in the Indian Ocean. The five
countries are Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles, Madagascar and Comoros.

- The mission is inspired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s vision of SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) and is in line with India’s role as the first responder in the region.

**ICMR, Bharat Biotech tie up to develop a fully indigenous vaccine**

- The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has partnered with Bharat Biotech International Limited to develop India’s first fully indigenous vaccine. Bharat Biotech is a Hyderabad-based leading Vaccine manufacturing company.
- The Indian vaccine will be developed using the virus strain, which has been isolated at ICMR’s National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune. The details of the virus strain have been successfully transferred from NIV to Bharat Biotech.

**Vista Equity Partners Buys 2.32% Stake in Jio Platforms for Rs 11,367 Crore**

- US-based private equity firm Vista Equity Partners has become the third company to buy a stake in billionaire Mukesh Ambani’s digital unit, Jio Platforms.
- It has bought 2.32 percent stake for Rs 11,367 crore in the company.
- This investment values Jio Platforms at an equity value of Rs 4.91 lakh crore and an enterprise value of Rs 5.16 lakh crore.

**Defence Minister inaugurates link road to Mansarovar Yatra**

- The 80 km long link road to Mansarovar Yatra was inaugurated recently by the Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. The road starts from Dharchula in Uttarakhand to Lipulek, China Border.
- The road will not only reduce the time taken to cover Kailash-Mansarovar pilgrimage but will also boost border area connectivity.

**UP suspends labour laws for 1000 days to boost investment**

- Uttar Pradesh government has decided to suspend majority of the labour laws for a period of 1000 years or over 3 years to attract investment. The move is expected to make UP a favourable destination for investment in existing and new industrial units.
- The government will soon set up a Japanese Help Desk to attract investors from Japan.

**ICMR partners India Post for delivery of testing kits**

- Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has entered into a tie-up with the India Post for delivery of its testing kits.
- These kits are taken from ICMR 16 regional depots to 200 additional labs designated for testing across the country.

**Defence Ministry signs contract with Tata Power SED for infra modernisation at 37 airfields**
The Ministry of Defence has signed a pact with the TATA POWER SED to modernize infrastructure of 37 airfields of Indian Air Force. The total cost of the project is estimated to be around Rs 1,200 crore.

The contract has been signed in Two Phases. Under 1st Phase of the contract is to Modernization of Airfield Infrastructure, the airfields of the Indian Air Force were upgraded.

AarogyaSetu IVRS service launched for feature phones & landline
- The AarogyaSetu IVRS service was launched recently to help people with landlines and feature phones. The IVRS is a toll-free service that can be used by people across the country by giving a missed call at 1921 number.
- Once the user gives a missed call, he or she will get a call back from officials asking for their health. The questions will be aligned with the app.

Government Launches Biggest Ever Evacuation Exercise ‘Vande Bharat Mission’ to bring Indians Stranded Abroad
- The Government of India has launched its biggest ever evacuation exercises named the Vande Bharat Mission, to bring home nearly 15,000 Indian nationals stranded abroad.
- Under the mission, to be undertaken in phased manner, the government will operate 64 flights from 07 May till May 13, 2020, to repatriate its citizens from 12 countries.

Niti Aayog Launches Campaign “Surakshit Dada-Dadi & Nana-Nani Abhiyan” to protect senior citizens
- The Government think tank NITI Aayog has launched a campaign titled “Surakshit Dada-Dadi & Nana-Nani Abhiyan” to ensure well-being of senior citizens of the country.
- The campaign has been launched in association with Piramal Foundation, the philanthropic arm of the Piramal Group.

Government to implement new Agro MSME policy
- The central government will soon be implementing the new agro MSME policy for the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME). The announcement regarding the same was made by Union Minister Nitin Gadkari.
- The new policy will be aimed at developing entrepreneurship in rural, tribal, forest and agricultural areas.

India’s Unemployment Rate rises to 27.11%: CMIE
- As per the data of Centre for Monitoring India Economy (CMIE), the unemployment rate in India rose to 27.11 percent for a week on May 3.
- Earlier in a week that ended on March 15, 2020, the unemployment rate was 6.74%. Nearly all the economic activities were suspended which led to the increase in unemployment in India.

National Gallery of Modern Art presents “NGMA KE SANGRAH SE”
National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi has presented a virtual program “NGMA KE SANGRAH SE”. For the current week, the theme of the virtual program is “ARTIST BY ARTISTS” and dedicated it to Gurudev Rabindra nath Tagore as it coincides with his 159th birth anniversary on 7th May 2020.

During the program “NGMA KE SANGRAH SE”, NGMA will display the rarely seen jewels from its repository.

Indian Navy launches “SamudraSetu” Operation
- The Indian Navy has launched ‘SamudraSetu’ operation as a part of the nation’s efforts to bring back Indian citizens from abroad. The operation's name means ‘sea bridge’.
- Under the operation, INS Jalashwa and Magar have departed for the port of Male in the Maldives to begin the evacuation of Indian citizens.

Government launches Saras Collection on GeM Portal
- The Government has introduced a new initiative, ‘The Saras Collection’ on Government e Marketplace (GeM) portal, which will showcase exquisitely handcrafted products from finest Self Help Groups in India.
- This new platform was inaugurated by Union Minister of Rural Development Narendra Singh Tomar on 4th May 2020 in New Delhi, to help SHGs in accessing government markets.
- The Saras collection has exclusively been designed to showcase the daily utility products handmade by rural Self Help Groups (SHGs), and to provide them with access to Central and State Government buyers.

50.37 lakh people internally displaced in India in 2019: UNICEF
- More than five million people (50,37,000) were internally displaced in India due to natural s, conflict and violence in 2019 as per “The Lost at Home’ report’, published by the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF).
- India has the highest number of new internal displacements in the world in 2019. Philippines, Bangladesh and China are on 2nd, 3rd and 4th spot respectively.

AarogyaSetuMitr Launched for online medical consultations, ePharmacy and home lab tests
- The mobile app AarogyaSetu launched by the Government of India has been upgraded to include a new private-public partnership initiative called AarogayaSetuMitr, to provide facilities for online medical consultations, ePharmacy and home lab tests.
- Upon selecting the AarogyaSetuMitr, user will be redirected to a new website, and won’t allow access to individual data from Aarogya Setu, so its safe.
- This new app has been developed in collaboration & partnership of the Principal Scientific Advisor to the Prime Minister and Niti Aayog and will operate under them.

Jal Shakti Ministry launches ‘IDEAthon’
- The National Mission for Clean Ganga operating under Ministry of Jal Shakti launched
“IDEAthon”.
- The initiative focuses on the “Future of River Management” to explore how the crisis will impact the river management strategies.
- The event examined how the social angle of rivers can be leveraged to address the health crisis. It also discussed the lessons taught by the and came to a conclusion that more attention is required towards river management.

**Ameyo launches RBI compliant video KYC engagement platform**
- A customer engagement technology provider, Ameyo has launched video KYC engagement platform for the banking and finance sector.
- The newly launched platform will eliminate the businesses’ requirement of physical KYC in accordance with latest RBI guidelines issued in January 2020. It is expected to decrease the customer on boarding process from the present 5-7 days to less than 3 minutes.

**US-based Silver Lake buys 1.15% stake in Reliance Jio for Rs 5,655.75 cr**
- American private equity giant Silver Lake Partners has announced to buy 1.15% stake in Jio Platforms for Rs 5,655.75 crore ($750 million).
- Jio Platforms, is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) and works on digital apps, digital ecosystems and the mobile service.
- This deal values Jio Platforms at Rs 4.90 lakh crore on equity basis and Rs 5.15 lakh crore on enterprise value basis.

**‘One nation, one ration card’ scheme: 5 more states & UT’s added to the initiative**
- 'One nation, one ration card' scheme will help 60 crore beneficiaries to purchase subsidized food grains using their existing ration card from the fair price shops anywhere in these 17 states and UT’s.
- The newly approved states/UTs under this plan are Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu.
- Already this plan has been initiated in 12 states viz. Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Kerala, Karnataka Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Telangana and Tripura.

**CAIT to launch national e-commerce marketplace 'bharatmarket' for retail traders**
- Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) will soon launch a national e-commerce marketplace named ‘bharatmarket’ for all retail traders.
- The aim of the portal is to bring 95 percent of retail traders onboard the platform, who will be the shareholders. The portal will be run exclusively by the traders.
- The pilot of this project has been started in six cities — Prayagraj, Gorakhpur, Varanasi, Lucknow, Kanpur and Bengaluru.
- The marketplace will integrate capabilities of various technology companies to provide...
end-to-end services in the logistics and supply chains from manufacturers to end consumers, including deliveries at home.

**CSIR-Central Road Research Institute develops “KisanSabha App”**
- The CSIR-Central Road Research Institute (CSIR-CRRI), New Delhi has developed a mobile app KisanSabha to connect farmers with supply chain and freight transportation management system.
- The app will enable the farmers in seed/ fertilizer procurement as well as their harvest reaching the market, among other things and thus facilitate the timely delivery of the produce at the best possible prices.
- The KisanSabha App will also help in providing best market rates of crops by comparing nearest mandis, booking of freight vehicle at cheapest cost thereby giving maximum benefit to the farmers.

**Kashmir saffron gets GI tag**
- Kashmiri saffron, the pride of Jammu & Kashmir, has finally been granted Geographical Indication (GI) tag, thus symbolizing its exclusivity in the international market.
- These saffrons are cultivated and harvested in the Karewas (high lands) of Jammu & Kashmir, by the local farmers, and are known for its unique qualities, which can only be found in saffrons grown and produced in J&K.
- The unique characteristics of Kashmir saffron – longer and thicker stigmas, natural deep-red colour of stigmas, high aroma, bitter flavour, chemical-free processing and high quantity of crocin (colouring strength), safranal (flavour) and picrocrocin (bitterness).
- In India, GI registration is administered by the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 which came into force with effect from September 2003. Darjeeling Tea(2004) is the 1st indian product to get a GI tag.

**“Ramayana” becomes Highest Viewed Entertainment Programme Globally**
- The epic mythological show Ramayan, by RamanandSagar, has scripted new world wide record of becoming the most watched entertainment programme in the world in 2020 as of April 16.
- This announcement was made by Doordharshan (DD) on its Twitter handle on 30 April 2020, based on the data released by Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) India.
- As per DD, Ramayan has also clocked the highest viewership record on a single day and has reported a viewership of 7.7 crore as of 16 April 2020.
- Besides this, the record has also contributed to make DD as one of the most viewed channels.

**Asian Paints to make hand sanitisers**
- Asian Paints, India’s largest paint maker, announced on May 1, 2020 that it will start making hand and surface sanitisers under Viroprotek brand. The sanitizers will be
made available in the market from next week onwards.
- The sanitisers will be manufactured at Asian Paints’ plant in Ankleshwar, Gujarat. The company stated that it has obtained all necessary permissions from authorities.

FIFA launches #WeWillWin campaign to pay tribute to health workers
- Fédération International de Football Association (FIFA) has launched a campaign called “#WeWillWin”. Through this campaign FIFA tribute a special video to health workers and other professionals who ensure the society continues to function.
- Former India football captain Bhaichung Bhutia who is also featured among 50 past and present football stars.

Chhattisgarh top state in providing employment to workers under MGNREGS
- Chhattisgarh has topped the list of states in providing employment to unskilled labourers under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS).
- The data was released by the Union Rural Development Ministry. Chhattisgarh has provided employment to 18.51 lakh workers under MGNREGS.
- Rajasthan is on second while Uttar Pradesh is on the third.

MP govt launches ‘Jeevan Amrit Yojana’ to boost Immune system
- Madhya Pradesh government has launched ‘Jeevan Amrit Yojana’ to boost the immune system of people to fight disease.
- Under this yojana, the state government will freely distribute an ayurvedic product called ‘TrikutChurna (means three peppers)’, prepared by the AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy) Department of the state in collaboration with Laghu Vanopaj Sangh, in areas with infection.
- A target has been set to distribute this packet of 50 grams to 1 crore families of the state.

SPONSORS

SPORTS

36th National Games postponed indefinitely
- The 36th National Games, planned for October-November in Goa, was deferred indefinitely. The National Games organising board has chosen to defer National Games.

Italy beat Serbia to win the inaugural UEFA eEURO 2020
- Italy has won UEFA eEURO 2020, beating Serbia in the final to clinch the inaugural virtual European Championship.
- Italy emerged triumphant by defeating Serbia 3-1 in the best-of-five series.
- The UEFA EURO 2020 eTournament was the biggest ever national team efootball
American tennis star Jamie Hampton announces retirement
- American tennis player and former world number 24 Jamie Hampton has officially announced her retirement from professional tennis, bringing a sudden halt to her career.
- The right hander player then suffered numerous injuries and was unable to play against Venus Williams in the semi finals of ASB Classic in Auckland in 2014.

NADA Suspends Power lifters Savita Kumari and Ankit Shishodia for violating anti-doping rules
- The National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) has provisionally suspended Power lifters Savita Kumari and Ankit Shishodia for violating anti-doping rules.

FIFA Under 17 Women’s World Cup to be held in February 2021
- The All India Football Federation (AIFF) on May 12, 2020 declared that the FIFA Under-17 Women’s World Cup will now be held during February 17, 2021 - March 7, 2021 in India.
- The tournament was earlier scheduled to be held on November 2, 2020. However, the AIFF had to cancel it.

FINA postpones 2021 world championships to May 2022
- Swimming world governing body, Federation International de Natation(FINA) rescheduled the 2021 Fukuoka aquatics world championships to May 2022 to avoid a clash with the postponed Tokyo Olympics.
- The new dates for the aquatics world championship in the Japanese city are May 13-29, 2022.

Former World Snooker champion Peter Ebdon announces retirement
- Former World Snooker Champion Peter Ebdon has announced his retirement from professional snooker. He has announced his retirement after suffering from various neck and back injuries.
- Peter Ebdon was the winner of 2002 World Snooker championship when he defeated Stephen Hendry in an 18-17 final thriller.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
NASA postpones its long-awaited launch of American Astronauts to ISS due to bad weather
- The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) postponed the scheduled launch of American Astronauts to the International Space Station from American soil
on May 27, 2020 due to bad weather. NASA called off its most-awaited mission minutes before the launch.

- This will be the first launch of astronauts from American soil since 2011. Large crowds had gathered along Florida's Space Coast to watch the historic moment. The launch is a joint operation between NASA and SpaceX.

NASA renamed its telescope after 'Mother of Hubble’ Nancy Grace Roman

- US Space agency NASA has announced to name its next-generation space telescope, the Wide Field Infrared Survey Telescope (WFIRST), currently under development, in honor of Nancy Grace Roman, NASA’s first chief astronomer, who paved the way for space telescopes focused on the broader universe.
- The WFIRST Telescope will now be called Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope (or Roman Space Telescope, for short). It is set to be launched in the mid-2020s. It will be the successor to NASA’s Hubble and Webb Telescopes.

Sun goes into ‘Solar Minimum’ state

- Space agencies recently reported that the sun has entered the ‘Solar Minimum’ state and is soon going to make entry into the deepest period of sunshine recession.
- The Solar minimum is currently underway and is a deep one.

ISRO directs start-ups to build local tech for Gaganyaan mission

- India’s space agency Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has directed the startups to develop tools and machines for its maiden human space flight Gaganyaan-1 mission.
- ISRO focuses to potentially help them build products and solutions that they can exploit commercially. ISRO has identified a set of 17 technologies that to develop locally at lower costs for use in its Gaganyaan missions.

ARCI & SCTIMST jointly develops biodegradable metal implants

- International Advanced Research Centre for Powder Metallurgy and New Materials (ARCI) and Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute of Medical Sciences and Technology (SCTIMST), Thiruvananthapuram have jointly developed new generation Iron-Manganese based alloys for biodegradable metal implants for use in humans.

DRDO develops “UV systems” to sanitise electronic gadgets

- DRDO’s Research Centre Imarat (RCI) lab, Hyderabad has developed an automated contactless UVC sanitisation cabinet named defence Research Ultraviolet Sanitiser (DRUVS).
- It has been designed to sanitise mobile phones, iPods, laptops, currency notes, cheque leafs, challans, passbooks, paper, envelopes, etc.
DRDO develops "UV Blaster" sanitisation tower

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has developed an Ultraviolet (UV) disinfection tower for disinfecting areas that are high infection prone. The tower named ‘UV Blaster’ is an area sanitizer based on ultraviolet technology.
- The equipment has been designed and developed by Laser Science and Technology Centre (LASTEC), the Delhi-based premier laboratory of DRDO, with the help of New Age Instruments and Materials Private Limited, Gurugram.

NASA partners with private companies for Moon-to-Mars campaign

- The US space agency NASA has partnered with SpaceX, Blue Origin and Dynetics to build lunar landing systems that can carry astronauts to the moon by 2024.
- The mission is accelerated under the space agency’s Moon-to-Mars campaign. For this project, the three companies will share $967 million from NASA.

OBITUARY

Rajya Sabha member M.P. Veerendra Kumar passes away

- Rajya Sabha (RS) MP from Kerala and Loktantrik Janata Dal (LJD) Leader, writer and journalist, M.P. Veerendra Kumar passed away. He was born on July 22, 1936, at Kalpetta, Wayanad district, Kerala.
- In 1996, Kumar was elected to the Lok Sabha from Kozhikode and became a ‘Union Minister of State for Finance’ and later ‘Union Minister of State for Labour’ in the United Front governments led by HD Deve Gowda and IK Gujral.
- He was elected to the Lok Sabha again in 2004. He has been a member of the Rajya Sabha since April 2016. He was a recipient of the Sahitya Academy award.

Ajit Jogi, the First Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh Passes Away

- Ajit Jogi, who served as the first Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh, has passed away. He was 74. Ajit Jogi had served as the first CM of the state from November 2000 to November 2003.
- He parted ways with the Congress in 2016 and went on to form the Janata Congress Chhattisgarh (J). Before taking over as the CM, Ajit Jogi served as a Rajya Sabha Member of Parliament (MP) from Madhya Pradesh.

Renowned Astrologer Bejan Daruwala passes away

- Renowned astrologer Bejan Daruwala passed away on May 29, 2020 in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. He was 88.
- Bejan Daruwalla was a world renowned Indian astrologer, who also served as an English professor in Ahmedabad. He was known to be an ardent follower of Lord Ganesha.
- His astrological techniques combined palmistry, western astrology, astrology, tarot reading, the Kabalah and I-Ching.
Padma Shri awardee, Urdu Writer Mujtaba Hussain passes away
- Noted Urdu author, humorist and satirist Mujtaba Hussain passed away. He was born on July 15, 1936, in Hyderabad, Telangana. Hussain was described as the Mark Twain of Urdu.
- He began his literary career from “Siasat”, a leading Urdu daily published from Hyderabad.

Hockey legend Balbir Singh Sr dies at 96
- Former Indian hockey player Balbir Singh Dosanjh passed away. He was a part of three-time Olympic gold medal-winning Indian hockey team, i.e. in London Olympics (1948), Helsinki Olympics (1952), and Melbourne Olympics (1956).
- In 1956 Olympics, he was the captain of the Indian team that won the gold medal after defeating Pakistan in the finals. The three-time Olympic-medal winner was battling multiple health issues.
- He is survived by three sons Karanbir, Kanwalbir, and Gurbir and a daughter Sushbir. He was conferred with one of India’s prestigious awards, Padma Shri in 1957.

Four-time Grand Slam singles champion Ashley Cooper passes away
- Former world no. 1 and four-time Grand Slam singles champion, Ashley Cooper passed away recently at the age of 83 after a prolonged illness. Cooper had won three of the four majors -the Australian Open, Wimbledon and US championships in 1958.
- Cooper had also won four doubles titles at Grand Slam tournaments. He achieved the top rank in 1957. The Australian was recognised as the world’s best amateur player during the years of 1957 and 1958.

Sahitya Akademi winning Bengali author Debesh Roy passes away
- Veteran Bengali author Debesh Roy, who had five decades of career as a writer, passed away.
- He was awarded with the Sahitya Akademi award for his novel ‘Teesta Parer Brittanto’.

Grammy-winning singer Betty Wright passes away
- The Grammy-winning soul singer, Betty Wright passed away. Her real name is Bessie Regina Norris. She is an R&B (Rhythm & blues) singer, songwriter and background vocalist.
- She received her first Grammy Award for the Best Song, “Where is the Love?”.

Former TT champion Manmeet Singh Walia passes away
- Former national table tennis champion Manmeet Singh Walia passed away at the age of 58 years.
- Manmeet was suffering from ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis). He had represented the country at multiple international events after making his debut at the Asian Championships in 1980.

**Founding father of rock-and-roll Little Richard dies at 87**
- Founding father of Rock ‘n’ roll, Little Richard passed away. His full name Richard Wayne Pennima, was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame as part of its first group of inductees in 1986 and he picked up a Lifetime Achievement Award in 1993 from the Recording Academy.

**KFH Tournament founder Pandanda Kuttappa passes away**
- Founder of Kodava Family Hockey Tournament, Pandanda Kuttappa passed away. Kuttappa conceived the idea of Kodava family hockey festival in 1997.
- He was a former State Bank of India employee and an ex-first division hockey referee, Pandanda Kuttappa has bestowed the Karnataka Rajyotsava award in 2015.

**Padma Shri awardee K S Nisar Ahmed passes away**
- Renowned Kannada poet KS Nisar Ahmed passed away. He was popularly known as “NityotsavaKavi”. He was born in Devanahalli, Karnataka on February 5, 1936. He was awarded the Pampa Award (the highest literary award in Karnataka) in 2017. He also a recipient of the Rajyotsava award in 1981 and Padma Shri in 2008.

**Delhi Historian RV Smith Passes Away at 81**
- Eminent historian, author and columnist Ronald Vivian Smith, who is best known for his writings on Delhi, passed away due to age-related ailments. He was 81.

**Padma Shri Freedom Fighter HemaBharali from Assam, passes away at 101**
- Assam born renowned freedom fighter and Padma Shri awardee HemaBharali passed away in Guwahati suffering from prolonged illness. She was 101.
- HemaBharali, who was born on 19 February 1919 was an Indian freedom activist, social worker, Sarvodaya leader and Gandhian known for her contributions for the empowerment of women and efforts towards the upliftment of the socially and financially challenged sections of the society.
- She had received the Padma Shri in 2005.

**Veteran anti-apartheid activist Denis Goldberg passes away**
- Veteran South African anti-apartheid activist Denis Goldberg passed away. He was the ally of late South African President Nelson Mandela. He played a key role in South African liberation struggle.
- He was the only white member of the African National Congress’s military wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK).
Legendary footballer Chuni Goswami passed away at 82
- Former India footballer Chuni Goswami passed away at the age of 82 years. Apart from playing football, he had also played first-class cricket for Bengal.
- He has captained the 1962 Asian Games gold-winning Indian football team. He played 50 matches for India as a footballer from 1956 to 1964.

**APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS**

**NDB elects Brazil’s Marcos Troyjo as its new President**
- Marcos Troyjo has been elected as the new president of the New Development Bank (NDB). He is a former deputy economy minister of Brazil and will replace India’s KV Kamath as a president of the multilateral financial institution.
- The Finance Ministry released a statement mentioning that the elections for the post were held in a special meeting of the bank’s board of governors on May 27. The statement also mentioned that India’s Anil Kishora will be the bank’s vice-president and Chief Risk Officer.

**Aiman Ezzat becomes new CEO of Capgemini Group**
- Aiman Ezzat has become the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of French technology major Capgemini Group.
- He has replaced the presently serving Paul Hermelin who will continue to serve as the Chairman of the Board.
- The appointment of Aiman Ezzat was made at the close of the Annual General Meeting of Shareholders.

**Leo Puri to become Chairman of JP Morgan South Asia and South East Asia**
- Leo Puri has been announced to become the new Chairman of JP Morgan South Asia and South East Asia. He will replace Kalpana Morparia who will be serving as the chairman until the 1st Quarter of 2021.
- Leo Puri has earlier served as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of UTI Mutual Fund.

**Wipro appoints Thierry Delaporte as its new CEO & MD**
- Thierry Delaporte has been appointed by the IT major Wipro as its new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Managing Director (MD). He will replace Abidali Neemuchwala as the new CEO and MD of Wipro.
- Abidali Neemuchwala will relinquish his position as CEO and MD on 1st June 2020.

**Indian-origin Siddhartha Mukherjee appointed to Commission on Economic Recovery of New York**
Indian-American physician Siddhartha Mukherjee has been appointed as the Member of Commission on Economic Recovery of New York. The commission focuses on jumpstarting the economy of the state.

On the other hand, Indian-origin Satish Tripathi has been appointed as the Member of the commission.

**Indian economist, AbhasJha appointed to key World Bank position in South Asia**

- Indian economist, AbhasJha has been appointed as the Practice Manager for Climate Change and Risk Management for South Asia at World Bank.
- AbhasJha's appointment comes at a time when Cyclone Amphan has badly hit West Bengal, Orissa in India and Bangladesh.

**Assam’s Jahnabi Phookan Takes Charge as FICCI FLO National President**

- Assam-based entrepreneur Jahnabi Phookan has been appointed as the new National President of FICCI Ladies Organization (FLO) on 22 May 2020.
- FICCI FLO is the women wing of the leading industry chamber, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).
- Phookan is the 37th National President of FICCI FLO. She succeeds Harjinder Kaur Talwar.

**Crisis expert Carmen Reinhart appointed World Bank Chief Economist**

- World Bank Group has appointed Carmen Reinhart as its new Vice President and Chief Economist. Her appointment will be effective from June 15, 2020. She was a Senior Policy Advisor and Deputy Director at the IMF and Vice President and Chief Economist of the investment bank Bear Stearns.
- She has been listed among Bloomberg Markets Most Influential 50 in Finance, Foreign Policy’s Top 100 Global Thinkers, and Thomson Reuters’ The World’s Most Influential Scientific Minds.

**Govinda Rajulu Chintala appointed NABARD chairman, Shaji KV and PVS Surya kumar appointed as DMD of NABARD**

- The appointments committee of the union cabinet appointed Govinda Rajulu Chintala as Chairman of National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD). He was the successor of Harsh Kumar Bhanwala.
- P V S Suryakumar: Suryakumar served as the chief general manager (CGM) of the NABARD, will hold the post of DMD of NABARD till his superannuation on July 31, 2023.
- Presently, Dr. Harsh Kumar Bhanwala is serving as the Chairman of NABARD.
Dilip Oommen is new President of Indian Steel Association
- Indian Steel Association (ISA) has appointed Dilip Oommen as its new President. He is presently the CEO of Arcelor Mittal Nippon Steel India. He was unanimously appointed as President for the next two years.
- He will replace Tata Steel CEO TV Narendran, who stepped down as President on May 1. Oommen is a veteran of the steel industry with more than 37 years of experience and an alumnus of Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur (IIT-K).

Health Minister Harsh Vardhan to assume charge as Chairman of Executive Board of WHO
- Health Minister Harsh Vardhan will on May 22, 2020 take charge as the Chairman of the Executive Board of World Health Organization (WHO), succeeding incumbent Japan's Dr. Hiroki Nakatani, who is the current Chairman of the 34-member board.

Jack Ma resigns from the Board of SoftBank
- Alibaba’s Jack Ma has resigned from the Softbank's Board of Directors. The official reason of Ma's resignation has not been revealed yet.
- Ma's resignation will come into effect on June 25, 2020, on the day of annual shareholder meeting of the Softbank. He served the group for nearly 13 years.

Rajesh Goel becomes new DG of NAREDCO
- Rajesh Goel becomes new director-general (DG) of the Realtors body National Real Estate Development Council (NAREDCO). Prior to this, he was serving as the chairman and managing director, Hindustan Prefab Ltd.
- He is a professional with over 37 years of experience in leading PSUs under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

Zubair Iqbal is JK Bank's New Managing Director
- Senior vice president of HDFC Bank, ZubairIqbal has appointed as new managing director of Jammu and Kashmir Bank by Jammu and Kashmir Government. Iqbal will have a three-year tenure.

WTO chief Roberto Azevedo resigns from post
- Brazilian Roberto Azevedo, the head of the World Trade Organization is likely to step down earlier than planned. Azevedo has summoned a virtual meeting to inform national members on May 14, 2020.
- The 62-year-old has been the Director-General at the Geneva-based WTO since 2013. His second term of office was due to conclude at the end of August 2021.
- The heads of delegations of the WTO’s 164 members have been called for a special meeting to inform them about "pressing WTO administrative issues".
Manoj Ahuja appointed as new Chairman of CBSE
- Manoj Ahuja was appointed as the new Chairman of Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) on May 12, 2020. He will be replacing IAS officer Anita Karwal, who has been appointed as the Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy under Human Resource Development Ministry.
- Manoj Ahuja is a 1990 batch IAS officer of Odisha cadre. He is currently serving as the Special Director at the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration under the Department of Personnel and Training.

Vidyavathi becomes new DG of Archaeological Survey of India
- IAS officer V. Vidyavathi is appointed as the new Director-General of Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) effective from 12th May 2020. She is a 1991 batch Karnataka cadre officer.

Indu Shekhar Chaturvedi takes charge as Secretary of New & Renewable Energy Ministry
- Indu Shekhar Chaturvedi (IAS) assumed charge as the new Secretary, Ministry of New & Renewable Energy on May 11, 2020. Chaturvedi is a 1987 Batch IAS officer from Jharkhand cadre. He will be succeeding Anand Kumar, who has become the Secretary in the Ministry of Culture.

D P S Negi takes charge as Director General of Labour Bureau in Ministry of Labour and Employment
- Indian Economic Services officer, DPS Negi took charge as Director-General of Labour Bureau in the Ministry of Labour and Employment. Besides this, Negi also assumed charge as Senior Labour & Employment Advisor of the ministry.
- He is an Indian Economic Services (IES) officer of the 1985 batch. Prior to this new assignment, Negi served as Advisor Finance (MSME).
- Labour Bureau collects and analyses data related to workers, employment, and retail inflation.

Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury reappointed as chairperson of Parliament’s Public Accounts Committee
- Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, Congress leader in LokSabha has been reappointed as chairperson of the Parliament’s public accounts committee (PAC). He was reappointed the chairman of the committee by LokSabha Speaker Om Birla.
- The PAC examines accounts showing the appropriation of sums granted by Parliament for the expenditure of the Government of India, the annual financial accounts of the Government and others. The PAC is the oldest Parliamentary Committee in which 15 members are elected from the LokSabha and 7 members from the RajyaSabha are elected every year for the 22 member panel of PAC.
Indian-origin Ashok Michael Pinto nominated to IBRD as US representative
- Indian-origin Ashok Michael Pinto has been nominated to International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) as a representative of the United States.
- Pinto's nomination was made by President Donald Trump for a period of two years. His appointment will become effective after the approval of US Senate.

Neeraj Dhawan appointed as Chief Risk Officer at Yes Bank
- Neeraj Dhawan has been appointed as the chief risk officer of Yes Bank with immediate effect.
- He will replace Ashish Agarwal and serve at the position for 3 years.

Mouhamadou Diagne Appointed Vice President of Integrity at the World Bank Group
- World Bank Group President David Malpass today announced the appointment of Mouhamadou Diagne as Vice President of Integrity (INT) at the World Bank Group.
- Mouhamadou Diagne has a deep track record in protecting institutions against fraud and corruption and a strong leadership record in ensuring accountability, most recently at the Global Fund.

Tarun Bajaj appointed as Economic Affairs Secretary
- Tarun Bajaj took charge as the new Economic Affairs Secretary on May 1, 2020. He has assumed charge at a time when the economy is under severe stress due to the ongoing situation.
- Tarun Bajaj is a 1988 batch IAS officer. He was previously serving as the Additional Secretary in Prime Minister's Office. He has succeeded Atanu Chakraborty, who retired on April 30, 2020.

Ajay Tirkey assumes charge as Secretary of WCD Ministry
- Ajay Tirkey has assumed charge as the Secretary in the Ministry of Women and Child Development. He is a 1987 batch IAS officer from Madhya Pradesh cadre.
- He succeeds Rabindra Panwar who retired on April 30, 2020. Ajay Tirkey was earlier serving as the Special Secretary and Additional Secretary in the Ministry.

Former Axis Bank CEO Shikha Sharma named advisor to Google Pay India
- Former Axis Bank CEO, Shikha Sharma named advisor to Google Pay India. Google Pay is one of the leading apps on Unified Payments Payments Interface (UPI), battling with the likes of Amazon Pay, Paytm, etc.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World No-Tobacco Day
- World No Tobacco Day (WNTD) is observed every year on 31 May, globally to
inform the public on the dangers of using tobacco and to discourage the use of tobacco in any form.

- Theme of the 2020 WNTD is ‘Tobacco and related industry tactics to attract younger generations’.
- The Day was created by the member states of the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1987.

**International Everest Day**

- International Everest Day is observed on 29 May every year.
- It was on this day in 1953 that Nepalese Tenzing Norgay and New Zealand’s Edmund Hillary had climbed the Mt. Everest, becoming the first humans to achieve the feat.
- The International Everest Day is held since 2008, when the legendary climber Hillary passed away.

**World Digestive Health Day**

- The American College of Gastroenterology is honored to join the World Gastroenterology Organisation in observing World Digestive Health Day on Friday, May 29, 2020.
- On World Digestive Health Day, ACG joins WGO in its objective to raise global awareness of the gut microbiome.

**World Hunger Day**

- World Hunger Day is observed globally on 28 May every year. The objective of this day is to raise awareness about more than 820 million people living in chronic hunger worldwide.
- It is observed since 2011 to not only spread awareness about the malaise of chronic hunger but also to solve hunger and poverty through sustainable undertakings.
- The Hunger Project is US based organization committed to the sustainable end of world hunger.

**International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers**

- The International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers is observed on May 29 annually to pay tribute to all the men and women who have served and continue to serve in United Nations peacekeeping operations for their high level of professionalism, dedication, and courage and to honor the memory of those who have lost their lives in the cause of peace.
- The day was designated by United Nations General Assembly on December 11, 2002 and first celebrated in 2003. The 2020 Theme: Women in Peacekeeping: A Key to Peace.
World Digestive Health Day
- Every year, the World Digestive Health Day (WDHD) is observed on 29 May. It is organised by the World Gastroenterology Organisation (WGO) in collaboration with the WGO Foundation (WGOF).
- The theme of WDHD 2020 is Gut Microbiome – A Global Perspective

NGMA commemorates 115th Birth Anniversary of Ramkinkar Baij
- The National Gallery of Modern Art organised a virtual tour to commemorate the 115th Birth Anniversary of iconic artist Ramkinkar Baij. The virtual tour was titled as “Ramkinkar Baij | Journey through silent transformation and expressions”.
- The virtual tour was conducted in five different themes namely: Portrait, LifeStudy, Abstract & Structural Composition, Nature Study & Landscape and Sculptures.

World Thyroid Day
- World Thyroid Day is observed globally on 25 May every year. The main purpose of the WTD is to aware of the importance of Thyroid and the prevention and treatment of thyroid diseases.
- The World Thyroid Day was established in 2008 by the European Thyroid Association and the American Thyroid Association.

International Missing Children’s Day
- Every year, 25 May is observed as International Missing Children’s Day (IMCD) around the world to commemorate the missing children who have found their way home, remember those who have been victims of crime, and continue efforts to find those who are still missing.
- The symbol for IMCD is the forget-me-not flower.

International Day to End Obstetric Fistula
- International Day to End Obstetric Fistula (IDEOF) is observed on 23 May. The day is celebrated by the United Nations.
- In 2003, the United Nations Population Fund (UNPF), formerly known as the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) and its partners had launched a global campaign to End Obstetric Fistula.
- The theme for 2020 IDEOF is “End gender inequality! End health inequities! End Fistula now!“.

World Turtle Day
- The World Turtle Day is observed on May 23 every year to raise awareness among people to protect turtles and tortoises and their disappearing habitats around the world.
International Day for Biological Diversity
- The United Nations celebrates International Day for Biological Diversity on 22 May every year to raise awareness about the issue of significant reduction in biological diversity due to certain human activities.

Anti Terrorism Day 2020
- Anti Terrorism Day 2020 is observed on 21st May every year in India. The day marks the death anniversary of India's seventh Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on 21 May 1991.
- He was killed in Tamil Nadu in a campaign by the Tamil Tigers Eelam (LTTE) a terrorist group. After this assassination, V.P. Singh government has decided to observe 21st May as Anti Terrorism Day.

World Metrology Day
- World Metrology Day is observed globally on 20th May every year. Many nations on this day, internationally collaborate to create awareness about metrology and its advancement in the respective field.
- This year theme for World Metrology Day: Measurements for global trade. This theme was chosen to create awareness of the important role measurement plays in facilitating fair global trade, ensuring products meet standards and regulations, and satisfying customer quality expectations.

International Tea Day
- International Tea Day is observed globally May 21 on the recommendation of India. The purpose of International Tea Day is to try to improve the condition of tea producers and tea workers.
- Tea producing countries make a lot of profit but the condition of the labourers working in the tea plantations is very bad. Therefore, the purpose of International Tea Day is to encourage the status of tea workers, workers’ rights, daily wages, social security, employment security, and health.

World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development
- World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development is observed globally on 21 May every year. The purpose of the day is to deepen the understanding of the values of cultural diversity and to advance the following goals of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions:
  1. a) Achieve a balanced flow of cultural goods and services and increase the mobility of artists and cultural professionals
  2. b) Integrate culture in sustainable development frameworks
  3. c) Promote human rights and fundamental freedoms
4. d) support sustainable systems of governance for culture.

World Bee Day
- World Bee Day is observed globally on 20th May every year. On this date, 20 May, the pioneer of beekeeping Anton Janša was born in 1734 in Slovenia. The purpose of the bee day is to acknowledge the role of bees and other pollinators for the ecosystem.
- About 33% of the world’s food production depends on bees thus they are vital for the preservation of biodiversity, ecological balance in nature and helpful in reducing pollution.

International Museum Day: 18 May
- The International Museum Day is celebrated on 18 May to raise awareness about the fact that “Museums are an important means of cultural exchange, enrichment of cultures and development of mutual understanding, cooperation and peace among peoples.”
- Theme of International Museum Day 2020: “Museums for Equality: Diversity and Inclusion”.
- It is coordinated by the International Council of Museums (ICOM).

World Telecommunication and Information Society Day
- The World Telecommunication and Information Society Day (WTISD) is observed every year on 17 May since 1969, to commemorate the founding of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).
- The theme of 2020 is “Connect 2030: ICTs for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)”
- The ITU was founded on 17 May 1865, when the first International Telegraph Convention was signed in Paris.

World Hypertension Day
- The World Hypertension Day (WHD) is celebrated on 17 May worldwide to promote public awareness of increasing high blood pressure (BP) and to encourage citizens of all countries to prevent and control this silent killer.
- The day was held for the first time in May 2005.
- World Hypertension Day (WHD) is an initiative of the World Hypertension League (WHL), an affiliated section of the International Society of Hypertension.
- The theme for World Hypertension Day 2020 is Measure Your Blood Pressure, Control It, Live Longer.

International Family Day
- International Family Day observed globally on 15th May every year. This day is spread awareness about the importance of families and the role of the international
community in the development of the families.

- The United Nation General Assembly proclaimed the International Year of the Families in its resolution 44/82 of 9 December 1989.

**International Nurses Day**

- The International Nurses Day is celebrated around the world every May 12, to mark the contributions and hard work of nursing staff around the world.
- The day was created by the International Council of Nurses, and is celebrated globally since January 1974. This day also marks the birth anniversary of nursing pioneer Florence Nightingale.
- The theme of 2020 International Nurses Day is Nurses: A voice to lead – Nursing the World to Health.

**National Technology Day**

- The National Technology Day is observed every year on May 11 since 1999 to mark the anniversary of 1998 Pokhran nuclear tests and India’s technological advancements in space.
- It was on this day in 1998 that India successfully fired an Operation Shakti missile at the Indian Army’s Pokhran Test Range in Rajasthan. The Test was led by late aerospace engineer and President Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam.

**Mother’s day 2020**

- Mother’s day is celebrated on every second Sunday of May month and this year, it’s falling on 10th May 2020. Mother’s Day is widely known to salute the motherhood, to extend the influence of mothers within the society, to extend the maternal bonds to children, etc.
- In 1914 President Woodrow Wilson declared second Sunday of May as an official holiday in the United States.

**Nation celebrates 480th birth anniversary of Maharana Pratap**

- Nation celebrates 480th birth anniversary of Maharana Pratap on 9 May. He was Born on 9 May 1540. To honour of the brave king, Maharana Pratap Jayanti is celebrated every year on 9 May.
- Pratap Singh I, popularly known as Maharana Pratap, was born to King Udai Singh II and Queen Jaiwanta Bai of Mewar. Udai Singh II died in 1572 in Gogunda and following his death, Maharana Pratap ascended the throne on 1 March 1572.

**World Migratory Bird Day**

- World Migratory Bird Day is observed globally on 9 May every year. The aim of the day is to raise awareness of migratory birds and the importance of international cooperation to conserve them.
- This time the theme of World Migratory Bird Day 2020 is “Birds Connect Our World”.

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SUBSCRIBE NOW
World Thalassaemia Day
- World Thalassaemia Day is observed on every 8th of May to create awareness about the disease and help thalassaemia patients lead a normal life.
- The theme for the International Thalassaemia Day 2020 is ‘The dawning of a new era for thalassaemia’. Thalassaemia is a blood disorder in which your body has less hemoglobin than normal.

World Athletics Day 2020 observed globally on 7 May
- The World Athletics Day-2020 is observed on the 7 May. The date is subject to adjustment, the date of World Athletics Day is decided by the IAAF, however, the month stays the same as May.
- The first World Athletics Day was observed in 1996. The basic objective of World Athletics Day is to boost the participation of youths in athletics.

Vesak Day 2020
- Vesak Day 2020 is observed globally on 7 May. Vesak, the Day of Full Moon is the most sacred day to the Buddhists all over the world. On this day, Lord Gautham Buddha attained enlightenment. The Day is commemorated by the United Nations every year.

World Hand Hygiene Day
- Every year, the World Health Organization (WHO) marks the World Hand Hygiene Day on May 5 to raise awareness among people across the globe about the importance of hand hygiene in warding off many serious infections.
- The theme for 2020 is ‘Save Lives: Clean Your Hands’.

World Asthma Day 2020
- The World Asthma Day takes place on the first Tuesday in the month of May.
- The day is annually organised by the Global Initiative for Asthma (GINA) to raise asthma awareness, care and support around the world for those people who are affected by asthma.
- The theme of 2020 World Asthma Day is Enough Asthma Deaths.

International Firefighters’ Day
- The International Firefighters’ Day (IFFD) is observed on May 4 every year since 1999, to recognise and honour the sacrifices that firefighters make to ensure that their communities and environment are as safe as possible.

International Day of the Midwife
- Every year the, International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) celebrates the International Day of the Midwife on 5 May, since 1992, to recognise the work of midwives and raise awareness about the status of midwives for the essential care they
provide to mothers and their newborns.

- The theme for 2020 International Day of the Midwife is Midwives with women: celebrate, demonstrate, mobilise, unite – our time is NOW!

**World Press Freedom Day**
- The World Press Freedom Day is observed on May 3 annually to raise awareness of the importance of freedom of the press and remind governments of their duty to respect and uphold the right to freedom of expression.
- The Day was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in December 1993. The theme of World Press Freedom Day 2020 is Journalism Without Fear or Favour.

**World Tuna Day**
- World Tuna Day is observed globally on 2nd May every year. This day is established by the United Nations (UN) to raise awareness about the importance of tuna fish. It is observed for the first time in 2017.
- According to the UN, an outsized number of nations worldwide depend upon tuna for both food security and nutrition. At the same time, more than 96 countries have tuna fisheries, and their capacity is constantly growing.

**Ayushman Bharat Diwas is celebrated on 30 April.**
- The day aims to promote affordable medical facilities in remote areas of the country based on the Socio-Economic Caste Census database.
- It will also promote health and wellness and provide insurance benefits to the poor.
- Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PMJAY), also known as the National Health Protection Mission (AB-NHPM), was launched by PM Narendra Modi on 14 April 2018, at Bijapur, Chhattisgarh.

**International Workers’ Day**
- The International Workers’ Day is held annually on May 1 worldwide to honour the contributions of the labourers or working class people.
- This day is also known as Workers’ Day, Labour Day as well as May Day in some of the countries.
- India celebrated the first Labour day in the year 1923 and the day is referred nationally as Antarrashtriya Shramik Diwas or Kamgar Din.

**Books and Authors**

**Penguin to publish biography of Captain Vijyant Thapar**
- The book titled ‘Vijyant at Kargil: The Life of a Kargil Hero’ authored by Vijyant’s father Colonel VN Thapar and writer Neha Dwivedi, a martyr’s daughter. Its e-book will be released on May 15.
- It is published by Penguin Random House. This book shows the journey of Vijyant
Thapar to join the Indian Military Academy and the experiences that shaped him into a fine officer.

Union Culture Minister launches e-book “Prof. B.B. Lal: India Rediscovered”
- Union Culture Minister Prahlad Singh Patel launched an e-book titled “Prof. B.B. Lal: India Rediscovered”. E-book was launched on the occasion of centenary year of great archaeologist Professor B. B. Lal.
- E-book titled “Prof. B.B. Lal: India Rediscovered” has been prepared by the Ministry of culture along with Prof B BLal Centenary Celebration Committee.

SUMMITS AND MOU’S
Facebook acquires animated graphics startup GIPHY
- Facebook has announced that it has acquired the animated graphics startup GIPHY. Facebook will now integrate GIPHY in its Instagram visual social network.
- GIPHY is known for its use of stickers and other products using the graphics interchange format or GIFs.

Reliance increases its stake to 26.3% in US-based tech company SkyTran
- Reliance Strategic Business Ventures Limited (RSBVL), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries Limited (RIL), has increased its stake to 26.3% on a fully diluted basis in US-based SkyTran Incorporated (Inc), a venture-funded technology company which develops modern transport modes including personal rapid transit system.
- RIL has invested in SkyTran to play an active role in advancing solutions, especially in telecom, digital platforms and services, advanced materials, electric batteries and also to develop India’s first pod taxi prototype, a next-generation transportation system.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION
Sania Mirza becomes 1st Indian to win Fed Cup Heart Award
- Tennis player Sania Mirza on Monday became the first Indian to win the Fed Cup Heart Award for her successful return to the court post motherhood.
- Sania won the award for Asia/Oceania zone after securing a whopping 10,000 plus votes out of the total 16,985 cast for this year’s three regional Group I nominees.
- She is one of 4 winners chosen by a public vote, alongside Anastasija Sevastova of Latvia (wins Qualifiers award), Estonian Anett Kontaveit (Europe/Africa I zone) and Mexico’s Fernanda Contreras Gomez (Americas I zone).

DW Freedom of Speech Award 2020 announced
- 17 journalists from 14 countries have been named for Deutsche Welle Freedom of Speech Award 2020 for showing "outstanding commitment to human rights and
freedom of expression in the media”.
- Indian journalist Siddharth Varadarajan is among the 17 recipients of the 2020 Freedom of Speech Award presented by German public news outlet Deutsche Welle on the occasion of the World Press Freedom Day on 3rd May 2020.

Startup India-Animal Husbandry Grand Challenge awards
- Union Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Giriraj Singh has presented the award to the winners of “Startup India-Animal Husbandry Grand Challenge”.
- The challenge was open for application to Startups from 11th of September, 2019 to 15th of November, 2019 on the Startup India portal – www.startupindia.gov.in.

Indian-origin girl Vaneeza Rupani names NASA’s 1st Mars Helicopter
- 17-year-old, Indian-origin girl, VaneezaRupani has been honoured of naming the NASA’s 1st Mars helicopter ‘Ingenuity’. she submitted her essay into NASA’s ”Name the Rover” contest.
- She has suggested the name ‘INGENUITY’ for the helicopter, which has been liked and accepted by NASA. She is a high school junior from Northport, Alabama.

RANKING
AarogyaSetu becomes world’s largest contact tracing app
- Union Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan said on May 27, 2020 that India’s AarogyaSetu has become the world’s largest contact tracing app, reaching over 11 crore 40 lakh people in just 40 days.
- The Minister tweeted saying that the application is a classic example of coordination between government, industry and citizens. The app was recently made an open source.
- The Health Minister stated that the iOS version of the open source app will be released in the next two weeks. He further added saying that the use of the app is continuously increasing and a large number of people are benefiting from it.

India Became Second Largest Manufacturer Of PPE In The World
- India has become the second-largest manufacturer of Personal Protective Equipment in the world following China which is currently leading producer of PPE in the world.
- At present, India is producing 2.06 lakh PPE kits every day which is the maximum capacity of the country. A PPE kit basically consists of shoe cover, gloves, eye shield, mask, and gown.

International tourism to decline 60-80% in 2020
- According to the latest data of the United Nations World Tourism
Organization (UNWTO) the international tourism could decline by 60-80% in 2020 when compared with 2019.

- Figures which will result in loss of USD 910 billion to USD 1.2 trillion and places millions of livelihoods at risk and threatens to curtail the progress made in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

**India up at 74th place on WEF’s global energy transition index**

- India has been ranked at 74th position on the Global ‘Energy Transition Index’ by the World Economic Forum (WEF). India has moved up two positions with improvements on all key parameters of economic growth, energy security and environmental sustainability.
- India is one of the few countries in the world to have made consistent year-on-year progress since 2015.

**Bengaluru airport voted as best regional airport in India & Central Asia**

- Kempegowda International Airport of Bengaluru has been voted by customers as the best regional airport in India & Central Asia at the 2020 World Airport Awards.
- Bengaluru Airport has won this award for the third time in four years.

**Delhi Top State in Internet Penetration Followed by Kerala: IAMAI Report**

- Delhi has emerged as the top most state with the highest Internet penetration rate among all the other states of India, according to a study titled ‘Digital in India’ by Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI). The study has been curated by Nielsen and based on IRS data.
- Delhi is followed by Kerala at second position in terms of internet penetration, means the number of internet users.
- In terms of cities, Mumbai has registered highest number of Internet users, which is estimated to be 13 million. Delhi is ranked second with 11.3 million, followed by Bengaluru (6.6 million), Kolkata (6.3 million) and Chennai (6 million) respectively.

**Amazon tops the BrandZ Top 75 Most Valuable Global Retail Brands 2020 Ranking**

- Amazon has topped the BrandZ Top 75 Most Valuable Global Retail Brands 2020 ranking. BrandZ ranking was unveiled by WPP and Kantar. It has a brand value of $415.855 billion
- Alibaba is on the second rank followed by McDonald’s on the third spot.

**ICC Rankings: India lose top spot to Australia in test rankings**

- India has lost its top spot to Australia in ICC test rankings on May 1 and has now dropped to third. The fall in the ranking was because India’s victory in 12 test matches and just one defeat in 2016-2017 was eliminated from the annual update.
- With Australia taking the top spot, India has slipped to the 3rd spot and New
Zealand has gained 2nd position in the ICC test rankings.

**India ranks 53rd in budget transparency, accountability: IBP survey**
- International Budget Partnership (IBP) has provided a transparency score of 49 out of 100 to India's Union budget process. The provided score to India is higher than the global average score of 45.
- New Zealand has topped the chart. It has a score of 87 out of 100.

**Karnataka tops in total installed renewable capacity: CRISIL**
- According to a CRISIL Research report, Karnataka retained its 1st position in terms of total installed renewable capacity in FY20 followed by Tamil Nadu(2nd) & Gujarat(3rd).
- The top 3 states in overall solar energy capacity addition are Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka & in wind energy- Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra.
- Karnataka’s total renewable energy installed capacity stood at 15,232 MegaWatt (MW) as on March 31, 2020, against 13,845 MW as on March 31, 2019. It has the highest installed capacity for solar at 7,278 MW, up from 6,096 MW a year ago. Its wind energy capacity is at 4,791 MW.

**BOOKS AND AUTHORS**

**JK Rowling to release her latest book “The Ickabog”**
- The “Harry Potter” author, JK Rowling will release her latest book, “The Ickabog”, online for free, for the children during this period. The Ickabog’ is a story about truth and the abuse of power.
- Rowling has pledged to donate all royalties when the book is published to “groups who’ve been particularly impacted.”

**New book released to mark Ruskin Bond’s 86th birthday**
- Ruskin Bond’s new book titled ‘Hop On: My Adventures on Boats, Trains and Planes’ was released on his 86th Birthday in an e-book format. The book narrates some of his memorable travel adventures on boats, trains and planes from his childhood.
- The book presents its readers with a number of the author’s hilarious journeys and travel adventures. The illustrations for Ruskin Bond’s new book has been done by Samrat Halder.

**A Book titled “Wuhan Diary: Dispatches from a Quarantined City” authored by Fang Fang**
- The book titled as “Wuhan Diary: Dispatches from a Quarantined City” authored by Chinese literary writer Fang Fang is a compilation of online diary entries and social media posts, captures the challenges of daily life and the changing moods and emotions of being quarantined without reliable information & is a remarkable
record of the extraordinary time.

- The book was released in India in an ebook format on May 15, 2020, published by Harper NonFiction, the audio will follow on May 26. The book will be translated into 15 languages.

**Book titled “Fear of God” authored by Vadhan**

- A book titled “Fear of God” has been authored by Bommadevara Sai Chandravadhan. He is popularly known as Vadhan.
- It is a book based on the lack of respect or fear of law in India.
- This is Vadhan’s third novel after “Agniputr: When Agni First Spoke” and “Shatru”.

**BANKING AND ECONOMY**

**ADB approves USD 177 mn loan for road projects in Maharashtra**

- The Asian Development Bank on May 27, 2020 approved a USD 177 million loans for road projects in Maharashtra. The projects aim to improve connectivity to national highways, interstate roads, seaports, airports, district headquarters, rail hubs, enterprise clusters, industrial areas and agricultural areas.
- Under the project, around 450 km of state highways and major district roads will be upgraded in Maharashtra.

**Fitch forecasts India’s GDP growth rate to contract 5% in FY21**

- American credit rating agency Fitch ratings has drastically projects India’s economic growth forecast to contract 5 percent in the current fiscal year 2020-21 due to a prolonged .
- This means India’s GDP is estimated to be -5% in FY21 Earlier it had predicted the same at 0.8%.

**S&P forecasts Indian economy to contract 5% in FY21**

- S&P Global Ratings has slashed India’s GDP growth rate to 5% in the Fiscal Year 2021. The reduction in the growth rates has been made due to slump in the economic activities in the whole country amid imposed.

**SBI Research Downgrades India’s GDP at -6.8% for FY21**

- SBI Research has slashed India’s economic growth forecast in the current fiscal year 2020-21 to contract to 6.8 percent from earlier 4.7 percent.
- This means, as per SBI Research Report, India’s GDP is estimated at -6.8% in FY21.

**Worst recession hits India in the current fiscal year: CRISIL**

- The research and rating agency CRISIL has revised its forecast downwards again and expects Indian economy to contract 5 percent in fiscal 2020-21. This was 1.8 percent in last prediction.
This means India's GDP growth for FY21 has been estimated to be -5%. It also said that the pre-gross domestic product (GDP) rate in India will not be possible for the next three fiscals.

Extension in higher economic costs and an economic package are the three basic reasons for the downward revision.

**KKR invests in Reliance Jio for 2.32% stake**
- KKR invests Rs 11367 crore in Reliance Jio Platforms to buy a stake of 2.32 percent in a fully diluted basis. The deal is subject to regulatory and customary approvals. This is fifth global investment deal in last one month.

**IRDAI approves Union Bank to continue with its 30% holding in India First Life Insurance**
- Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has approved the proposal of the state owned lender Union Bank of India-UBI (which holds 25.1% stake in Star Union Dai-Chi Life) to continue with its 30% holding in IndiaFirst Life Insurance.

**NTPC, ONGC to set up Joint Venture Company for Renewable Energy Business**
- National Thermal Power Corporation Limited (NTPC) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) to set up a joint venture company for the renewable energy business.
- The agreement will enable both companies to increase their presence in the renewable energy sector. Under the MoU, NTPC and ONGC will jointly explore the setting up of offshore wind and other Renewable Energy Projects in India and overseas.
- The two companies will also explore opportunities in the field of E-mobility and ES (Environmental, Social and Governance), storage and sustainability projects.

**RBI reduces Repo Rate by 40 bps to 4.0% in Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)**
- The Reserve Bank of India in its Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting on May 22, 2020 has decided to:
  - Reduce Repo Rate by 40 bps to 4.00% from 4.40% earlier.
  - Reverse repo rate has been reduced to 3.35%
  - The marginal standing facility (MSF) rate and the Bank Rate stands at 4.25%
  - The MPC decided to continue with the accommodative stance.
**NABARD issues Rs. 20,500 crore to RRBs & co-operative banks**
- The NABARD, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development, has issued funds amounting Rs. 20,500 crore for the RRBs (regional rural banks) and co-operative banks for helping the farmers.
- The funding was provided under Rs. 25,000 crore refinance facility that was provided by the Reserve Bank of India to NABARD.

**RBI reiterates usage of digital modes for banking transactions**
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on May 20, 2020 reiterated the usage of digital modes for banking transactions.
- The RBI stated that the use of digital payment modes has become more important with the ongoing nationwide.
- The central bank stated that digital payment modes make it easier for people to do banking transactions while being safe at home and at any hour of the day.

**Investment firm Bernstein projects India’s GDP growth for FY21 at -7%**
- Bernstein, an investment management firm based in the United States, has projected India’s GDP growth rate for FY21 at -7.0%.
- This means India’s GDP will contract by 7% in FY21 as per Bernstein.

**BSE, NSE cut annual listing fee for SMEs by 25%**
- Stock exchanges BSE and NSE have announced to reduce the listing fee for their SME platforms by 25 per cent.
- BSE and NSE had launched their respective SME platforms in 2012 and since then have been facilitating SMEs for raising funds, listing and trading on the exchanges.

**Goldman Sachs projects India’s GDP growth rate for FY21 at -5%**
- The global investment banking group, Goldman Sachs has predicted India’s GDP growth for FY21 at -5.0%. Earlier it has predicted the same at -0.4%.
- It means as per Goldman Sachs the GDP of India will contract by 5.0% in FY21.

**RBI extends KYC norms to Housing Finance Companies**
- The Reserve Bank of India has announced that the Know Your Customer (KYC) guidelines/norms will now be applicable to Housing Finance Companies also.
- It must be noted that the Regulation of Housing Finance Companies (HFCs) was transferred from the National Housing Bank to RBI in August 2019.
- And KYC norms are applicable to all Regulated Entities of the RBI and hence it has now been made applicable on Housing Finance Companies also.

**World Bank approves $1 billion social protection package for India**
The World Bank has announced $1 billion social protection package for India. This package will be linked to the programmes launched by the Government of India. Hence, it will support India’s efforts at providing social assistance to the poor and vulnerable households.

The social protection package for India would be funded in two tranches in the following manner:
First tranche will be made available as an immediate allocation of $750 million for fiscal year 2020.
Second tranche would be remaining $250 million that would be made available for fiscal year 2021.

Federal Bank tie-up with MoneyGram for direct-to-bank deposits service
Federal Bank Limited tie-up with MoneyGram Payment System to offer a cost-effective direct-to-bank account credit option for customers in India.
This tie-up will help the non-resident Indians with access to modern, low cost, fast, easy and reliable ways for transferring money to India.
Federal Bank has a 15% share of the country’s remittance market and expects that the tie-up with MoneyGram will give the business a further boost.

BRICS’ Bank provides USD 1 billion loan to India
The BRICS’s New Development Bank has decided to provide USD 1 billion emergency assistance loan to India to reduce human, social and economic losses.
The 'Emergency Assistance Program Loan' to India was approved by the Board of Directors of the bank on April 30, 2020. “The loan was approved in response to the immediate financing needs of the Indian Government,” said NDB Vice President and CEO Xian Zhu.

Morgan Stanley projects India GDP growth for 2020 at 0%; For 2021 at 7.7%
American multinational investment bank, Morgan Stanley has projected India’s GDP growth for 2020 at 0% and for 2021 at 7.7%.
For the global GDP growth, Morgan Stanley has made a projection of -3% in 2020 and 5.9% in 2021.

Government hikes its market borrowing to Rs 12 lakh crore from Rs 7.80 lakh crore for FY 21
The Finance Ministry has informed that Government has hiked its estimated gross market borrowing to Rs 12 lakh crore(additional Rs 4.2 lakh crore) from Rs 7.80 lakh crore for Financial Year(FY) 2020-21 as per the Budget Estimates(BE) so as to tackle the expected shortfall in revenue.
The borrowing happens by issuing dated securities and treasury bills, the purchase
and sale of which is conducted by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

**Mahindra & Mahindra launches digital sales platform ‘Own-Online’**
- Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd has announced the launch of an online vehicle ownership platform named ‘Own-Online’.
- The portal will offer an end-to-end sales experience for prospective buyers. It will also help customers to finance, insure, exchange, accessorize, and own a Mahindra vehicle from home.

**AIIB approves USD 500 million loan to support India’s fight**
- Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has approved a loan worth of $500 million for India’s Emergency Response. The assistance will help India to scale up efforts to restrict the transmission of instances, strengthen the public health system to broaden its response capability and to improve preparedness to handle future.

**Nomura predicts Indian GDP for FY21 at -5.2%**
- Nomura has made the following GDP growth/contraction prediction for India for various years:
  - For year 2020 (Jan-Dec 2020)= -5.0% (contraction by 5%)
  - For FY21 (April 2020 to March 2021)= -5.2% (contraction by 5.2%)
  - For year 2021= 7.9%

**Moody’s cuts India’s GDP growth to “zero” in FY21**
- Moody's cuts down India's Gross Domestic Product(GDP) growth to “zero” for the current fiscal 2020-21. Its previous estimate was 2.6%.
- In 2021-22 India’s GDP growth rate will bounce back to 6.6%.

**Goldman Sachs predicts India’s GDP growth at -0.4% for FY21**
- The global investment banking group, Goldman Sachs has predicted India’s GDP growth for FY21 at -0.4%.
- It means as per Goldman Sachs the GDP of India will contract by 0.4% in FY21.

**EU forecasts deep and uneven recession in 2020**
- The European Commission recently released spring economic forecast that projects Europe’s economy to witness a record decline of 7.7 percent this year.
- The economic projections hint at a “recession of historic proportions” in 2020 as an impact of current situation. Europe is currently facing worst ever recession since the Great Depression in 1930.

**Punjab National Bank extends moratorium to NBFC**
- The Punjab National Bank has extended moratorium to non-banking finance companies (NBFC), becoming the first lender to do so after the Reserve Bank of India cleared
doubts over the issue on May 2, 2020.
- The bank has sent emails to the NBFCs for expressing their desire to avail moratorium. The banks were earlier divided over the issue.

**RBI cancels the licence of The CKP Co-operative Bank Ltd., Mumbai**
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has cancelled the licence of “The CKP Co-operative Bank Ltd., Mumbai” due to non-compliance to various sections of Banking Regulation Act and RBI Act. The license has been cancelled with effect from the close of business on April 30, 2020.
- As a result “The CKP Co-operative Bank Ltd., Mumbai” is prohibited from conducting the business of ‘banking’ which includes acceptance of deposits and repayment of deposits.

**RBI permits Visa, Mastercard and NPCI for contact-free payments for any amount**
- The Reserve Bank of India has permitted the country’s payment networks — Visa, Mastercard and NPCI to allow tap-and-go functionality on card payments for all purchases at retail stores and shopping centers.
- Earlier this facility was available for card payment up to amount Rs 2000. Now tap-and-go functionality will be available even for purchases made above Rs 2000.
- However, the transactions with are about Rs 2,000 shall be authenticated by PIN.

**KVG bank launches “Vikas Abhaya” loan scheme**
- Karnataka VikasGrameenaBank(KVGB) has launched ‘VikasAbhaya’ a loan scheme to provide some relief to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise(MSME) borrowers.
- This scheme is for those borrowers whose business activities are disrupted on account of the current situation in Dharwad, Karnataka.