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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

India, Netherlands sign agreement to support decarbonisation

- NITI Aayog of India and the Embassy of the Netherlands in New Delhi have signed a Statement of Intent on September 28, 2020 to support decarbonisation and energy transition agenda in order to accommodate cleaner energy.
- The main objective of the partnership is to co-create innovative technological solutions.
- The SoI was signed by NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant and Ambassador of the Netherlands to India Marten van den Berg.

India extends \$1 bn credit line to Central Asian countries

- The second meeting of the India-Central Asia Dialogue was held virtually, under the chairmanship of the External Affairs Minister of India Dr S Jaishankar. The foreign minister of all the five Central Asian countries- Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan- participated in the meeting.
- During the meeting, India announced US \$1 billion line of credit for “priority developmental projects” in Central Asian countries in the fields of connectivity, energy, IT, healthcare, education, agriculture and offered to provide grant assistance for implementation of High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDP) for furthering socio-economic development in the countries of the region.
- Apart from this, the Acting Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan also attended the meeting as a special invitee. The first India-Central Asia Dialogue was held in Uzbekistan’s Samarkand in 2019.

Japan to achieve zero carbon emissions by 2050

- Japanese Prime Minister, Yoshihide Suga has stated that the country will achieve zero carbon emissions by 2050. The Prime Minister stated he intends to make a sustainable economy a pillar of his growth strategy and put maximum effort into achieving a green society.
- Suga emphasized the need to shift away from fossil fuels to counter climate change as an opportunity rather than a burden. As per Japan’s current energy plan, 56 per cent of its energy requirements come from fossil fuels.

Indian-origin Wavel Ramkalawan elected President of Seychelles

- Indian-origin Wavel Ramkalawan has been elected as the President of Seychelles. Seychelles has elected an opposition candidate as president for the first time since 1977. He has defeated the incumbent Danny Faure.
- Ramakalwan is a priest of Indian Origin whose grandfather came from Gopalganj, Bihar.

Luis Arce declared as Bolivia’s president-elect

- Luis Arce has been chosen as the President-elect of Bolivia, after winning a landslide victory in the 2020 Bolivian general election. He captured 55.1% of the total votes. Arce will take the charge of the office on 8 November 2020. He would succeed Jeanine Anez,

who is serving as the interim President of Bolivia.

- The 57-year-old, Luis is a member of the political party Movement Toward Socialism. Previously, Arce served as Minister of Economy and Public Finance from 2006 to 2017 and in 2019 under the President Evo Morales.

Alpha Condé won the 3rd Term as President of Guinea

- Alpha Condé, the incumbent president of Guinea and leader of Rally of the Guinean People (Rassemblement du Peuple Guinéen – RPG) party won the 3rd term as the President of Guinea by winning the 2020 presidential elections.
- He won the election against Cellou Dalein Diallo with 59.49 % votes. Diallo got 33.5% votes in the election. Winning the 2020 elections, Alpha Condé is set to govern the country for the next 6 years.

Bangladesh govt orders 'no mask, no service' policy

- Bangladesh government has decided that no service will be provided to people who don't wear a mask. The cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina decided that no one will be allowed to enter offices without the mask. It decided that all offices must install notice boards saying 'no mask, no service' in order to control the spread of COVID 19 virus in the country.
- Involving community leaders in the campaign to wear a mask, the Cabinet Secretary said that the government has also talked to the Islamic scholars and religious leaders to publicise this at all mosques through the Imams.

ICICI Bank has shut down his operations in Sri Lanka

- ICICI Bank has shut down his operations in Sri Lanka after getting approval from the Sri Lankan monetary authority. The Monetary Board of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka, having considered the request made by ICICI Bank, has granted approval to close down the business operation of the bank in Sri Lanka and cancel the licence issued to it.
- The Director of Bank Supervision being satisfied with the bank complying with the terms and conditions imposed by the Monetary Board, the licence issued to the bank to carry on banking business in Sri Lanka is cancelled with effect from October 23, 2020.

World Bank sanctions Rs 3 crore for Sand Dune Park in Goa

- India's first sand dune parks and interpretation centres are set to be developed in Goa. World Bank has sanctioned around Rs.3 crore under the programme. The Goa state biodiversity board has proposed the project, which will be implemented with financial assistance from the World Bank.
- Andorra has joined the International Monetary Fund (IMF), to become its 190th member.
- Andorra is a microstate situated between France and Spain. However, it is the largest microstate in Europe.
- IMF's Membership allows the Andorran government to benefit from IMF policy advice, especially as the country tackles the crisis caused by COVID-19 and can now receive an annual review or "health check" of its economy by the IMF, tap technical assistance, and

access IMF lending if needed.

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Saad al-Hariri reappointed as Lebanon Prime Minister

- Former Lebanese Prime Minister, Saad al-Hariri has been re-appointed to the post, after winning a slim majority of votes in parliament election. Hariri received 65 parliamentary votes out of 118, giving him the mandate to form his new government.
- In October 2019, Hariri announced his resignation amid 2019-20 mass-protests. Previously he had served as Prime Minister of Lebanon from 9 November 2009 to 13 June 2011 and then from 18 December 2016 to 21 January 2020.
- Hariri is the third person to be tasked with forming a government this year, after academic Hassan Diab, who succeeded in forming a government but resigned and then diplomat Mustafa Adib.

Singapore becomes 1st country to use facial recognition to pay taxes

- Singapore became the World's First Country to attach Facial verification in the National Identification Database. The function is called "SingPass Face Verification". This technology is being rolled out to the city-state's SingPass digital identity scheme, offering access to no less than 400 online services, including tax declarations and public housing applications.
- According to the Singapore authorities, the technology helps ensure that the right person is genuinely present in front of their screen, rather than a photograph, a video, a replayed recording or a deepfake.

Jacinda Ardern wins 2nd term as New Zealand's PM

- The Prime Minister of New Zealand, Jacinda Ardern, won a landslide victory in the country's general election, to be elected as the PM for the second consecutive three-year term. In the battle against C-19, Ardern was alone among her western peers in pursuing an explicit elimination strategy and imposed one of the strictest nationwide C-19s in the world.
- Ardern's centre-left Labour Party won 49.2% of the total 83.7% votes counted in the

120-member parliament. The 40-year-old is serving as the 40th Prime Minister of the country since 26 October 2017.

WHO backs India's proposal against "C-19 Vaccine Nationalism"

- Early in October, 2020, India and South Africa urged the TRIPS Council of the World Health Organization to waive certain rules to scale-up research, development, manufacturing and supply of medical products to fight against C-19. This has been backed by the World Health Organization.
- India and South Africa had proposed to ease international and intellectual property agreements on C-19 vaccines, treatments and tests. This will make tools related to C-19 available at affordable costs.

India-Sri Lanka to hold SLINEX military exercise

- On October 19, 2020, India and Sri Lanka are to begin a three-day military exercise "SLINEX". The eighth edition of the exercise is to be held off coast of Trincomalee. It is to be conducted in non-contact at-sea only format. This strategy has been adopted due to C-19 pandemic.
- The drill will include series of anti-air weapons firing, cross deck flying operations to fine tune high degree of inter-operability. Indian Navy is to deploy INS Kiltan and INS Kamorta, Chetak helicopters and Dornier maritime patrol aircrafts in the exercise. The Sri Lankan Navy is to be represented by SLN Ships Sayura and Gajabahu. Gajabahu is a training ship and Sayura is an offshore patrol vessel.
- In 2019, the SLINEX exercise was conducted in Vishakhapatnam. The exercise is being conducted in consonance with India's SAGAR (Security and Growth for all in the Region) and Neighbourhood first policy of India.

India's night trial of Nuclear Capable PRITHVI II missile successful

- India recently conducted the night trial of indigenously developed nuclear capable Prithvi II missile. The test was successful. The test was conducted at the Integrated Test Range, Balasore, Odisha.
- Prithvi II is a surface-to-surface missile. The first trial of Prithvi II was conducted in September 2020. The launch was conducted by the Strategic Force Command. The complete trial of the missile was monitored by Defence Research Development Organization.
- The missile has a range of 25-350 kilometres. It is capable of carrying 500 kg to 1000 kg of Nuclear material. It is powered by Liquid Propulsion Single Engine and is a single stage missile. It uses advanced inertial guidance system. It was first inducted into the Indian Defence System in 2003.

India contributes 1 million dollars to UNRWA for Palestine Refugees

- India has contributed one million dollars to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for Palestine Refugees in Near East. This aid will support the Agency's programmes and services, including education, health care, relief and social services.

- The Representative Office of India in Ramallah stated, India's support for the Palestinian cause is an integral part of the nation's foreign policy. It shall continue supporting the UNRWA's activities in providing vital services and necessary humanitarian aid to Palestinian refugees.

India re-elected as president of International Solar Alliance

- India and France were re-elected as the president and co-president of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) for a term of two years at the virtual meeting of the third assembly.
- A total of 53 member countries and five signatory and prospective member countries participated in the assembly.
 1. The representatives of Fiji & Nauru for Asia Pacific Region
 2. Mauritius & Niger for Africa Region
 3. UK & Netherlands for Europe and other Region
 4. Cuba and Guyana for Latin America and the Caribbean Region

Pakistan listed on 'Enhanced Follow-up List' by FATF

- Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Asia Pacific group has kept Pakistan in its 'Enhanced Follow Up' list.
- The organisation had downgraded Pakistan status from "regular follow-up" to "enhanced follow up".
- According to the FATF's report, Pakistan complied with only two of the 40 recommendations of Financial Action Task Force.

World Economic Forum shifts annual meeting 2021 from Davos to Lucerne

- The World Economic Forum (WEF) said it will hold its Annual Meeting 2021 in Lucerne-Burgenstock, Switzerland, from May 18 to 21, as against the traditional venue of ski resort town Davos in January-end.
- The change in schedule and venue was necessitated by the C-19 pandemic.

Argentina becomes 1st nation to approve genetically modified wheat

- Argentina has approved HB4 drought-resistant GMO wheat, making it the first country in the world to approve a strain of GMO wheat.
- The drought-resistant HB4 wheat variety was developed by Argentine biotechnology company Bioceres, working with the National University and Conicet.
- Bioceres' HB4 wheat is resistant to drought and tolerates the herbicide glufosinate sodium, a combination the company says can help boost yields on dry years.

Bishr al-Khasawneh appointed as Jordan's New Prime Minister

- Bishr al-Khasawneh has been appointed as New Prime Minister of Jordan which is a Western Asia.
- The appointment was approved by King of Jordan, Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein. He succeeded Former PM Omar al Razzaz.

Russia Successfully Test-Launches 'Tsirkon' Hypersonic Missile

- Russia has successfully test-fired its highly touted hypersonic cruise missile called Tsirkon in the waters of northwestern Russia.
- The missile traveled four and a half minutes at the hypersonic speed of more than Mach 8 and a maximum altitude of 28 kilometers.

Jordan's Prime Minister Omar Razzaz resigns

- Jordan's Prime Minister Omar al Razzaz submitted his resignation to Jordan's King Abdullah.
- King Abdullah accepted his resignation but asked him to stay on as a caretaker premier until he designates a successor to oversee parliamentary elections on Nov. 10.
- The monarch dissolved parliament at the end of its four-year term in a move that under constitutional rules meant the government had to resign within a week.

12th BRICS Summit to be held virtually on November 17, Russia to chair

- The 12th BRICS Summit will be held on 17th November 2020 via video conference. The theme of the Meeting of the Leaders of BRICS countries is "BRICS Partnership for Global Stability, Shared Security and Innovative Growth".
- The Summit this year is being held under the Chairmanship of Russia and aims at a multifaceted cooperation between the member countries.

US commits USD 1.9 mn to India to support informal sector workers

- The United States has announced a financial aid of USD 1.9 million for India to support vulnerable populations like informal sector workers whose livelihoods have been disrupted due to C-19.
- The fund will be extended by the US Agency for International Development (USAID), to support efforts to rebuild local economies and improve the livelihoods of Indians who have been hit hardest by this pandemic.

NATIONAL NEWS

Rajnath Singh launches Defence India Startup Challenge-4 to promote innovation in defence sector

- Defence Minister Shri Rajnath Singh launched the Defence India Startup Challenge (DISC 4) during the iDEX event. iDEX4Fauji initiative and Product Management Approach (PMA) guidelines were also launched by the Raksha Mantri during the event.
- All these initiatives are aimed at expanding the horizons of Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) ecosystem in the country.
- iDEX4Fauji is a first of its kind initiative, launched to support innovations identified by members of the Indian Armed Forces and will bolster frugal innovation ideas from soldiers/ field formations. iDEX4Fauji will allow our soldiers to become part of the innovation process and get recognised and rewarded.

Government constitutes panel to screen China's foreign investment proposals

- The Indian government has set up a screening panel to vet all the Chinese foreign investment proposals and those which will be considered non-controversial could be approved.
- The screening panel has been headed by the home secretary and has the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) secretary as a member. As per the senior official, more than 100 proposals involving the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from China are pending.
- In April 2020, prior government clearance was made mandatory for FDI from the countries sharing a land border. The step was widely seen to be directed at curbing Chinese takeover of companies amid stock market volatility during the C-19 pandemic.

First VVIP aircraft 'Air India One' for PM, President, Vice President arrives

- The first of the two VVIP aircraft Air India One for President, Vice President, and Prime Minister arrived in India on October 1, 2020.
- The Special Extra Section Flight (SESF) aircraft for the country's VVIP arrived at Delhi's International Airport from the United States. A joint team of senior officers from Air India, VVIP security personnel and senior government officials had gone to the US to accept the delivery of the VVIP's flight Air India One.
- The Air India One is equipped with an advanced and secured communication system, which will enable availing audio and video communication functions mid-air without any worries of hacking or being taped.
- The VVIP aircraft B-777 will replace wide-body aircraft Boeing B-747 jumbo aircraft whose call sign is Air India One.

World's longest highway tunnel 'Atal Tunnel' to be opened by Prime Minister

- Prime Minister of India will open World's longest highway tunnel 'Atal Tunnel' on 3 October 2020.
- This Tunnel is named after former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
- This is 9.2 km long tunnel which is the longest highway tunnel in the world.
- This tunnel is connecting Manali to Lahaul-Spiti valley throughout the year.
- It reduces the road distance by 46 Kms between Manali and Leh and the time by about 4 to 5 hours.

Tribes India E-Marketplace – India's Largest Market of Tribal Products

- Union Minister for Ministry of Tribal Affairs Shri Arjun Munda will launch – India's Largest Market of Tribal Products named Tribes India E-Marketplace on 02 October 2020, on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti.
- This Tribes India e-Marketplace is an initiative of the government which aims to give platform for 5 lakh tribal producers for sourcing of various handicraft, handloom, organic food products across the country and brings the best of tribal produce.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan launches CSIR Technologies for rural development

- The Minister of Science & Technology, Earth Sciences and Health & Family Welfare, Dr. Harsh Vardhan has launched CSIR Technologies for rural development under a joint initiative of Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR), Unnat Bharat Abhiyan (UBA), Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IITD) and Vijnana Bharti (VIBHA).
- The initiative was launched during the celebrations of 40th foundation day of CSIR-NISTADS.

Telangana CM Chandrasekhar Rao launches 'Dharani' Portal

- Telangana Chief Minister, K Chandrasekhar Rao has launched the web portal 'Dharani' for land and property registrations. The state government will now undertake all the property transactions, including registrations and mutations, through a web portal.
- The Dharani is a one-stop portal for all land and property-related transactions as well as documentation.
- The portal will do away with any loopholes in the registration process as well as store all land and property-related information online.
- It will simplify the registration, succession and even partition of agriculture lands, to ensure that the entire process is completed within a few minutes and the e-pattadar passbook is provided to the landowners immediately.

IIT Kanpur, ASI sign MoU with Italian institutes for restoration of monuments

- The Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur (IIT-K) and the Archaeological Survey of India have signed an agreement with two institutions from Italy, seeking restoration and protection of historical monuments.
- The MoU was signed among IIT-K, Ca'Foscari University of Venice, Soprintendenza Archeologia, Belle Arti E Paesaggio, Venice, on creating a network and sharing skills for restoration and protection of historical monuments.
- All institutes have agreed to develop collaborative scientific study activities and sharing skills to restore and protect monuments on a reciprocal and equal basis.
- All institutes shall seek to promote collaboration and activities in areas such as collaboration in scientific studies and skill sharing, the exchange of knowledge, experience, academic materials and publications, conducting workshops, undertaking joint field studies and technology development.

Indian Army launches indigenous mobile application SAI

- The Indian Army has launched a secured messaging application platform named 'Secure Application for the Internet' (SAI).
- This mobile application for Android will support end-to-end secure voice, text and video calling services. This application is similar to applications like Telegram and WhatsApp.
- SAI has been vetted by CERT-in empanelled auditor and Army Cyber Group. It also informed that the process for filing Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) hosting the infrastructure on NIC and working on iOS platform is currently in progress.
- Ministry of Defence also informed that SAI will be used by pan Army to ensure securing

messaging.

- Upon reviewing the functionalities of the application, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh praised Col Sai Shankar for his skill and ingenuity for developing the application.

BharatPe launches digital gold on its platform

- A leading merchant payment network, BharatPe has announced the launch of digital gold on its platform. The launch of this new category of fintech product is in line with the company's commitment to offering the entire gamut of financial products to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).
- BharatPe's merchants will be able to buy and sell 99.5 per cent pure 24-carat gold. Merchants can choose to buy in rupees or grams, any time of the day and from anywhere, by using the BharatPe app.
- To facilitate this, BharatPe has also partnered with Safegold, a digital platform that allows customers to buy, sell and receive vaulted gold.
- SafeGold has appointed IDBI Trusteeship Services to protect the interest of merchants with regard to their gold purchases.

PM Modi Inaugurates 4th edition of India Energy Forum

- PM Narendra Modi has inaugurated the 4th India Energy Forum by CERAWEEK organised by HIS Markit.
- The theme of this edition is "India's Energy Future in a World of Change". India is the third-largest and the fastest-growing aviation market in terms of domestic aviation and Indian carriers are projected to increase their fleet size from 600 to 1200 by 2024.
- According to PM, India's Energy Plan aims to ensure energy justice while fully following India's global commitments for sustainable growth.
- This means more energy is needed to improve the lives of Indians with a smaller carbon footprint. He envisioned India's energy sector to be growth-centric, industry-friendly and environmentally conscious.

Kerala becomes the first state to fix floor price for vegetables

- Kerala becomes the first state in the country to fix the floor price for vegetables.
- The floor price will be 20 per cent above the production cost of the vegetable. Even if the market price goes below the floor price, the product will be procured at the floor price from the farmers.
- This is the first time in the country that the floor price is being fixed for vegetables produced in the state.

Odisha CM launches 'Sumangal' & Student Scholarship web portals

- Odisha Chief Minister, Naveen Patnaik has launched two web portals named 'Odisha State Scholarship Portal' and 'Sumangal Portal'.
- The former portal is to help eligible students of the state to avail scholarship benefits in a seamless and transparent manner, while the latter one is to help people avail inter-caste marriage incentives.

Vice President launches virtual festival of 'Parampara Series 2020

- Vice President, M Venkaiah Naidu has launched the virtual festival of "Parampara Series 2020-National Festival of Music and Dance" organised by Natya Tarangini in partnership with the United Nations. Natya Tarangini has been organising this for the past 23 years.
- This dance and music festival as the normal life has been disrupted by C-19, economic downturns and lack of social interaction caused by the pandemic. It may be noted that this festival has been organized to coincide with the World Day for Audio-visual Heritage.

GoI sets up committee to commemorate 400th anniversary of Guru Tegh Bahadur

- The Centre has set up a high-level committee headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to commemorate the 400th birth anniversary of Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur.
- Union Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla will be the member secretary of the 70-member high-level committee.
- The committee will look into the approval of policies, plans, programmes and supervision and guiding the commemoration, as well as for deciding dates for detailed programmes of celebration.

Arjun Munda launches two Centers of Excellence for tribal welfare

- The Union Minister of Tribal Affairs, Arjun Munda has launched two Centers of Excellence (CoE) for Tribal Welfare in a collaboration between Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) and Art of Living (AoL) through video conference.
- The first CoE has been launched in Aurangabad district of Maharashtra for training about 10000 tribal farmers in the field of sustainable natural farming based on Go-Adharith farming techniques.
- The second CoE has been launched in Jharkhand in the field of 'Strengthening PRIs' in 5 districts of the state covering 30 Gram Panchayats and 150 villages.

Mansukh Mandaviya inaugurates 'Direct Port Entry Facility'

- The Union Minister of State for Shipping (I/C), Mansukh Mandaviya has inaugurated the 'Direct Port Entry (DPE) facility' of V.O. Chidambaranar Port Trust in Tamil Nadu.
- This will help in increasing Ease of Doing Business for the exporters, as the facility will bring efficiency and reduce dwell time, lower tariff cost and improve the competitiveness of shipper in the international trade.
- The state-of-the-art Direct Port Entry (DPE) facility would enable direct movement of containers from factories, without intermediate handling at any Container Freight Station (CFS), thus facilitating the shippers to Gate-In their factory stuffed exports directly to the Container Terminal on 24x7 basis.

UP Govt to establish anti-human trafficking Police Stations

- Uttar Pradesh Government has decided to establish anti-human trafficking Police Stations in each and every district in a major step towards the security of women and

children.

- These Police Stations will be given enough powers to register the case and investigate the matter independently.
- The state government is going to establish 40 new anti-trafficking units which will work like police stations in districts and will conduct the investigation after registering the cases.
- Earlier, only 35 districts in the state had Police stations of anti-human trafficking unit which was established in 2011 and 2018.
- The new Police stations are being established after directives from women safety division of union Government. Union Government has also allocated funds for these units.

Young Advocates Welfare Fund launched in Tamil Nadu

- The Young Advocates Welfare Fund has been launched in Tamil Nadu. The Young Advocates Welfare Scheme is aimed at helping such fresh candidates to withstand the initial challenges. It provides monthly financial assistance of three thousand rupees each for two years to the lawyers who just come out of law colleges.
- Normally a fresher from law colleges takes three to four years to begin practice as an advocate in the court as the registration in the Bar Council, and the mandatory practicing under a senior advocate takes time. Unable to sustain themselves during the initial period, many from poor and rural backgrounds shifted their profession.

NATO plans to set up new space center in Germany

- The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) alliance, plans to build a headquarters for space operations at its airbase in Ramstein in Germany, to counter a rising Russian and Chinese threat.
- The new centre is to be a central point of contact to support NATO missions with communication and satellite images. It will also be a place to exchange information on potential threats to satellites. Some 2,000 satellites orbit the Earth, more than half of which are operated by NATO members, allowing everything from mobile phone services to weather forecasts. Currently, at least 40 per cent of NATO's communications are via satellite.

Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri launches 'e-Dharti Geo portal'

- Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister, Hardeep Singh Puri has launched the 'e-Dharti Geo Portal' to integrate legacy drawings such as maps and lease plans in the management information system and make its geographic information system (GIS)-enabled.
- The Land and Development Office deals with more than 60000 residential, commercial, industrial and institutional properties. Now with the launch of the portal the property certificate details and outline map of the property can be easily accessed online. The portal is highly beneficial to the elderly public. It will help avoid unnecessary litigation. Also, the portal will help a purchaser to learn about the details of the property whether any lawsuit is pending in respect of the property.

Prahlad Singh Patel virtually launched “Life in Miniature” project

- Union Minister of State for Culture and Tourism (I/C), Prahlad Singh Patel has virtually launched the “Life in Miniature” project, a collaboration between the National Museum, New Delhi, Ministry of Culture, and Google Arts & culture.
- On the Google Arts & Culture app, online viewers can experience the first Augmented Reality-powered art gallery designed with traditional Indian architecture, and explore a life-size virtual space where you can walk up to a selection of miniature paintings.
- The artworks showcased are presented along with five universal themes of the human relationship with nature, love, celebration, faith, and power.
- Users will be able to see famous miniature collections of the National Museum, like the Ramayana, Royal Saga, Pahari style paintings in never before seen ways and in extraordinary detail, in just a few clicks at co/LifeInMiniature.

India-assisted hydroelectric project in Bhutan wins UK engineers’ body award

- India-assisted Mangdechhu Hydroelectric project in Bhutan has been awarded the Brunel Medal-2020, an award conferred by the UK’s top engineering body, Institute of Civil Engineers.
- The 720-MW Mangdechhu run-of-river power project is built on the Mangdechhu River in Trongsa Dzongkhag district of central Bhutan at a cost of Rs 4,500-crore.
- The project was jointly inaugurated by the prime ministers of the two countries in August 2019, during Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s state visit to Bhutan.

Pakistan to remain in grey list of FATF till Feb 2021

- The global terror financing watchdog, Financial Action Task Force (FATF) has announced that Pakistan will continue to remain on its grey list till February 2021.
- This decision has been taken since Pakistan has not been able to fulfil six out of the 27 mandates to check terror funding. FATF has strongly urged Pakistan to swiftly complete its full action plan by February 2021.

PM Modi launched 3 projects in Gujarat

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated three projects in his home State Gujarat, one each related to farmers’ welfare, healthcare, and tourism development, via video conference from New Delhi. The projects inaugurated include:
Kisan Suryodaya Yojna
- The ‘Kisan Suryodaya Yojna’ is an Agri scheme which aims to provide power supply during daytime from 5 am to 9 pm (16 hours) for irrigation purposes to farmers.
- The state government has allocated a budget of Rs 3,500 crores for installing transmission infrastructure under this scheme by 2023.
- Initially, Dahod, Patan, Mahisagar, Panchmahal, Chhota Udepur, Kheda, Tapi, Valsad, Anand and Gir-Somnath districts have been covered under the scheme for 2020-21. The rest will be included in a phased manner by 2022-23.
- India’s biggest cardiac hospital in Ahmedabad
- The Paediatric Heart Hospital was inaugurated at U.N Mehta Institute of Cardiology and

Research Centre at Civil Hospital campus in Ahmedabad and a Mobile Application for telecardiology.

- The new facilities have been set up at the cost of Rs 470 crore and will be India's biggest hospital for cardiology.
- It has increased the existing 450 beds to 1251 beds, 531 cardiac ICU beds, 15 cardiac modular operation theatres and 6 cardiac cath labs.
- World's longest temple ropeway project at Girnar in Junagadh
- Girnar hill ropeway at Junagadh is Rs 130 crore project. It would attract more tourists and pilgrims to this historical place which will boost employment opportunities.
- The 2,320 metres long ropeway has a capacity of carrying 1,000 passengers every hour.

Mandi district bags top position for implementation of PMGSY

- Union Ministry of Rural Development has declared the list of top-performing 30 districts in the country for implementing the PMGSY programme.
- Himachal Pradesh's, Mandi district has bagged top position among 30 districts of the country in the successful implementation of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY).
- Himachal Pradesh has also secured the second position at the national level for construction of roads under PMGSY.

India gets Chairmanship of ILO Governing body after 35 years

- India has assumed the Chairmanship of the Governing Body of International Labour Organization (ILO), after a gap of 35 years.
- The Labour and Employment Secretary, Apurva Chandra, has been elected as the Chairperson of the Governing Body of the ILO for the period October 2020- June 2021.
- Chandra is a 1988 batch Indian Administrative Service officer of Maharashtra Cadre. He would preside over the upcoming the Governing Body's meeting, to be held in November 2020.
- The Governing Body is the apex executive body of the ILO which decides policies, programmes, agenda, budget and elects the Director-General.
- At present, ILO (Headquarter- Geneva, Switzerland) has 187 members. It meets three times a year, in March, June and November.

NITI Aayog panel for reforms in urban planning education

- NITI Aayog has constituted a 14-member advisory committee to look into introducing reforms in the urban planning education system. The panel will be headed by NITI Aayog Vice-Chairman Rajiv Kumar.
- The members of the committee include Amitabh Kant, CEO of NITI Aayog and secretaries of Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs(MoHUA), Ministry of Education(MoE) and Ministry of Panchayati Raj.
- The committee will examine the current system in terms of multidisciplinary, curriculum and other related issues at the level of graduates and postgraduates against the challenges of rapid urbanization.
- The committee will examine the urban planning education system in India and examine

the availability, demand and supply of the qualified urban planners in India.

Uttarakhand CM launches Integrated Model Agricultural Village scheme

- Uttarakhand Chief Minister, Trivendra Singh Rawat has inaugurated Integrated Model Agricultural Village scheme (Ekikrit Adarsh Krishi Gram Yojana) in the state in partnership with NABARD.
- Putting emphasis on mechanised farming for boosting productivity, state Agriculture Minister Subodh Uniyal urged National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) Chairman G R Chintala to lend a helping hand to farmers to switch over to mechanised farming.

Tamil Nadu Government launched “Smart Black Board Scheme”

- The state government of Tamil Nadu has launched the Smart Black Board scheme in 80,000 government schools of the state. The initiative aims to ensure a better teaching environment as well as lead towards Digital India and Atmanirbhar Bharat.
- Under this Smart Black Board scheme, audiovisual teaching material would be possible, that can even be fed into the computer screens in classes using widely available pen drives. The Tamil Nadu Govt has taken an important decision to lessen syllabus for season 2020-21 by 40 per cent.

Asan Conservation Reserve becomes Uttarakhand’s First Ramsar site

- Asan Conservation Reserve has become Uttarakhand’s first Ramsar site, making it a ‘Wetland of International Importance’, announced the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. The Reserve is located on the banks of Yamuna river near Dehradun district in Garhwal region of the Himalayan state.
- “Asan Conservation Reserve cleared five out of the nine criteria needed to be declared as a Ramsar site and get identified as a Wetland of International Importance. It cleared the category on species and ecological communities, one on water-birds and another on fish. Ramsar declares Asan Conservation Reserve as a site of international importance. With this, the number of Ramsar sites in India goes up to 38, the highest in South Asia and Uttarakhand gets its first Ramsar site.

Andhra Pradesh CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy launched ‘YSR BIMA’ for BPL families

- The Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has launched ‘YSR Bima’, a scheme to provide financial assistance through insurance cover to the beneficiary in case of death or accident of their families members. All families with white ration cards are eligible for YSR Bima scheme. Village/ward volunteers will visit the families and enrol the names of the primary householders.
- The claim amount will be directly credited into the beneficiary bank account within 15 days of making the claim.
- Apart from this, immediate assistance of Rs 10,000 will be provided to the families through village and ward secretariats.
- The scheme will benefit 1.41 crore BPL families of the state.
- An amount of Rs 510 crore would be paid by the state government annually as an

insurance premium for this scheme.

- This will also make Andhra Pradesh as the first state in the country to single-handedly fund the insurance scheme.

Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik launches 'Mo Bidyut' portal

- Odisha Chief Minister, Naveen Patnaik has launched the electricity consumer service portal "Mo Bidyut" and a mobile app through video conference.
- The bilingual online electricity integrated consumer service portal www.mobidyut.com developed by the Energy Department and dedicated to the public under 5T (Teamwork, Transparency, Technology, Time leading to Transformation) initiative of the state government. Through this people will now be able to avail efficient, time-bound, and transparent online service delivery.

Uttar Pradesh emerges as top destination in 2019

- Uttar Pradesh has emerged as the top destination for attracting the highest number of domestic tourists visiting the state in 2019 as per the Indian Tourism Statistics (ITS) 2020, released by the Ministry of Tourism. About 53.6 crore domestic tourists visited Uttar Pradesh in 2019, which is 23.1% of the total travellers. Tamil Nadu (21.3%) came second followed by Andhra Pradesh (10.2%).

Tamil Top destination for attracting foreign travellers

1. In terms of Foreign tourists, Tamil Nadu has topped the list with nearly 68 lakh foreigners visiting the state in 2019.
2. Maharashtra (over 55 lakh) is at the second position in this list while Uttar Pradesh (over 47 lakh) has secured the third position in attracting foreign tourists visiting in 2019.
3. Goa came last on this list with over 9 lakh foreign tourist visits in 2019.

RPF launches 'Meri Saheli' initiative on AP Express

- Railway Protection Force (RPF), Visakhapatnam has started implementing 'Meri Saheli' initiative in AP Express (Visakhapatnam to New Delhi), in order to provide proactive security to women passengers.
- The main motto of 'Meri Saheli' is to provide safety and security to women passengers travelling in trains throughout their journey.
- A team of women Sub Inspectors and women constables of RPF will enter all coaches including ladies coaches and identify women passengers, who are travelling alone before the departure of the train.
- These passengers will be briefed about all precautions to be taken during the journey and inform about help no. 182 apart from giving contact numbers of RPF to contact in case of any issue.

Nokia selected by NASA to build 4G LTE Mobile Network on the Moon

- Nokia has been selected by NASA to build the first cellular network on the moon. NASA aims to return humans to the moon by 2024 and dig in for a long-term presence there

under its Artemis programme. The first wireless broadband communications system in space would be built on the lunar surface in late 2022.

- The network will configure itself and establish a 4G/LTE communications system on the moon, Nokia said, though the aim would be to eventually switch to 5G. It will partner with a Texas-based private spacecraft design company, Intuitive Machines, to deliver the equipment to the moon on their lunar lander.
- The network will give astronauts voice and video communications capabilities, and allow telemetry and biometric data exchange, as well as the deployment and remote control of lunar rovers and other robotic devices.
- The network will be designed to withstand the extreme conditions of the launch and lunar landing and to operate in space. It will have to be sent to the moon in an extremely compact form to meet the stringent size, weight and power constraints of space payloads.

Narendra Singh Tomar launches AYUSHMAN SAHAKAR scheme

- Union Agriculture Minister, Narendra Singh Tomar has launched “AYUSHMAN SAHAKAR”. The scheme is a unique way to assist cooperatives to play an important role in the creation of healthcare infrastructure in the country.
- AYUSHMAN SAHAKAR scheme has been formulated by the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC).
- The NCDC would extend term loans to prospective cooperatives to the tune of 10 thousand crores in the coming years.
- NCDC’s scheme will be a step towards strengthening farmers welfare activities by the Central Government.
- NCDC’s Ayushman Sahakar scheme aims at bringing transformation in the health services primarily in the rural areas.
- The scheme also provides working capital and margin money to meet the operational requirements of the health facilities. It provides interest subvention of one per cent to women majority cooperatives.

UP Governor launches “Safe City Project” for women's safety

- Uttar Pradesh (UP) Governor, Anandiben Patel has launched “Safe City Project” – a women’s safety campaign in Lucknow, UP. The Project is a 180-day-long campaign under which police and other departments will work towards strengthening the security of women in public places. The campaign will involve the movement of women police personnel to inculcate a feeling of pride and safety for women in Lucknow. The UP Governor flagged off 100 pink scooters and 10 four-wheeler police vehicles as part of the campaign. The vehicles are equipped with first-aid kits, flashlights and other facilities.
- It is a mission mode initiative of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). Its main aim of Safe City Project is to create a safe, secure and empowering environment for women in public places.
- Eight cities (Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad and Lucknow) have been identified for implementation of this project in the first phase.

- The projects will be financed under Nirbhaya Fund at a cost of INR 2919.55 Crores.

Nitin Gadkari laid the foundation stone of multi-modal logistic park in Assam

- The Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari virtually laid the foundation stone for the first-ever multi-modal logistic park of India, at Jogighopa, in Bongaigaon district of Assam.
- The logistic park will provide direct connectivity to air, road, rail and waterways to the people of Assam and other parts of North East.
- The fund for the multi-modal logistics park would be spent in three components – road and railway connectivity as well as building and infrastructure work. It will also give employment to 20 lakh people.
- The overall cost of this project is around Rs 693.97 Crore and is being developed under the Bharatmala Pariyojana of the Central Government.

Kati Bihu festival celebrated across Assam

- Kati Bihu is one of the sets of three Bihu festivals (agricultural festivals) was celebrated in the state of Assam. The Kati Bihu is also known as Kangali Bihu, the festival of the poor (the word “Kongal” means “poor”) is celebrated in mid-October when the crops are at growing stage and the granaries of the farmers are depleting.
- The Kati Bihu is celebrated with the lamp called ‘Saki’ which is lit on the tips of bamboo poles in the fields which represents a guide to spirits and earthen lamps are lit in the garden, under the tulusi plants and in the granaries.
- The farmers chant spells to ward off the negativity and pests in the field and pray for a prosperous harvest.
- The locals of Assam celebrate the festival by lighting Diya in their fields and homes and perform cultural dance and organise feasts.

IIT Madras startup launches ‘mooPay’ for dairy farmers in Rajasthan

- The IIT-Madras incubated dairy-tech startup, “Stellapps” has launched a first-of-its-kind, fully-automated direct payment platform, ‘mooPay’, for dairy farmers in Rajasthan. The Digital technology solutions provider Stellapps is a first of its kind end-to-end dairy technology solutions company of India. It is also one of the technology pioneers of the World Economic Forum (WEF).
- mooPay is a payment gateway for dairies and dairy farmers where the dairy officials can transfer milk payments digitally to member farmers from the dairies’ existing bank account to farmers’ savings bank account.
- Directly depositing payments in farmers’ bank accounts will help enhance farmer savings and will also build farmer loyalty to the dairy.
- This will remove the risks and costs of transferring money in cash to hundreds of thousands of farmers in hundreds of villages.

Australia to join Malabar-2020 Naval Exercise with India, US & Japan

- India has invited Australia to participate in its trilateral naval exercise “Malabar-2020” which is scheduled to be held in November 2020, in the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian

Sea. In 2020, the exercise will be held in a 'non-contact – at sea' format. It aims to increase cooperation and enhance safety and security in the maritime security domain.

- The Malabar series of naval exercises began in 1992 as a bilateral exercise between the Indian Navy-US Navy. Later, Japan joined the Naval exercise in 2015. It must be remembered that US-India-Japan and Australia are already the part of the "Quad" alliance.

ADB and India inks USD 177 million loan for Maharashtra

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of India have signed a loan agreement worth USD 177 million, to upgrade 450 km of state highways and major district roads in Maharashtra. The project aims to improve connectivity between rural areas and urban centres in the state to enable rural communities to have better access to markets, employment opportunities and services, which in turn will expand development and livelihood opportunities outside of the state's major urban centres to second-tier cities and towns thus reducing income disparities.
- Under the project, 2 major district roads and 11 state highways, with a combined length of 450 km, will be upgraded to 2-lane standard across seven districts of Maharashtra.
- The Government of Maharashtra will contribute \$78.99 million equivalent toward the \$255.99 million total costs of the project.

CRPF collaborates with IIT Delhi, DRDO, JATC to augment R&D capabilities

- The country's largest para-military force, Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) has collaborated with IIT Delhi, Defence Research and Development Organisation, and Joint Advanced Technology Centre (JATC) to augment its Research and Development capabilities.
- The CRPF officers/SOs(Subordinate Officers) who are trained by the IIT Delhi will also be associated with joint research projects undertaken by DRDO and IIT Delhi in the field of defence/security tech solutions. CRPF has over 3 lakh personnel, of which more than 500 officers/SOs holds a degree in Engineering.

J&K L-G announces 'My Town My Pride' programme

- Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha has announced that the government is coming up with a movement called "My Town My Pride" from October 19 to provide governance at the doorsteps in urban areas on the pattern of the "Back to Village" programme.
- The three main objectives of the programme:
 1. Public outreach in towns
 2. Strengthening grassroots democracy
 3. Service delivery at doorsteps
- The programme will also ensure that on-the-spot grievance redressal, instant delivery of services to the masses, and on the ground speedy execution of people-centric projects.
- The "My Town My Pride" programme anticipates the time-bound delivery of

documents like domicile, SC/ST/RBA/ALC/OBC certificates, revenue services.

- This programme will also ensure the time-bound delivery of benefits of various welfare schemes like pensions, scholarships, PMAY, KCC, Health golden cards, Ladli Beti, etc.

Union Education Minister launched “KAPILA” Kalam Program

- Union Education Minister, Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’ has virtually launched the campaign ‘KAPILA’, which stands for Kalam Program for Intellectual Property Literacy and Awareness campaign on 15th October 2020. The day was launched in honour of 89th birth anniversary celebration of former President Dr APJ Abdul Kalam.
- Through the campaign, the government will spread awareness through educational programs about the importance of patenting an invention, to lead India towards self-reliance. In order to promote awareness in the field, the Ministry has decided to celebrate the week from 15 to 23 October as ‘Intellectual Property Literacy Week’. Various awareness programs will be organised to create awareness about the system and the importance of the process of applying for a patent.

Cabinet approves Rs. 5718 crore World Bank-supported STARS project

- Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has approved the implementation of the Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States (STARS) project. STARS is a new Centrally Sponsored Scheme under the Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education for improving the quality of education, in the Indian School Education System.
- The total project cost is Rs 5718 crore with the financial support of World Bank amounting to the USD 500 million (approximately Rs. 3700 crores). The project will cover 6 states namely Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala and Odisha.
- The project envisages improving the overall monitoring and measurement activities in the Indian School Education System by supporting the selected states in developing, implementing, evaluating and improving interventions with direct linkages to improved education outcomes and school to work transition strategies for improved labour market outcomes
- The overall focus and components of the STARS project are aligned with the objectives of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 of Quality-Based Learning Outcomes.

Union Cabinet approves World Bank-aided STARS project

- The Union Cabinet has approved implementation of the World Bank-aided STARS project. The project seeks to support the states in implementing, developing, evaluating and improving interventions with direct linkages to improve quality of education. STARS stands for Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States.
- The total project cost is estimated to be around Rs. 5,718 crore, out of which the financial support from World Bank will amount to USD 500 million (approximately Rs. 3700 crore). This was informed by Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar during a press briefing after the Cabinet meeting.
- The project will cover six states- Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh,

Maharashtra, Odisha and Kerala. This is expected to mark an important milestone and mark the beginning of the New Education Policy.

World Economic Forum shifts annual meeting 2021 from Davos to Lucerne

- The World Economic Forum (WEF) has announced that the Annual Meeting 2021 will be held in Lucerne-Burgenstock, Switzerland, as against the traditional venue of ski resort town Davos.
- The meeting has been re-scheduled to be held from May 18 to 21, 2021 instead of the usual January-end each year.
- The Annual Meeting 2021 in Lucerne-Burgenstock will be held around the theme of 'The Great Reset'.

Kerala: First State to become Digital in Public Education

- The State of Kerala is the first state in the country to make public education completely digital.
- The state Government has achieved it at a cost of Rs 42.36 crores. The initiative was launched in 2018.

BRICS Ministerial Summit 2020 held virtually

- BRICS Ministerial Summit 2020 held through online mode via Video Conferencing.
- Minister of State (I/C) for Labour & Employment, Shri Santosh Gangwar represented India in this meeting. This BRICS Labour & Employment Ministers' Virtual Meeting was held under Russian Presidency.
- The Objective of this BRICS Summit is to discuss various issues including approaches to creating a safe work culture in BRICS countries.

PM releases Rs 100 commemorative coin to honour Vijaya Raje Scindia

- On 12 October 2020, Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a commemorative coin of Rs 100 to mark the birth centenary of Rajmata Vijaya Raje Scindia, one of the founder member of the ruling BJP, through a virtual ceremony.
- The special coin has been minted by the Ministry of Finance.
- Vijaya Raje Scindia, who dedicated her life to poor people, is also popularly known as the Rajmata of Gwalior.

Graded Response Action Plan for Delhi & NCR

- The Supreme Court-appointed Environment Pollution (Prevention & Control) Authority (EPCA) has directed the Delhi and National Capital Region (NCR) states to implement air pollution control measures listed under the "very poor" and "severe" category of Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP). These measures will come into force from October 15, 2020 to improve the air quality of the Delhi-NCR region.
- As per the directions given by the EPCA, the diesel generators will no longer be used in Delhi and NCR towns including Noida, Greater Noida, Ghaziabad, Faridabad, Gurgaon and others with effect from October 15. The generators will only be used for emergency and essential services.

- Moreover, the Pollution control authorities will carry out the night patrolling to investigate dust, industrial emissions and burning of waste. The pollution monitoring body has also directed the authorities to undertake frequent sprinkling of water on roads.

All eight Indian beaches recommended by Ministry of Environment and Forests awarded the prestigious International Blue Flag Certification

- The Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar has informed that all eight beaches recommended by the Government of India has got the coveted International Blueflag Certification.
- India is the first nation to achieve such a feat, as no other Blueflag nation has ever been awarded for 8 beaches in a single attempt.
- The Blue Flag programme is a world-renowned award operated by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), headquartered in Copenhagen, Denmark to benchmark the beaches as clean and hygienic.

CWG medallist Shuttler Chetan Anand named brand ambassador of India's first-ever Badminton Brand 'Transform'

- Commonwealth Games medallist in Badminton, Chetan Anand has been roped in as the brand ambassador for the India's first-ever homegrown professional badminton brand "Transform".
- Transform Badminton is India's 1st professional badminton brand at par with the best racquets available in the market that are currently imported from abroad for playing in India.
- Transform racquets have been made out of the military grade graphite.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will distribute property cards

- Under Svamitva scheme, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will distribute property cards to rural land owners.
- The property cards are to be distributed to villages in the states of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and Uttarakhand.
- Svamitva is Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improvised Technology in Village Areas to provide the right to document residential properties to the rural population. It enables the rural population to use property as a financial asset.

Andhra Pradesh CM launches Jagananna Vidya Kanuka' scheme to distribute school kits

- Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has launched a new scheme named the 'Jagananna Vidya Kanuka' scheme to distribute school kits among the poor children of the state.
- The state shall spend around Rs 650 crore towards the scheme. 42,34,322 kits will be distributed across the state under the scheme.
- Under this scheme, the government school students from classes 1 to 10 across the state will set the school kits or Vidya Kanuka, which will contain three pairs of uniform, one pair of shoes, two pairs of socks, a belt, one set of textbooks and notebooks and one

school bag.

Amazon India partners with IRCTC to offer train ticket bookings

- Amazon India said it had partnered with Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) to provide their customers with the facility to book reserved train tickets on its platform.
- For the introductory period, Amazon.in has waived off service and payment gateway transaction charges.
- With this launch, Amazon Pay adds another travel category, thereby offering its customers a one-stop-shop for booking flights, bus and train tickets

BRICS Bank grants approval to USD 741 million for Rapid Rail & Mumbai Metro

- BRICS Bank, also known as New Development Bank, approved USD 741 million funds for Delhi-Meerut Rapid Rail and Mumbai metro projects. Of this total amount, USD 500 million have been allocated for the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) Project and USD 241 million have been allocated for Mumbai Metro Rail Project.
- The rapid rail network will connect the National Capital Territory of Delhi with the cities of Meerut and Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh.
- The Mumbai metro rail line 6 will have a length of about 14.47 km. It will provide much needed rail connectivity between the western and eastern suburbs.

First State to provide 100% Tap Water Connections is Goa

- Goa has become the first state in India to provide 100% tap water connections in rural areas under "Har Ghar Jal State".
- The State of Goa is now planning to install sensor-based service delivery monitoring system to monitor the functionality of water supply.
- The Jal Jeevan Mission aims to provide 55 litres of tapped water per person per day to all the households by 2024.

The Additional charge of Ministry of Consumer Affairs is given to Piyush Goyal

- The additional charge of Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution has been given to the Union Minister Piyush Goyal.
- He currently serving as the Union Minister of Railways and Minister of Commerce and Industry.

India's first B2B Crypto trading exchange DigitX launched

- DigitX, India's first business-to-business (B2B) cryptocurrency trading exchange, began its trading operations.
- DigiX aims to deliver transparent and secure model with its network of trusted links in a first of its kind industry initiative to instill trust and confidence in its investors and traders of cryptocurrency.

Government launches online startup discovery platform 'Startup India Showcase'

- To further give boost to the Indian startups, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has launched an online discovery platform for startups called "Startup India Showcase".
- The main aim of this website is to make a repository of India's most promising startups that have proved their capabilities, from across sectors such as fintech, enterprise tech, social impact, healthtech, and edtech, among others.
- The listed firms will also be considered by the government and corporate buyers as potential suppliers of goods or services.
- The startups mentioned on the website will be handpicked by experts, and will go through multiple screening and evaluation rounds,
- Each startup will have its own profile page, with a detailed information about its product and innovation, as well as video and PDF links.

India gets its first ever Brand & Logo for its Cotton on World Cotton Day

- On the occasion of the 2nd World Cotton Day, the Union Minister of Textiles and Women & Child Development, Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani, launched the first ever Brand & Logo for Indian Cotton on 7th October, 2020 through Video Conferencing.
- It means that from now on, the premium Cotton of India would be known as 'Kasturi Cotton' in the world cotton Trade.
- The Kasturi Cotton brand will represent Whiteness, Brightness, Softness, Purity, Luster, Uniqueness and Indianness.

MoHUA enters into MoU with Swiggy to take street food vendors online under PM SVANIDHI scheme

- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has entered into an MoU with Swiggy, one of the leading food delivery platforms, to onboard street food vendors on its e-commerce platform under the Prime Minister Street Vendor's AtmaNibhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) Scheme
- The MoU aims at giving the street food vendors online access to thousands of consumers and help them grow their businesses.
- The Ministry and Swiggy will run a pilot programme by on-boarding 250 vendors across five cities namely – Ahmedabad, Chennai, Delhi, Indore, and Varanasi.

CM Kejriwal announces campaign against pollution-'Yudh Pradushan Ke Virudh'

- Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal launched a mega anti-air pollution campaign, saying polluted air can be life threatening in view of the C-19 pandemic.
- Under the campaign "Yudh Pradushan ke Virudh", separate plans have been prepared for each of the 13 pollution hotspots in the city.

Union Minister Jitendra Singh releases Coffee Table Book 'Discovering the Heritage of Assam', authored by Padampani Bora with foreword by Amitabh Bachchan

- The Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), Dr Jitendra Singh released a Coffee Table Book on "Discovering the

Heritage of Assam”, written by Padampani Bora and having foreword by Amitabh Bachchan. The book has been published by Penguin.

- With beautiful pictures and photographs, the book depicts the heritage, faith, beliefs and traditions of different ethnic tribes and subtribes living in Assam, the largest State of the North Eastern Region.
- The author, Padampani Bora, is by profession an officer of the Indian Revenue Service (IRS-2009 batch), but has over the years established himself as an accomplished author, specializing in the subjects reflecting diverse nuances of the North Eastern Region of India.

PM to inaugurate Summit RAISE 2020- ‘Responsible AI for Social Empowerment 2020’

- Prime Minister will inaugurate a mega virtual summit on Artificial Intelligence RAISE 2020- ‘Responsible AI for Social Empowerment 2020’ on October 5, 2020, at 7 PM.
- According to an official release from PMO, the mega virtual summit will be organised by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and NITI Aayog on October 5-9, 2020.
- The release also informed that PM plans on leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI) for inclusive development, representing India’s ‘AI for ALL’ strategy in the spirit for Sabka Saath Sabka Vikaas.

Kerala’s first Mega Food Park inaugurated virtually

- Union Minister for Food Processing Industries, Agriculture and Farmers Welfare inaugurated Kerala’s first and nation’s twentieth mega food park in Palakkad district. The inauguration was conducted virtually through video conferencing.
- The Park will also provide direct and indirect employment to 5,000 persons and benefit about 25,000 farmers. This Mega Food Park has been set up in 79.42 acres of land at a project cost of Rs. 102.13 crore.

Tamil Nadu & Arunachal Pradesh integrated under One Nation One Ration Card Scheme

- Two more States, Tamil Nadu and Arunachal Pradesh have been integrated with existing national portability cluster of 26 States and UTs under One Nation One Ration Card.
- With this, a total of 28 States and UTs are now seamlessly connected with each other under the ‘One Nation One Ration Card plan’, which aims to provide an option to all NFSA beneficiaries.
- The beneficiaries of these states can lift their entitled foodgrains under NFSA from any ePoS enabled Fair Price Shop of their choice anywhere in the country, by using their existing/same ration card with Aadhaar authentication on ePoS device.

National Institute Of Naturopathy’s Tribal Unit set up in Pune

- A 20-bed tribal unit of the National Institute of Naturopathy was inaugurated in Pune’s Ambegaon tehsil by Union AYUSH minister Shripad Naik. It would provide free clinical services to the tribal population in the area.
- A research unit on tribal practices for health maintenance had also been set up and it

will be a “repository of knowledge and will work in areas of education, nutrition and health problems of the tribal population”.

Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Act, 2020 comes into force

- As per the Ministry of Home Affairs, the amended Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act came into force on 29 September 2020.
- The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Act, 2020 amends the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010.
- As per the amended law, furnishing of Aadhaar numbers by office-bearers of NGOs has become mandatory for registration. The Act also provides for reduction in administrative expenses of any NGO receiving foreign funding, from 50 per cent to 20 per cent of annual funds to ensure spending on their main objectives.

SPORTS

Kiren Rijju launches new logo of Sports Authority of India

- Sports Minister Kiren Rijju launched the Sports Authority of India’s (SAI) new logo at Delhi’s Major Dhyan Chand Stadium.
- The new logo signifies SAI’s journey of metamorphosis from identifying and nurturing grassroot level sporting talent to creating sporting excellence in the country.

Plastic Premier League tournament to be played in Indore

- A unique Plastic Premier League (PPL) tournament is being played in Indore, Madhya Pradesh to free the city from single-use plastic. Indore is known for its innovative efforts regarding cleanliness. Indore has been awarded as the cleanest city in the country four times so far.
- Four teams have been formed for the Plastic Premier League competition.
- The 19 zones of Indore Municipal Corporation are divided into these four teams.
- For the competition, the team captain Radio Jockey will encourage citizens to donate more and more plastic from their radio station.
- These teams have been provided by municipal workers and five vehicles to collect plastic.
- The team that collects the most single-use plastics in this 45-day competition will be awarded the PPL Trophy.

Under-19 World Cup-winner Tanmay Srivastava retires from cricket

- Tanmay Manoj Srivastava, who was part of India’s Under-19 World Cup-winning team in 2008 announced his retirement from all forms of domestic cricket.
- He played 90 first-class games, scoring 4918 runs. He also played 44 List A matches and 34 T20s. He also played IPL (Indian Premier League), where he represented Kings XI Punjab, Deccan Chargers and Kochi Tuskers Kerala.

Federation of Indian Fantasy Sports appoints Bimal Julka as Chairman

- Federation of Indian Fantasy Sports (FIFS) has announced the appointment of Bimal

Julka as its Chairman. In his new role, Julka will work closely with all the stakeholders to further strengthen the operating standards of the Indian fantasy sports industry. Bimal Julka is an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) Officer of the 1979 batch belonging to the Madhya Pradesh Cadre.

- Julka is taking over from John Loffhagen, who served as the Chairman of FIFS for over three years. Loffhagen will assume the role of a Strategic Advisor and support FIFS on collaborating with relevant international bodies in the industry.

Lewis Hamilton wins Portuguese Grand Prix 2020

- Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes-Great Britain) has won the 2020 Portuguese Grand Prix, held at Algarve International Circuit, Portugal. This was the 12th round of the 2020 Formula One World Championship. This is Hamilton's 8th win of the season and 92nd career race victory.
- With this win, he has surpassed the record of 91 wins set by German great Michael Schumacher. Valtteri Bottas (Mercedes- Finland) came second followed by Max Verstappen (Red Bull – Netherlands) at the third spot.

India's Elavenil Valarivan wins gold in International Air Rifle Championship

- In Shooting, the world number one Elavenil Valarivan of India won the gold medal in women's event of the 2020 Sheikh Russel International Air Rifle Championship. The event was organised by Bangladesh Shooting Sport Federation (BSSF).
- Japan's Naoya Okada won the gold in the men's event, while India's Shahu Tushar Mane bagged a silver. The event was a 60-shots competition in which shooters from six nations participated which included Bangladesh, India, Japan, Korea, Indonesia and Bhutan.

Nozomi Okuhara and Anders Antonsen wins Denmark Open 2020

- In Badminton, former World Champion Nozomi Okuhara of Japan clinched the Denmark Open 2020 title beating three-time world champion Carolina Marin in women's singles. In the men's singles final, world number seven Anders Antonsen of Denmark defeated his compatriot Rasmus Gemke.

Winners List:

Category	Name of the Sportsperson
Women's Single	Nozomi Okuhara (Japan)
Men's Single	Anders Antonsen (Denmark)
Men's Double	Marcus Ellis and Chris Langridge (England)
Women's Double	Yuki Fukushima and Sayaka Hirota (Japan)
Mixed Double	Mark Lamsfuss and Isabel Herttrich (Germany)

Pakistan's fast Bowler Umar Gul announces retirement

- Pakistani pace bowler, Umar Gul has announced that he will retire from all forms of cricket. The 36-year-old Gul, who played his last match for Pakistan an ODI in 2016, featured for Balochistan team in the National T20 Cup.
- The Peshawar-born Gul made his international debut in an ODI in 2003. He played his

first Test that year itself. His last Test was against South Africa in 2013. From 47 Test matches, Gul took 163 wickets at an average of 34.06. He also claimed 179 wickets from 130 ODIs, besides 85 wickets from 60 T20Is.

Constantina Dita named ambassador for Half Marathon C'ships Gdynia 2020

- Romania's 2008 Olympic champion, Constantina Dita has been named an ambassador for the World Athletics Half Marathon Championships Gdynia 2020. The 2020 World Athletics Half Marathon Championships, originally scheduled for 29 March 2020 in Gdynia, Poland, was postponed until 17 October 2020, due to the C-19 pandemic.
- Dita competed at eight editions of the World Half Marathon Championships and earned seven medals in the process, making her one of the most successful athletes in the history of the event. Her double victory in Edmonton in 2005, taking individual and team gold medals, remains one of the highlights of her career.
- She won the marathon gold medal at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, China.

17th NBA Championship won by Los Angeles Lakers

- The National Basketball Association (NBA) Championship 2020 held on 12 October 2020.
- The Los Angeles Lakers won this year trophy by defeating the Miami Heat.
- NBA Finals Most Valuable Player (MVP): LeBron James of the Lakers' was named the for the fourth time in his career.

Rafael Nadal and Iga Swiatek wins French Open 2020

- In tennis, Rafael Nadal beat Novak Djokovic 6-0,6-2,7-5 to win the men's 2020 French Open on 11 October 2020. This is his 13th French Open men's singles title and 20th Grand Slam title.
- In Women's single, the 19-year-old Iga Swiatek of Poland, claimed a historic win, by becoming the youngest women to win the title in the history of the championship in 28 years.
- Winners of French Open Tennis 2020
Men's Single – Rafael Nadal (Spain) beat Novak Djokovic (Serbia)
Women's Single – Iga Swiatek (Poland) defeated Sofia Kenin (US)
Men's Double – Kevin Krawietz and Andreas Mies of Germany
Women's Double – Tímea Babos (Hungary)/ Kristina Mladenovic (France)

Lewis Hamilton wins 2020 Eifel Grand Prix

- Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes-Great Britain) has won the 2020 Eifel Grand Prix, held on 11 October 2020 at the Nurburgring in Nurburg, Germany.
- This is Hamilton's 7th win of the season and 91st career race victory, which was till now achieved only by Michael Schumacher.
- The race was the eleventh race in 2020 Formula One World Championship and the first running in history of the Eifel Grand Prix.
- Max Verstappen (Red Bull – Netherlands) came second followed by Daniel Ricciardo (Renault, Australia) at third position.

India's Visnu wins gold in International Online Shooting Championship

- In Shooting, India's Visnu Shivaraj Pandian has won the 10m air rifle event at the fifth edition of the International Online Shooting Championship held on 3rd October 2020.
- The 16-year-old Visnu shot 251.4 to win the title by a clear margin of two points.
- The world No. 27 Etienne Germond of France came second followed by Martin Strempl of Austria at third place.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

India successfully test-fires BrahMos supersonic cruise missile

- India successfully test-fired the extended range BrahMos supersonic cruise missile on September 30, 2020. The BrahMos missile is capable of hitting targets at over 400 kilometre range.
- DRDO Chairman Dr. G Satheesh Reddy said that the successful test will lead to adding more indigenous content to the supersonic cruise missile. The BrahMos can be launched from submarines, ships, fighter jets or land.
- The test-firing was carried out under the PJ-10 project of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). The missile was launched with an indigenous booster from a land-based facility in Odisha.
- This is the second test-firing of the extended range version of the missile that has an indigenously developed airframe and booster. The BrahMos supersonic cruise missile has been developed as a joint venture between the DRDO and Russia's Federal State Unitary Enterprise NPO Mashinostroyenia (NPOM).

ISRO to launch its Venus Mission in 2025, France to take part

- ISRO is scheduled to launch its Venus mission in 2025 and France will participate in it.
- The VIRAL (Venus Infrared Atmospheric Gases Linker) instrument co-developed with the Russian federal space agency Roscosmos and the LATMOS atmospheres, environments and space observations laboratory attached to the French national scientific research centre CNRS has been selected by the ISRO after a request for proposals.
- CNES will coordinate and prepare the French contribution, the first time a French payload will be flown on an Indian exploration mission.

DRDO successfully test fires laser-guided anti-tank guided missile

- The indigenously developed Laser Guided Anti Tank Guided Missile (ATGM) was successfully test fired by DRDO on 1st Oct 2020. It defeated a target located at longer range. The test was conducted from MBT Arjun at KK ranges (ACC&S) Ahmednagar in Maharashtra.
- This Laser guided ATGM has been developed by Armament R&D Establishment (ARDE), Pune in association with High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL), Pune and Instruments Research & Development Establishment (IRDE), Dehradun.
- It has a tandem HEAT warhead to destroy Explosive Reactive Armour (ERA) protected

armoured vehicles in ranges from 1.5 to 5 km. The missile is currently undergoing technical evaluation trials from 120 mm rifled gun of MBT Arjun.

NASA's SOFIA discovers water on Sunlit Surface of Moon

- Two new studies published in Nature Astronomy suggest there could be much more water than previously thought, including ice stored in permanently shadowed “cold traps” at lunar polar regions. Using data from the Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA) Airborne Telescope, researchers scanned the lunar surface at a more precise wavelength than had been used before — six microns instead of three. This allowed them to distinguish the spectral fingerprint of molecular water.
- Previous research has found indications of water by scanning the surface, but these were unable to distinguish between water (H₂O) and hydroxyl, a molecule made up of one hydrogen atom and one oxygen atom. But a new study provides further chemical proof that the Moon holds molecular water, even in sunlit areas.

“INS Kavaratti” commissioned into Indian Navy

- The Chief of Army Staff, General MM Naravane has commissioned the ‘INS Kavaratti’, the last of four indigenously-built anti-submarine warfare (ASW) stealth corvettes, into the Indian Navy in Visakhapatnam.

DRDO successfully conducts final trial of Nag anti-tank guided missile

- Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) successfully carried out the final trial of the third generation, anti-tank guided missile ‘NAG’, from the Pokhran field firing ranges in Rajasthan.
- The successful final user trial of the missile makes the Nag anti-tank missile ready for induction in the Indian Army. Following the final trial, the missile will now enter into the production phase.

IIT Kharagpur's develops 'COVIRAP' Technology for C-19

- The researchers at IIT Kharagpur have developed ‘COVIRAP,’ the C-19 diagnostic test technology, which is fairly easy to conduct and affordable as well and can produce results within one hour. This COVIRAP technology has been successfully validated for its efficacy in C-19 detection by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and been granted certification, after rigorous testing with patient samples by an authorized ICMR laboratory.
- This testing technology is comparable to the celebrated RT-PCR tests, and will just cost the common people with a testing cost of around Rs 500.
- COVIRAP is a cuboid-shaped portable testing device that can deliver results in an hour, making it an effective tool to scale up coronavirus screening in peripheral and rural areas.
- This machine can be developed at a cost of less than Rs 10,000 with minimal infrastructural requirement making the technology affordable to common people. The testing process in this new machine is completed within one hour.
- This implies influenza, malaria, dengue, Japanese encephalitis, tuberculosis and many

other infectious, as well as vector-borne diseases, can be tested using the same machine.

- This will virtually minimise the need for thermal cyclers or real-time PCR machines, without sacrificing the expected high standards of a molecular diagnostic test.

India successfully test-fires “SANT” Missile off Odisha coast

- India successfully flight-tested its indigenously developed Stand-off Anti-tank (SANT) missile from Integrated Test Range (ITR) off Odisha coast. The missile was test-fired from a roof-top launcher of the ground-based platform. It is an upgraded version of the anti-tank missile, Helicopter Launched Nag (HeliNa). This was the 11th missile test-fired by India within one and a half month.
- SANT is an air-to-surface missile developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) for the Indian Air Force. The SANT missile has both lock-on before launch and lock-on after launch capability and can destroy targets 15 km to 20 km away.

DRDO test fires Naval Version of BRAHMOS missile successfully

- On October 18, 2020, the Defence Research Development Organization test fired the naval version BRAHMOS missile from INS Chennai successfully. The missile was test fired from an indigenously built stealth destroyer INS Chennai. The missile hit a target in Arabian Sea.
- BRAHMOS is a supersonic missile. It was jointly developed by India and Russia.
- The major classification of the missiles is Cruise Missiles and Ballistic Missiles.
- The Ballistic Missiles are those missiles that have a ballistic trajectory. The currently operational ballistic missiles in the Indian Defence Systems are Prithvi I, Agni I, Prithvi II, Agni II and Dhanush.

Coastal security exercise “Sagar Kavach” concludes

- A two-day Coastal Security Exercise namely ‘Sagar Kavach’ conducted by the Indian Navy along with Indian Coast Guard and all stakeholders involved in Coastal Security from the coast of Kerala.
- The exercise was monitored from Joint Operations Centre, Kochi. Sagar Kavach is a half-yearly exercise with an objective to check the Coastal Security mechanism and validate Standard Operating Procedures.
- The exercise conducted along the coastal areas of Kerala, Karnataka and Lakshadweep assumes significance in the backdrop of the prevailing security situation in the country.

India’s Anti-Radiation Missile RUDRAM successfully tested

- The new generation anti-radiation missile named Rudram 1 which has been generated to kill enemy radar is successfully tested in the Balasore test range located off the coast of Odisha in Bay of Bengal.
- This missile was developed by Defence research and development organisation.
- The missile can reach up to a range of 200 km, can achieve a maximum speed of 2 mach and can be fired from an altitude envelope of 500 meters to 15kms.

C-DAC to commission India's fastest HPC-AI Supercomputer 'PARAM Siddhi - AI' with NVIDIA

- The Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) will be commissioning India's largest HPC-AI supercomputer 'PARAM Siddhi - AI'.
- This initiative will place India among the top countries in global AI supercomputing research and innovation.
- The initiative was headed by Abhishek Das, Scientist and Program Director (HPC-AI Infrastructure Development) at C-DAC, who conceived the idea and designed the architecture for the largest HPC-AI infrastructure in India.

ICG Offshore Patrol Vessel 'Vigraha' Launched to Enhance Coastal Security

- The seventh offshore patrol vessel of the Indian Coast Guard (ICG), 'Vigraha' was formally unveiled at the Kattupalli port. The vessel is expected to be inducted into the Coast Guard after completion of extensive trials and testing for the equipment and machinery by March 2021.
- The vessel, built by Larsen and Toubro, is the last in the series of seven OPVs contracted to the company by the Ministry of Defence in 2015.
- The OPV is 98 metres long, 15 metres wide, has 3.6 m draught, 2140T displacement and a range of 5,000 nautical miles.

DRDO successfully flight tests weapon system SMART- Supersonic Missile Assisted Release of Torpedo

- India has successfully flight-tested SMART (Supersonic Missile Assisted Release of Torpedo) from the Wheeler Island off the coast of Odisha on October 5, 2020.
- The Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh congratulated the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) for the successful flight test of SMART. He mentioned it to be a major technology breakthrough in anti-submarine warfare.
- A number of DRDO laboratories, including RCI Hyderabad, DRDL, NSTL Vishakhapatnam, ADRDE Agra have developed the technologies that were required for SMART.

Reliance develops RT-PCR kit that gives C-19 results in 2 hours

- Reliance Life Sciences has developed an RT-PCR (real-time reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction) kit that will be able to diagnose C-19 infection in just about 2 hours.
- The computational biologists at Reliance Life Sciences, which is a subsidiary of billionaire Mukesh Ambani- run Reliance Industries Ltd., had analyzed more than 100 genomes of SARS-CoV-2 sequenced in the country and had designed unique RT-PCR primers for developing the qualitative RT-PCR kit for C-19 detection.
- Currently, the test for the qualitative detection of nucleic acid from SARS-CoV-2 takes up to 24 hours for the results.

ICMR develops “Purified Antisera” as treatment

- The Indian Council of Medical Research has developed “Purified Antisera”. The antiserum has been obtained from animals. This is to be used as a prophylaxis and treatment for C-19.
- The new therapy works just like that of plasma therapy. But here the plasma is obtained from animals. Antiserum is blood-based serum that holds antibodies against viruses.
- In this new therapy, the serum is raised from horses that have recovered from viral infection and found to hold antibodies against the virus in their system.

OBITUARY

‘I Am Woman’ Singer Helen Reddy passes away

- Singer Helen Reddy, whose 1972 song ‘I Am Woman’ became a global feminist anthem, died in Los Angeles aged 78.
- Helen Reddy’s 1971 version of “I Don’t Know How to Love Him” from the musical “Jesus Christ Superstar” launched a decade-long string of Top 40 hits, three of which reached No. 1.
- In 1973, she won the best female vocal pop performance Grammy Award for “I Am Woman,” quickly thanking her then-husband and others in her acceptance speech.

Veteran lyricist songwriter Abhilash passes away

- Veteran songwriter Abhilash, who is best known for the song ‘Itni Shakti Hame Dena Daata’ from the 1986 film Ankush, has passed away. He was 74.
- His real name was Om Prakash. His song ‘Itni Shakti Hame Dena Daata’ has been translated into eight languages and is played as a prayer song across schools and other institutions even today.

Award-winning author and editor Daniel Menaker passes away

- Daniel Menaker, an award-winning author of fiction and nonfiction and a longtime editor at The New Yorker and Random House who worked with Alice Munro, Salman Rushdie, Colum McCann and many others, passed away.
- Daniel Menaker was the author of several books, including the memoir My Mistake and the comic psychological novel The Treatment, adapted into a 2007 movie starring Chris Eigeman and Ian Holm. He was also known for the O Henry Award-winning title story of his collection The Old Left.

Veteran Gujarati Film Musician, Former MP Mahesh Kanodia passes away

- Famous Gujarati film musician, singer and former Parliamentarian Mahesh Kanodia passed away. He was born at Kanoda village of Mehsana district on January 27, 1937.
- Kanodia was a three-time BJP MP from Patan in north Gujarat. He represented Patan Lok Sabha constituency as a Member of Parliament of the BJP thrice between 1991 and 1999. He had received several accolades and awards for his performance as a music composer and singer for Gujarati films including Jigar and Ami, Tanariri, Jog Sanjog and

Laju Lakhan.

Samsung Chairman Lee Kun-Hee passes away

- The chairman of South Korea's largest conglomerate, Samsung Group, Lee Kun-hee has passed away. Lee helped to transform Samsung from a small trading business to become the world's largest producer of smartphones and memory chips.
- The firm's overall turnover today is equivalent to a fifth of South Korea's GDP. Lee was also the richest person in South Korea, according to Forbes, with a net worth of nearly \$21bn.

Playback singer and actor K J Mohammed passes away

- Playback singer, music director and actor K J Mohammed Babu, popularly known as 'Zero' Babu passed away.
- He was a recipient of the Sangeetha Nataka Akademi Award. He has sung in nearly 90 films and various plays. His first movie was the 1964 film 'Kudumbini'.

Renowned economist Dr Jayanta Madhab passed away

- The renowned economist from Assam, Dr Jayanta Madhab passed away. He worked as financial adviser to Calcutta Metropolitan Development Corp and has served as a director at the ADB.
- He was the founder chairman of North Eastern Development Finance Corporation Ltd. He was also the financial advisor of the Chief Minister from 2003-2009.

First woman officer of IAF's Vijayalakshmi Ramanan passed away

- Indian Air Force 1st woman officer, Wing Commander (retd) Dr Vijaylakshmi Ramanan passed away. She was born in February 1924, she did her MBBS and later was commissioned in the Army Medical Corps on August 22, 1955. Besides having served as a gynaecologist at various Air Force Hospitals, including here, she had also attended to the troops wounded during wars and performed administrative duties.
- Ramanan was promoted to the rank of Wing Commander in August 1972 and honoured with the Vishist Seva Medal five years later.
- She had retired in February 1979. Ramanan was also trained in Carnatic music and had been an artist with the All India Radio at a very young age.

Veteran TV Actress Zarina Roshan Khan passes away

- Renowned TV actress, Zarina Roshan Khan passed away. She was fondly remembered for her role in the television show 'Kumkum Bhagya' as Indu Dadi.
- Zarina had begun her career as a stunt woman, before taking up acting as a profession and has featured in several shows and films. The actor has also performed in serials like Rishta Kya Kehlata Hai and played the role of a mother in several Hindi films.

Veteran Bengali Vocal Artiste Pradip Ghosh passes away

- Noted Bengali elocutionist, Pradip Ghosh passed away. Ghosh was a prominent recitor and renowned vocal artist, who was well-known for his inimitable style of recitation.

- His most notable works included his recitation of Tagore's poems, especially those for children.

"Nightingale of Gujarat" Kaumudi Munshi passes away

- The "Nightingale of Gujarat", Kaumudi Munshi passed away due to C-19. During the early stage of her career, Munshi sang mostly in Gujarati, gaining fame with songs like 'Sachi re maari satre bhavani maa'. The singer also sang Bhojpuri songs, for the 1963 movie Bidesiya she sang 'Neek Saiyan bin' with renowned singer Geeta Dutt.
- Singer and musician Kaumudi Munshi were born in Varanasi. She completed her education with an arts degree in music from Banaras Hindu University. She trained under the likes of Siddheshwari Devi and Taj Ahmed Khan. After shifting to Mumbai, she got selected in an audition for All India Radio. This is also where she met and later married Ninu Mazumdar, a music director associated with All India Radio.

Bihar Panchayati Raj Minister Kapil Deo Kamat passes away

- The senior Janata Dal (United) leader Kapil Deo Kamat, who was serving as the Panchayati Raj Minister of Bihar, passed away due to C-19.
- He was a JDU MLA from Babubarhi assembly constituency in Madhubani district, Bihar.

Legendary Malayalam poet Akkitham passes away

- Legendary Malayalam poet and Jnanpith laureate, Mahakavi Akkitham Achuthan Namboothiri passed away. He has penned more than 46 literary works including poems, plays, essays and short stories. He was awarded Padma Shri in 2017.
- Akkitham, who was instrumental in introducing modernism in Malayalam poetry, had worked as scriptwriter and editor with Akashvani Kozhikode and Thrissur for nearly
- He bagged Kerala Sahitya Academy award in 1972 for his work Balidarshanam.
- He had won several other awards including the Ezhuthachan puraskaram, Vayalar award, Sanjayan puraskaram and Odakuzhal award.

Cricket journalist and commentator Kishore Bhimani passes away

- Veteran sports journalist and Cricket commentator, Kishore Bhimani passed away. He was a leading cricket commentator in the Eighties and Nineties and is best remembered for being on the air during the tied Test of 1986 between India and Australia in Chepauk, Chennai. He had received a lifetime achievement award for his decades-long contribution in the fields of media and commentary in 2013.

First Indian to win Oscar Bhanu Athaiya passes away

- The first Indian to win the Oscar award, Bhanu Athaiya passed away. She won the Best Costume Design Oscar for her work in the 1982 film Gandhi, directed by Richard Attenborough. In 2012, Athaiya returned her Oscar to the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences for safekeeping.
- Bhanu Athaiya had also designed costumes for over 100 Bollywood movies. And in a career of more than five decades won two National Awards, for Gulzar's mystery drama "Lekin" (1990) and the period film "Lagaan" directed by Ashutosh Gowariker (2001).

Former Indian Football Captain Carlton Chapman passed away

- Former Indian football captain, Carlton Chapman passed away. He was born on 13th April 1971 in Bengaluru, Karnataka. He announced his retirement from professional Football in 2001.
- He was the captain of the Indian team when India won the South Asian Football Federation Gold Cup in 1997. He was a leading midfielder played for Indian from 1995 to 2001.
- He joined Quartz FC, Kozhikode as the technical director in 2017.

Priscilla Jana, Renowned Indian-origin South African Human Rights Lawyer Passes Away

- Renowned Indian-origin South African human rights lawyer Priscilla Jana has passed away at the age of 76.
- Jana, who had played a significant role against apartheid, was the Deputy Chairperson of the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC).

CM Chang, Environment Minister of Nagaland passes away

- Senior Nagaland Minister 'CM Chang' has passed away, due to C-19. He was 78-years-old.
- Chang was serving as the Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, and Justice and Law.

First woman chief justice of Kerala KK Usha passes away

- Former Chief Justice of the Kerala High Court, Justice KK Usha, passed away.
- She served as a judge from 1991 to 2000 and when she was appointed Chief Justice of the Kerala High Court from 2000 to 2001, Justice Usha became the first woman to join the High Court Judiciary from the Bar and became a Chief Justice.

Mexican scientist Mario Molina passes away

- Mexican scientist and a Nobel Prize receipt Mario Molina have passed away at the age of 77. Molina was the first Mexican to win the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1995.
- He was appointed a scientific adviser to the then U.S. President Barack Obama in the year 2008.

Union Minister Ram Vilas Paswan passes away

- Union minister of consumer affairs, food and public distribution, Ram Vilas Paswan passed away. He was born on 5 July 1946. He was also the president of the Lok Janshakti Party and current Rajya Sabha MP.
- An eight-time Lok Sabha MP, Paswan went to jail during Indira Gandhi's tenure when an emergency was imposed in the country. He began his political career as a member of the Samyukta Socialist Party and in 1969 became a member of the Bihar Legislative Assembly.

Former CBI director Ashwani Kumar passes away

- Ashwani Kumar, former Governor of Manipur and Nagaland, and ex-CBI Director passed away.
- He was born at Nahan in Sirmaur district and joined the Indian Police Force in 1973.
- From March 2013 to July 2014, he served as the Governor of Nagaland and also held the additional charge of Governor of Manipur for some time.

Justice AS Dave, former Judge and acting CJ of the Gujarat HC passes away

- Former Acting Chief Justice of the Gujarat High Court Justice Anantkumar Surendraray Dave passed away at the age of 62.
- Justice Dave was appointed as a Gujarat High Court Judge in 2004 and was made permanent in 2006.
- He was appointed as an Acting Chief Justice of the Gujarat High Court on November 14, 2018 and served until the present Chief Justice Vikram Nath took over the helm in September 2019.

Veteran Social activist Pushpa Bhawe passes away

- Veteran social activist Prof Pushpa Bhawe, also known as the Iron Lady of Mumbai, has passed away following a prolonged illness. She was 81.
- Bhawe has been associated with the Rashtra Seva Dal and democratic movements since her student days.

APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

Shekhar Kapur appointed president of FTII Society & chairman of FTII Governing Council

- Noted Filmmaker Shekhar Kapur has been named as the President of Film and Television Institute of India, FTII Society and Chairman of Governing Council of FTII.
- He has a vast experience, will add more value to the Institute, will replace television producer BP Singh.

Crown prince Sheikh Nawaf Al Ahmad Al Sabah becomes Kuwait's new ruling emir

- Kuwait's Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al Ahmad Al Sabah became the oil-rich nation's new ruling emir, after the death of his half-brother Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad Al-Sabah at the age of 91.
- Sheikh Nawaf, 83, had served as the crown prince since 2006, jumping a traditional order of alternating rule between the Al Jaber and the Al Salim branches of the country's ruling family.

RBI Approves Appointment of CoD to Run Dhanlaxmi Bank Till Appointment Of CEO

- Dhanlaxmi Bank said that the RBI has approved a three-member interim committee of directors, to run the private sector bank after the shareholders voted out its MD and CEO Sunil Gurbaxani.
- The committee of directors (CoD) will be constituted with G Subramonia Iyer as

chairman and G Rajagopalan Nair and P K Vijayakumar as its members.

Apurva Chandra appointed as Secretary of Ministry of Labour & Employment

- Apurva Chandra appointed as new secretary of Union Ministry of Labour & Employment.
- Earlier he was serving as Special Director General, Defence Acquisition, Ministry of Defence.
- He belongs to the 1988 batch of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Maharashtra Cadre.

SBI appoints Charanjit Attra as CFO

- The State Bank of India (SBI) has appointed Charanjit Singh Attra as its new Chief Financial Officer (CFO) with effect from 01 October 2020.
- The post was lying vacant after the former Deputy MD & CFO Prashant Kumar, was appointed as the CEO of Yes Bank in March 2020.
- C Venkat Nageshwar was serving the post on interim capacity.

Yashvardhan K. Sinha appointed as new Chief Information Commissioner

- Government of India has approved the name of Former Foreign Service officer, Yashvardhan Kumar Sinha as the new Chief Information Commissioner. He was already the Information Commissioner and was also the most senior. The post of CIC chairman had been vacant for several months after Bimal Zulka retired.
- A Marathi journalist, Uday Mahurkar has been selected for the post of Information Commissioner. Uday Mahurkar worked as a deputy editor in India Today Group and is considered close to the Sangh Parivar. Uday Mahurkar has also written a book on Prime Minister Modi titled "Merging with a Billion" and "Center Stage: Inside Narendra Modi".

HDFC Bank MD & CEO Aditya Puri retires

- The Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of HDFC Bank, Aditya Puri has stepped down, after 25 years of a highly successful career at India's largest private sector lender. The 70-year-old Puri had transformed a start-up in a sector dominated by state-owned banks into an industry leader. At nearly Rs 6 trillion, HDFC Bank leads the industry in terms of market capitalisation and remains the most profitable by a long margin.
- Sashidhar Jagdishan has been appointed as the new chief executive and managing director of the HDFC Bank w.e.f. 27 October 2020.

Vega ropes in Rohit Sharma as brand ambassador

- Ace Indian cricketer and Captain of Mumbai Indians, Rohit Sharma has been signed up by India's leading beauty accessories brand, Vega, for its men's personal grooming electronics range under the 'Vega Men' brand.
- Rohit Sharma will feature as the brand ambassador for 'Vega Men' range in the upcoming digital campaign.

Sushil Kumar Singhal appointed as next Ambassador to Solomon Islands

- Sushil Kumar Singhal, a 2000-batch IFS officer, has been concurrently accredited as the next High Commissioner of India to the Solomon Islands.
- He is presently serving as the High Commissioner of India to the Independent State of Papua New Guinea.

Neena Malhotra appointed as Ambassador to Republic of San Marino

- Indian diplomat Dr Neena Malhotra, 1992-batch Indian Foreign Service officer, appointed as next Ambassador to the Republic of San Marino. She will have a residence in Rome.
- Presently, she is serving as the Ambassador of India to the Republic of Italy.

Lewis Hamilton named ambassador of LG Signature

- LG Electronics has named Lewis Hamilton a global ambassador for its home solutions brand, LG Signature. Hamilton, the epitome of skill, style and precision will be seen communicating the brand's philosophy.
- In the new campaign, he will share with audiences his thoughts on how to lead a stylish, sophisticated life, and what motivates him to be the best in his field.

Parle agro Named Priyanka Chopra Jonas as brand ambassador

- Parle Agro has roped in Priyanka Chopra Jonas as the national brand ambassador to maximise reach and awareness of its fruits plus fizz portfolio 'B-Fizz'.
- The campaign will be aggressively promoted across IPL on Hotstar and YouTube. B-Fizz is a unique and refreshing apple juice-based malt flavoured carbonated drink that is set to revolutionize the taste experience of consumers across age groups.

GoI extends Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla's tenure till 2021

- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the extension of the tenure of Home Secretary, Ajay Kumar Bhalla till August 22, 2021. Bhalla, a 1984 batch IAS officer of Assam-Meghalaya cadre, was appointed as Home Secretary in August 2019. He was to superannuate on November 30, 2020.

Rajkiran Rai becomes new chairman of IBA

- The Managing Director and CEO of Union Bank of India, Rajkiran Rai G has been elected as the Chairman of Indian Banks' Association (IBA) for the term 2020-21. He succeeds Rajnish Kumar as the IBA Chairman after Kumar recently retired as SBI Chief.
- Apart from this, Dinesh Kumar Khara, the Chairman of State Bank of India has been elected as the deputy chairman of the association. IBA is an association of banks and other entities in the banking ecosystem in India catering to its members.

Rohan Jaitley elected unopposed as DDCA President

- Advocate Rohan Jaitley, the son of late Union Minister Arun Jaitley, has been elected unopposed as the President of the Delhi and District Cricket Association (DDCA). He was the single candidate left for the post, as the lone candidate who had filed his

nomination against him withdrew his candidature.

- The 31-year-old lawyer is slated to remain in the post till June 30, 2021. Notably, late Arun Jaitley had also served as the president of DDCA between 1999 and 2013.

IWF appoint Michael Irani as interim president

- Dr Michael Irani of Great Britain (GBR) has been appointed as the Interim President of the International Weightlifting Federation(IWF), at the meeting of the IWF Executive Board, in accordance with the constitution of IWF. Michael Irani was appointed following the resignation of IWF President Tamás Aján. Prior to this, Michael Irani was serving as the chairman of the IWF Medical Committee.
- Michael Irani was born in Bombay, India.
- Michael Irani is a leading physician in Rheumatology who works as a Consultant Rheumatologist at Ashford Hospital NHS Trust.
- He was the former Chairman of the anti-doping Commission of IWF.
- He was a member of the IWF Medical Committee since 1992.
- He served as the President of the European Weightlifting Federation(EWF) Medical Committee from 1995 to 1999.

Vishal V Sharma appointed India's next permanent representative to UNESCO

- Vishal V. Sharma has been appointed as the next Permanent Representative of India to the Permanent Delegation of India to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), with the rank of Ambassador. He will replace Jawed Ashraf. Sharma is expected to take up the assignment shortly.
1. UNESCO headquarters: Paris, France.
 2. UNESCO Head: Audrey Azoulay.
 3. UNESCO Founded: 16 November 1945.

SC appoints former judge to monitor steps to prevent stubble burning

- The Supreme Court has appointed Justice Madan B Lokur, a former judge of the apex court, as a one-man monitoring committee to prevent stubble burning in the states of Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, amid rising levels of pollution in the national capital and adjoining regions.
- The bench also directed court-appointed Environment Pollution Control Authority (EPCA) and chief secretaries of Haryana, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh to help the Lokur panel with physical surveillance of fields to check instances of stubble burning and other related matters.
- The new committee will monitor the stubble burning and take preventive steps. It will get assistance from chief secretaries of all states as well as National Cadet Corps (NCC), National Service Scheme and Bharat Scouts. The panel shall submit its report on stubble burning within 15 days to the apex court.

NTPC CMD Gurdeep Singh's term extended till 2025

- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has extended the tenure of state-run National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) Ltd, chairman and managing director,

Gurdeep Singh till 31 July 2025. He had first assumed the charge of utility's chairman and managing director in February 2016.

- Gurdeep Singh has earlier worked at NTPC and also across the power sector in firms such as CLP, CESC, IDFC, Powergen and AES. His second term will start from 4 February next year and extend till 31 July 2025 which is the date of his superannuation.

Kyrgyzstan President Sooronbai Jeenbekov resigns

- Kyrgyzstan President, Sooronbai Jeenbekov has resigned from his post, following 10 days of unrest caused by protesters who have demanded his removal from office. On 4th October 2020, he was re-elected as the President in Parliamentary election, causing political turmoil
- The 61-year-old has served as the President of Kyrgyzstan from 2017 to 2020. He was also the Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan from April 2016 to August 2017.

Bharate launches new brand campaign with 11 cricketers as brand ambassadors

- BharatPe has announced the launch of its high impact TV campaign starring 'Team BharatPe' with 11 Cricket stars.
- The TVC series has been directed by ace Bollywood director, Puneet Malhotra, and communicates the message 'Hum Hai Team BharatPe – Jo Desh Ke Har Dukandaar Ke Saath Hai Khade'.
- This is the first time that a new age FinTech company has rolled out a TV campaign with 11 top cricket stars as its brand ambassadors. Team BharatPe includes Rohit Sharma, Jasprit Bumrah, KL Rahul, Mohammed Shami, Ravindra Jadeja, Suresh Raina, Shreyas Iyer, Prithvi Shaw, Sanju Samson, Yuzvendra Chahal, and Shubhman Gill.

Nilesh Shah re-elected as Chairman of AMFI

- Nilesh Shah has been re-elected as the Chairman of the Mutual fund industry body, Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI).
- Shah is the managing director of Kotak Asset Management Company (AMC). The decision was taken at the annual general meeting (AGM) of the AMFI on 07 October 2020.
- Shah was earlier elected as the chairman for the financial year 2019-20. He would continue to hold the office till the conclusion of the next AGM.

Manoj Kumar Appointed as chairman and managing director of Western Coalfields Ltd

- According to a personnel ministry order, Manoj Kumar has been appointed as chairman and managing director of Western Coalfields Ltd.
- Currently, Manoj Kumar is serving as the director in the Western Coalfields Ltd.

Govt appoints M Rajeshwar Rao as new deputy governor of RBI

- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet appointed M Rajeshwar Rao as the deputy governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- Currently, BP Kanungo, MK Jain and Micheal Patra are the deputy governors. Rao will take charge as the fourth deputy governor. The post became vacant after N S

Vishwanathan demitted office in March citing health reasons just before his tenure was to end.

- Prior to this, he was the chief general manager of the financial markets operations department.

J Venkatramu appointed MD and CEO of India Post Payments Bank

- J Venkatramu has been appointed the managing director and chief executive officer of India Post Payments Bank (IPPB). He will succeed Suresh Sethi, who served the post till March 2020.
- Venkatramuis presently working as the chief digital officer in Equitas Small Finance Bank. He has been appointed to the post of MD and CEO of IPPB for a period of three years.

MA Ganapathy Appointed Director General of Civil Aviation Security

- A 1986 batch IPS officer of Uttarakhand cadre, M A Ganapathy has been appointed as the Director General of Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) for a tenure up to his superannuation on February 29, 2024
- The post of BCAS chief fell vacant after Rakesh Asthana was appointed as the Director General of Border Security Force in August.

Dinesh Kumar Khara becomes new Chairman of SBI

- The government of India has appointed Dinesh Kumar Khara as the new Chairman of State Bank of India for a period of three years. His appointment is effective from October 7. Currently, Khara is the Managing Director in-charge of Global Banking & Subsidiaries.
- The Banks Board Bureau (BBB) had recommended Khara for the post of Chairman of SBI on August 28, ruling out an extension to Rajnish Kumar, whose term is ending on October 6.

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Day of Non-Violence

- Every year, 02 October is celebrated as the International Day of Non-Violence, to mark the birth anniversary of the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi.
- This day is referred to as Gandhi Jayanti in India. On 15 June 2007 the United Nations General Assembly, voted to establish 2 October as the International Day of Non-Violence.
- The day aims to “spread the message of non-violence, including through education and public awareness.
- The year 2020 marks 151th birth anniversary of the global peace icon who was born on 2 October 1869, in Porbandar in Gujarat.

World Vegetarian Day

- World Vegetarian Day is observed annually on October 1 globally to raise awareness

about the ethical, environmental, health, and humanitarian benefits of a vegetarian lifestyle.

- The day was initiated by the North American Vegetarian Society in Scotland in 1977 during the World Vegetarian Congress.

International Coffee Day

- International Coffee Day is celebrated on 1st October every year to celebrate millions of people across the world who do hard work to create and serve the beverage in the consumable form such as farmers, roasters, baristas, and coffee shop owners etc.
- The first ICD was launched in 2015 by the International Coffee Organization in Milan. The theme 2020 of the day is “Coffee’s Next Generation”.

Indian Army celebrates 74th Infantry Day in J&K

- Every year, October 27 is celebrated as Infantry Day by the Indian Army in Jammu & Kashmir (known by the nickname, Chinar Corps).
- The Chinar Corps celebrated the 74th Infantry Day on October 27, 2020, to honour the supreme sacrifice of the gallant soldiers in fighting the Pakistani invaders, in Jammu and Kashmir, in 1947.

International Animation Day: 28 October

- International Animation Day is observed globally on 28 October every year. The day has celebrated the art of animation and also recognise the artists, scientists and technicians behind animation.
- This year marks the 19th International Animation Day. The day was created in 2002 by International Animated Film Association (ASIFA), an International Animated Film Association, a member of UNESCO.

59th ITBP Raising Day: 24 October

- Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) has observed his 59th raising Day on 24th October. The ITBP was raised in the aftermath of the 1962 Chinese aggression and it has a strength of about 90,000 personnel with 60 battalions on the ground.
- ITBP is one of the five bodies of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF). It keeps Vigil on the northern borders and prevents border violations. It checks illegal immigration, trans-border smuggling, and maintains peace.

World Day for Audiovisual Heritage: 27 October

- The World Day for Audiovisual Heritage is observed globally on 27 October every year. The day was chosen by UNESCO to raise awareness of the significance and preservation risks of recorded sound and audiovisual documents. The theme of the World Day for Audiovisual Heritage 2020: “Your Window to the World”.
- The 33rd session of UNESCO’s General Conference adopted 33 C/Resolution 53 to proclaim 27 October as World Day for Audiovisual Heritage, in commemoration of the adoption, in 1980 by the 21st session of the General Conference, of the Recommendation for the Safeguarding and Preservation of Moving Images.

India Posts releases 75th Anniversary of UN Commemorative Stamp

- Department of Posts (DOP), Ministry of Communications released a commemorative postage stamp on the 75th anniversary of the United Nations Organisations.
- External Affairs Ministry spokesperson, Anurag Srivastava stated India attaches the highest priority to the expansion of the UN Security Council so that it reflects contemporary realities of the world. He stated reformed multilateralism will be a key pillar of the overall approach in the upcoming innings of India as a non-permanent member.

United Nations Day: 24 October

- 24th October has been celebrated as United Nations Day since 1948.
- The United Nations was founded in 1945 to support collective action to realize peace, development and human rights for all.
- With the ratification of the UN Charter by the majority of its signatories, including the five permanent members of the Security Council, the United Nations officially came into being.

World Polio Day: 24 October

- The World Polio Day is celebrated annually on October 24, to raise awareness for polio vaccination and eradication of polio.
- World Polio Day provides an opportunity to highlight global efforts toward a polio-free world and honour the tireless contributions of those on the frontlines in the fight to eradicate polio from every corner of the globe.
- The Day was established by Rotary International to commemorate the birth of Jonas Salk, who led the first team to develop a vaccine against poliomyelitis. 2020 theme for World Polio Day is "A win against polio is a win for global health."
- As of August 2020, Afghanistan and Pakistan are the only two nations which remain with the continued transmission of wild poliovirus.

World Development Information Day: 24 October

- The United Nations' World Development Information Day is held on October 24 every year.
- The day aims to draw the attention of world public opinion to development problems and the need to strengthen international cooperation to solve them for overall growth and development.
- The General Assembly in 1972 established World Development Information Day to draw the attention of the world to development problems and the need to strengthen international cooperation to solve them.
- The Assembly decided that the date for the Day should coincide with United Nations Day, 24 October, which was also the date of the adoption, in 1970, of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade.

World Snow Leopard Day: 23 October

- World Snow Leopard Day is observed globally on 23rd October. The main purpose of this day is to show the importance of snow leopard conservation and raise awareness about this incredible animal.
- The day also emphasizes the importance of taking measures to stop poaching, as well as consolidating efforts in terms of an environmental organization in the countries of the snow leopard range.

National Police Commemoration Day: 21 October

- In India, the National Police Commemoration Day is observed on 21st October every year. The day is marked to remember and honour the brave policemen who have laid down their lives in the line of duty.
- On 21 October 1959, twenty Indian soldiers were attacked by Chinese troops in Ladakh's Hot Spring area, in which, ten Indian policemen lost their lives and seven were imprisoned. Since that day, 21 October has been observed as Police Commemoration Day in honour of the martyrs.

International Stuttering Awareness Day: 22 October

- International Stuttering Awareness Day is observed globally on 22nd October every year. The day is intended to raise public awareness of the millions of people who have a speech disorder of stuttering or stammering.
- This year's theme is "Journey of Words – Resilience and Bouncing Back".
- The International Stuttering Awareness Day, ISAD, (October 22) began in 1998, spear-headed by Michael Sugarman, Oakland, California. ISAD recognizes the growing alliance between SLPs and consumers, who are learning from each other and working together to share, give support, and educate one another and the general public on the impact that stuttering has on individuals' lives. Online Conferences, organized by Judy Kuster, have been an integral part of International Stuttering Awareness Day since its inception.

World Statistics Day: 20 October

- The third World Statistics Day is observed globally on 20 October 2020. The celebration of World Statistics Day 2020 is a global collaborative endeavour, organized under the guidance of the United Nations Statistical Commission.
- The World Statistics Day 2020 theme "Connecting the world with data we can trust." This theme reflects the importance of trust, authoritative data, innovation and the public good in national statistical systems.
- At its 41st Session in February 2010, the United Nations Statistical Commission proposed celebrating 20 October 2010 as World Statistics Day. The General Assembly adopted on 3 June 2010 resolution 64/267, which officially designated 20 October 2010 as the first-ever World Statistics Day under the general theme "Celebrating the many achievements of official statistics. In 2015, with resolution 96/282, the General Assembly decided to designate 20 October 2015 as the second World Statistics Day under the general theme "Better data, better lives," as well as to celebrate World

Statistics Day every five years on 20 October.

World Osteoporosis Day: 20 October

- The World Osteoporosis Day (WOD) is observed globally on 20 October. The day is celebrated to raise global awareness of the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of osteoporosis and metabolic bone disease. WOD is organized by the International Osteoporosis Foundation (IOF), by the launch of a year-long campaign with a specific theme. WOD aims to make osteoporosis and fracture prevention a global health priority by reaching out to health-care professionals, the media, policymakers, patients, and the public at large.
- In 2020 the Global WOD Campaign theme is “THAT’S OSTEOPOROSIS”, highlighting emotionally impactful visuals and stories of real people living with osteoporosis in all regions of the world.

36th Raising Day of National Security Guard

- The 36th Raising Day of National Security Guard (NSG) is observed on 16 October. NSG plays a crucial role in India’s security apparatus. It has been associated with the utmost courage and professionalism.
- The NSG is a Federal Contingency force to deal with anti-terrorist activities. The NSG is a force equipped and trained to deal with the specific situation and is therefore used in exceptional circumstances to thwart serious acts of terrorism. It was established in 1984, NSG is popularly known as the Black Cats. It is an elite striking force in the country trained and equipped to handle situations like a terrorist attack, hijacking, and hostage captivity.

International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

- International Day for the Eradication of Poverty is observed globally on 17 October every year. The day aims to raise awareness of the need to eradicate poverty and destitution around the world, particularly in developing countries.
- 2020 Theme: “Acting together to achieve social and environmental justice for all”. The theme for the Day this year addresses the challenge of achieving social and environmental justice for all.
- This year marks the 27th anniversary of the declaration by the General Assembly, in its resolution 47/196 of 22 December 1992, of 17 October as the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. This year also marks the 32nd anniversary of the Call to Action by Father Joseph Wresinski — which inspired the observance of October 17 as the World Day for Overcoming Extreme Poverty — and the recognition by the United Nations of the day as the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

World Food Day: 16 October

- World Food Day (WFD) is observed globally on 16 October every year. The day is celebrated to eradicate worldwide hunger from our lifetime. This day generates awareness globally for those who suffer from hunger and to ensure the need for food security and nutritious diets for all. Theme 2020: “Grow, Nourish, Sustain. Together”.

- The main focus of this day is that food is a basic and fundamental human right. WFD commemorates the day in 1945 when the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) was founded.

World Students' Day

- World Students' Day is observed every year on October 15 to mark the birth anniversary of former President A. P. J. Abdul Kalam.
- In 2010 the United Nations declared 15 October "World Students' Day", due to Kalam's love for students and who himself was a dedicated teacher and identified himself foremost in that role before anything else.
- 2020 marks 89th birth anniversary of the former president and 'Missile Man' Dr APJ Abdul Kalam.

World Standards Day

- The World Standards Day (WSD), also known as International Standards Day, is celebrated globally on 14 October annually.
- World Standards Day 2020 theme is "Protecting the planet with standards".
- The day aims to raise awareness about the importance of standardisation to the global economy among the consumers, regulators and industry.

International Day for Disaster Reduction observed on 13 October

- The United Nations observe International Day for Disaster Reduction every year on 13th October.
- Objective is to promote a global culture of risk-awareness and disaster reduction and also celebrates how people and communities around the world are reducing their exposure to disasters and raising awareness about the importance of reining in the risks that they face.
- Theme of 2020 International Day for Disaster Reduction is 'Disaster risk governance'.

International Day for Disaster Reduction

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- This year's International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction is all about governance.

World Arthritis Day

- On World Arthritis Day, 12 October, people with rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases from around the world join together to make their voices heard.
- Objective of the day is to raise awareness about arthritis, an inflammatory condition which causes pain and stiffness in joints which can worsen with age.
- This day was started by Arthritis and Rheumatism International (ARI) in 1996 in order

to spread awareness about arthritis and encourage policymakers to help reduce burden of arthritis.

- The World Arthritis Day theme 2020 is Time2Work.

International Day of the Girl Child

- International Day of the Girl Child (also known as Day of Girls and the International Day of Girls) is observed annually on October 11 since 2012.
- This international observance day was declared by the United Nations to raise awareness of issues facing girls internationally surrounding education, nutrition, child marriage, legal and medical rights.
- The theme for 2020 International Day of the Girl Child is “My voice, our equal future”.

World Investor Week

- World Investor Week (WIW) is promoted by the International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO) and will be held between October 05 and October 11, 2020.
- This is the 4th World Investor Week and it aims to raise awareness about the importance of investor education and protection.

National Postal Week

- The Department of Posts is celebrating National Postal Week from 9-15 October, 2020, to mark the occasion of the World Postal Day.
- Every year, the National Postal week is organised to generate awareness of the role and activities of the postal services among the public and media on a national scale.
- Online campaign will be organised to create awareness about new offerings and availability of citizen centric services in Post Offices.

Indian Foreign Service Day

- Indian Foreign Service Day is celebrated on 9 October every year since 2011 to commemorate the day the Indian Cabinet created the IFS.
- Months before India's independence, in September 1946, the Indian Foreign Service was created “for India's diplomatic, consular and commercial representation overseas.”

World Migratory Bird Day 2020

- Officially, the World Migratory Bird Day is observed twice in a year, firstly on Second Saturday of May and again on Second Saturday of October, so as to follow the seasonal migrations of birds, which peak in those months.
- In 2020, the WMBBD falls on 09 May 2020 and 10 October 2020. The Day was officially declared by the United Nations in 2006.
- The theme of 2020 World Migratory Bird Day is “Birds Connect Our World”.
- The day aims to raise awareness of migratory birds and the need for international cooperation to conserve them.

World Mental Health day

- On 10th October the WHO celebrates World Mental Health day every year.
- Objective of the day is to raise awareness of mental health issues around the world and mobilizing efforts in support of mental health.
- The theme for World Mental Health Day 2020 is 'Mental Health for All'.
- The World Federation for Mental Health took the initiative of celebrating this day since 1992.

The 2020 World Egg Day

- Every year on the second Friday of October, world celebrates World Egg day. This year the day is being observed on 9th October 2020.
- Objective of the day is to raise awareness of the benefits of eggs and their importance in human nutrition.
- The theme for 2020 World Egg Day is "Eat your egg today and every day"

The 2020 World Sight Day

- Every year on the on the second Thursday of October, world celebrates world sight day. This year the day is observed on 8th October.
- Objective is to draw public awareness towards blindness & vision impairment and educate target audiences about blindness prevention.
- World Sight Day 2020 Theme: Hope In Sight.

Air Force Day 2020

- Air Force Day is observed every year on 8 October. The Air Force Day 2020 celebrates the 88th anniversary of the official foundation day of the force on October 8.
- Indian Air Force was officially established on 8 October 1932 by the British Empire as the Royal Indian Air Force. The name was changed to Indian Air Force in 1950.

World Cotton Day

- The WHO-recognised World Cotton Day (WCD) is observed on 7th October since 2019 to celebrate the international cotton industry and its contribution to communities and the global economy..
- The day was inaugurated by the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Geneva on October 7, 2019.
- WCD Day was initiated by the Group of Cotton-4 countries namely Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali to the reflect the importance of cotton as a global commodity.

Wildlife week is celebrated on October 2 to 8.

- The Wildlife Week was adopted by National Board of Wildlife.
- This Week was conceptualized in 1952 with an objective of raising awareness to serve the long-term goal of safeguarding the lives of wildlife through critical action.
- The Government of India is also established an Indian Board of Wild Life which works to improve awareness towards the preservation of wildlife.

- The annual theme of the campaign is to promote the preservation of fauna of animal life.

World Space Week

- World Space Week is celebrated on October 4-10, to commemorate the launch of earth's first human-made satellite, Sputnik I, on October 4, 1957, and the signing of the Outer Space Treaty on October 10, 1967.
- 2020 World Space Week is dedicated to satellites and their broad benefits under the theme "Satellites improve life."

World Habitat Day 2020

- World Habitat Day is observed every year on the first Monday of October throughout the world to reflect on the state of our towns and cities, and on the basic right of all to adequate shelter as well as remind people that they are responsible for the habitat of future generations.
- In 2020, the World Habitat Day is being celebrated on 5th October. The theme for 2020 World Habitat Day is Housing For All — A Better Urban Future.
- It was officially designated by the United Nations in 1985 and first celebrated in 1986.

World Teachers' Day

- World Teachers' Day is observed globally on 5th October since 1994. The day provides the occasion to celebrate the teaching profession worldwide, take stock of achievements, and draw attention to the voices of teachers, who are at the heart of efforts to attain the global education target of leaving no one behind.
- In 2020, World Teachers' Day will celebrate teachers with the theme "Teachers: Leading in crisis, reimagining the future".

World Animal Day

- The World Animal Day is observed annually on October 4 since 1929. The day aims to raise the status of animals in order to improve welfare standards around the globe.
- It was originated by Heinrich Zimmermann and he organized the first World Animal Day on 24 March 1925 at the Sport Palace in Berlin, Germany.

SUMMITS AND MOU'S

Flipkart partners with Bajaj Allianz to offer cyber fraud insurance

- Keeping the upcoming festive season and growing online frauds in mind, Flipkart announced a partnership with Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Company to offer 'Digital Suraksha Group Insurance for customers in the country.
- The "Digital Suraksha Group Insurance" policy will cover financial losses caused by various kinds of online frauds and cyber attacks that might occur during digital transactions.
- The customers can choose for a one-year cover at premiums as low as Rs 183 for a cover of Rs 50,000, Rs 312 for Rs 1 lakh, and Rs 561 for Rs 2 lakh for a 12-months tenure, with

covers also extending up to Rs 10 lakh.

BSE joins hands with Yes Bank to empower SMEs

- Leading stock exchange BSE said it has signed a pact with private sector lender Yes Bank to empower the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) listed on the platform.
- The pact aims at empowering the SME segment through awareness and knowledge-sharing programmes.
- As per the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), BSE and Yes Bank will conduct knowledge events for SMEs, export promotion of SMEs, in addition to providing banking and financial solutions.

Gujarat inks MoU with Denmark in water sector

- The Government of Gujarat has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of Denmark in water sector.
- The MoU was signed through online interactive platform between the Gujarat government arm 'Gujarat Water Supply and Sewerage Board' and 'Deanish Water Forum'.
- The MoU will facilitate technology exchange, training, capacity building, knowledge exchange, cooperation in water supply, waste water treatment/reuse and water management.

India hosts 19th Meeting of SCO Ministers of Foreign Economy

- India hosted the 19th Meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Ministers of Foreign Economy and Foreign Trade. The virtual meeting was held under the Chairmanship of Union Minister of Commerce and Industry of India Shri Piyush Goyal. It was attended by the Secretary-General of SCO Vladimir Norov and Ministers from Kyrgyz Republic, China, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.
- Statement on the response to C-19: It highlights the need for greater cooperation for access to medicines and facilitation of trade.
- Statement on the Multilateral Trading System of Ministers of SCO Countries who are WTO Members: It highlights the importance of the rules-based multilateral negotiations.
- Statement on SCO Cooperation on Intellectual Property Rights (IPR). It relates to the cooperation of intellectual property and include sharing information/experience on legislation and enforcement, cooperation in international organisations and other areas.
- Action Plan for Implementation of MOU to stimulate cooperation within the framework of SCO in the field of MSMEs. It looks at the number of areas of cooperation among MSMEs, including the exchange of information, organisation of events and collaboration on research and capacity building.

Microsoft & NSDC tie-up to empower 1 lakh women with digital skills

- Microsoft has collaborated with the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) to impart digital skills to more than one lakh underserved women in India over the next ten months. This initiative is an extension of Microsoft's partnership with NSDC to

provide digital skills to over 1 lakh youth in the country.

- The programme will curate a series of live training sessions and digital skilling drives to help create opportunities for young girls and women, particularly first-time job seekers and those whose jobs may have been impacted by C-19, to join the future workforce.

India Post, US Postal Service sign pact for electronic exchange of customs

- Indian Posts & US Postal Service entered into an agreement for the electronic exchange of customs data related to postal shipments. It will enable to transmit & receive electronic data of international postal items prior to their physical arrival.
- The agreement will make it possible to transmit and receive electronic data of international postal items prior to their physical arrival at the destination and would enable customs clearance of postal items in advance in line with the evolving global postal framework.

Om Birla participates in 6th BRICS Parliamentary Forum virtually

- The 6th BRICS Parliamentary Forum has been organised virtually under the chairmanship of Vyacheslav Volodin, the Chairman of Russian Parliament.
- The Indian Parliamentary Delegation is being led by Lok Sabha Speaker, Om Birla and also consists of Member of Lok Sabha Kanimozhi Karunanidhi.
- The forum provides an effective platform to facilitate inter-parliamentary dialogue and Parliamentary Diplomacy among the Parliaments of BRICS countries with a view to strengthening the role of Parliaments on a range of contemporary global issues.
- Speakers and members of five BRICS Parliaments namely Brazil, Russian, India, China and South Africa are attending the Forum. The theme of the Forum is 'BRICS partnership in the interest of global stability, general safety and innovative growth: Parliamentary dimension'.

3rd India-US 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue begins in New Delhi

- India is hosting the third India-US two plus two Ministerial Dialogue at Hyderabad House in New Delhi. The Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and External Affairs Minister Dr S. Jaishankar are leading the Indian delegation. The United States Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Secretary of Defence Mark Esper are leading the US delegation. The First two plus two dialogue was held in New Delhi in September 2018 and the Second in Washington DC in 2019.
- Besides, covering all bilateral, regional and global issues of mutual interest during the third dialogue, the two sides also signed the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement for Geo-Spatial Cooperation (BECA) to further expand the geospatial cooperation between them and improve the accuracy of missile systems of India.

IIT Jodhpur, NHAI sign MoU for betterment of Highway Infrastructure

- Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Jodhpur and National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to share expertise for the betterment of highway infrastructure.

- The two institutions will work in domains which include transportation engineering, structural engineering, geotechnical engineering.
- They will also cooperate in hydraulics engineering, infrastructure systems, earthquake engineering, urban and rural planning and disaster management and planning domains.
- The MoU will enable Undergraduate and Postgraduate students of IIT Jodhpur to undertake internships from the above-mentioned domains.
- The joint activities will bridge the industry-institution gap and develop technologies that would be adopted in practice by NHAI.

BSE inks MoU with ICCI to support SMEs & start-ups

- Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) has signed an agreement with Inventivepreneur Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ICCI) to support small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and start-ups, and promote their listing on the exchange.
- ICCI will offer assistance to BSE in evaluating SMEs and start-ups for listing on BSE SME board.
- ICCI will also help to offer industry connections to respective BSE start-ups globally and support entrepreneurship nationwide through knowledge transmission on government announced programs, acceleration fund, international presence and global business relations.

India participates in 18th meeting of Prosecutors General of SCO

- The 18th meeting of Prosecutors General of SCO was held on 20 October 2020, via video conference. India was represented by the Solicitor General Tushar Mehta. During the meeting, all the prosecutors agreed to strengthen cooperation in preventing and combating corruption, mutual legal assistance and exchange of regulatory legal acts.
- India will host the SCO Prosecutors General Meeting in 2021. SCO is an important regional grouping which gives India an opportunity to engage its extended neighbourhood especially central Asian countries.

Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju attended Y20 Global Summit Virtually

- The first-ever virtual G20 (Group of Twenty) Youth 20 (Y20) Global Summit was virtually hosted from Al Khobar, Saudi Arabia for exchanging ideas and dialogues for the empowerment of youth Post C-19, where Indian side was represented by Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Kiren Rijiju. Indian side emphasized on galvanizing the youth to take on the challenges set forth by the worldwide C-19 Pandemic.
- The theme of the Summit was “Government – Youth dialogue on post-C-19 opportunities”. The Summit concluded with the drafting of the Y20 Communique under the three overarching priority areas viz. Future Fit; Youth Empowerment; and Global Citizenship.
- Notably, the year 2020 marks the 10th anniversary of Y20 as the official G20 youth engagement group. Y20 is a forum for developing cooperation with the future generation and provides a platform for young people to have their voices heard on

issues relevant to the G20 agenda.

India hosts 7th meeting of Ministers of Justice of SCO

- The 7th meeting of Ministers of (Law and) Justice of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Member States was virtually hosted by Indian Minister of Law & Justice, Communication and Electronics & Information Technology, Ravi Shankar Prasad. The Indian side urged the SCO Member States to promote the exchange of ideas, best practices and experiences in identified areas through the platform. He also mentioned initiating Pro Bono Legal Services to provide free legal aid to marginalized sections of the society.
- The virtual meeting was attended by justice ministers from China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, according to a statement by the Ministry Of Law and Justice. The Seventh Session of the Justice Ministers of SCO member states deliberated on areas of cooperation; emphasized the high relevance of mutual exchange of legal information on counteraction to the spread of the coronavirus pandemic and acknowledged the need for cooperation in ADR mechanism area, among others.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister signs 14 MoUs to generate employment

- Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Edappadi K. Palaniswami signed 14 Agreements worth Rs. 10, 055 crore with potential to generate employment in the State.
- The Tamil Nadu State Government is also ranked first among Indian states in attracting investments during the first six months of this year.

Microsoft and AICTE partnered to skill students

- The Government of India's All India Council For Technical Education (AICTE) has partnered with Microsoft to empower learners and educators with future-ready skills.
- As part of this partnership, over 1500 course modules from Microsoft will be made available to students and educators free of cost through AICTE's e-learning portal, ELIS.

NCERT signed an MoU with ISLRTC for deaf children

- To make textbooks and other study material easily accessible for deaf children through sign language, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) signed an MoU with the Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre (ISLRTC).
- It will not only enhance their vocabulary, but also enhance their capabilities to understand concepts.

ADIA will invest Rs 5,512.5 crore in Reliance Industries Ltd

- Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA) will invest Rs 5,512.5 crore in Reliance Industries Ltd's retail arm.
- With this investment, RRVL has raised Rs 37,710 crore from leading global investors including Silver Lake, KKR, General Atlantic, Mubadala, GIC, TPG and ADIA in less than four weeks.

Warburg Pincus invests Rs 700 cr to acquire stake in Home First Finance

- Home First Finance, True North-backed affordable housing finance firm, said it has entered into an agreement with Warburg Pincus-affiliate Orange Clove Investments BV for an investment of Rs 700 cr.
- The investment is a combination of primary fund raise and secondary sales by existing shareholders.
- As of March 31, 2020, Home First had an asset under management (AUM) of Rs 3,618 crore with a net worth of Rs 933 crore and a gross non-performing asset of 0.87 per cent.

India signs USD 90 million defence deal with US to buy spares for C-130J Super Hercules aircraft

- India and the United States have entered into a defence deal worth \$90-million, wherein US would provide equipment, spare parts and logistical support for India's fleet of C-130J Super Hercules cargo aircraft.
- As per the deal, the US will repair the C-130J Super Hercules to India, as well as supply spare part and ground support.
- India has also ordered an AN/ALR-56M advanced radar warning system, 10 lightweight night vision binoculars, 10-night vision glasses, GPS and electronic warfare to the US.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Sonu Sood honoured with SDA Special Humanitarian Action Award by UNDP

- The veteran actor Sonu Sood has been conferred the prestigious SDG Special Humanitarian Action Award by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on 28 September 2020 during a virtual ceremony.
- The actor has been awarded for selflessly extending a helping hand and sending home lakhs of migrants, helping thousands of stranded students across geographies abroad, providing free education and medical facilities to young children and creating free employment opportunities to the needy in the wake of the C-19 pandemic.

Bengal Peerless ropes in former cricket captain Sourav Ganguly as brand ambassador

- City based real estate developer Bengal Peerless Housing has roped in Sourav Ganguly as brand ambassador for the company.
- The former national cricket team captain and current president of the Board of Control for Cricket in India, Ganguly will primarily lead the campaign of the company's residential project Avidipta II on EM Bypass.

Gajendra Singh Shekhawat presents Swachh Bharat Awards 2020

- The Union Minister for Jal Shakti, Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and the Minister of State for Jal Shakti, Shri Rattan Lal Kataria virtually conferred the Swachh Bharat 2020 Awards to the best performing States/UTs, districts, blocks, GPs in various categories on 2nd October 2020.

- The Ministry of Jal Shakti is observing the Swachh Bharat Diwas, 2020 on 2nd October to mark six years of the launch of the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM).
- The Swachh Bharat 2020 Awards were conferred under three categories which are:
 - ✓ Swachh Sundar Samudayik Shauchalaya (SSSS) campaign
 - ✓ Samudayik Shauchalaya Abhiyan (SSA)
 - ✓ Gandagi Se Mukh (GMB) campaign

14th Asian Film Awards 2020 announced

- The 14th edition of Asian Film Awards was organized by the Asian Film Awards Academy. Indian Movie Gully Boy has received the award for the Best Original Score at 14th Asian Film Awards. The award went to Karsh Kale and The Salvage Audio Collective. Gully Boy has been directed by Zoya Akhtar. In Gully Boy, Ranveer Singh and Alia Bhatt played leading roles.

14th Asian Film Awards Winners List:

Award	Name Winner
Best Actor	Lee Byung-hun – The Man Standing Next (South Korea)
Best Actress	Zhou Dongyu – Better Days (China)
Best Cinematography	Dong Jinsong – The Wild Goose Lake
Best Costume Designer	Pacharin Surawatanapongs– Happy Old Year
Best Director	Wang Xiaoshuai for So Long, My Son (China)
Best Editing	Yang Jin-mo – Parasite
Best Film	Parasite (South Korea)
Best Newcomer	Jackson Yee – Better Days
Best New Director	Hikari – 37 Seconds
Best Supporting Actor	Ryo Kase – To the Ends of the Earth
Best Supporting Actress	Ko Shu-chin – A Sun
Best Screenplay	Bong Joon-ho, Han Jin-won – Parasite
Best Original Music	Karsh Kale, The Salvage Audio Collective – Gully Boy
Best Production Design	Ha-jun Lee – Parasite
Best Visual Effects	Tomi Kijo, Renovatio Pictures – Detention
Best Sound	Yoshifumi Kureishi – Listen to the Universe

Anzar Mustaeen Ali wins special prize in Global Art Competition

- A six-year-old Bangladeshi boy, Anzar Mustaeen Ali won a special prize of USD 1000 for his artwork in the global art competition organised by the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR). The ICCR had launched a global painting competition named 'United Against C -19- Express through Art' which attracted 8000 artwork entries from around the world. After the first round of competition 210 artworks were shortlisted.

- The final jury evaluated and decided the winners from each category such as Indian and Foreign, Professional/Amateur/Children in four different sections.

Dr Jajini Varghese honoured with Outstanding Young Person 2020

- UK-based Indian-origin plastic surgeon, Dr Jajini Varghese has been named an 'Outstanding Young Person of the World 2020' by a non-profit NGO for her "incredible" scientific contributions to diagnosing and treating breast cancer.
- Varghese has been recognised in the "Medical Innovation" category for making it her personal mission to attempt to restore the lives of millions of women affected by breast cancer and will be presented with the award at a ceremony at the 2020 Junior Chamber International (JCI) World Congress in Yokohama, Japan.
- In the UK, she is a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons in Plastic Surgery (FRCS) and a Member of the Royal College of Surgeons (MRCS). She is also on the Board of Examiners for the MSc in Plastic Surgery at University College London (UCL).

ISA Solar Awards conferred for the first time

- For the first time, since the inception of the framework agreement of ISA, the Solar Awards were presented during the third Assembly of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) to the countries of the region as well as institutions working for solar.

Three categories of awards were conferred which included:

1. Visvesvaraya award recognises the countries with a maximum floating solar capacity in each of the four regions of ISA.
2. Kalpana Chawla awards recognise the outstanding contribution of scientists and engineers working in the field of solar energy.
3. Diwakar award recognizes organisations & institutions that have been working for the benefit of differently-abled people and have maximised the use of solar energy in the host country.

List of Winners:

- Visvesvaraya award: Japan for the Asia Pacific region and the Netherlands for Europe and Others region.
- Kalpana Chawla awards: Dr Bhim Singh from IIT Delhi (India) and Dr Aesha Alnuaimi from Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (United Arab Emirates).
- Diwakar award: Arpan Institute (Haryana) and Arushi Society.

Aishwarya Sridhar wins Wildlife Photographer of the Year Award

- A 23-year-old, Mumbai based girl, Aishwarya Sridhar became the first Indian woman to win the 2020 Wildlife Photographer of the Year award. It is the 56th year of the prestigious award. Her image titled 'Lights of passion', won among 50,000 entries from over 80 countries across the world.
- Only 100 images were shortlisted and she won the award for her photograph in the Behaviour Invertebrates category. She is the first and youngest girl to win this prestigious award from India in the Adult category. The award winners were announced at the Natural History Museum in London.

Central bank of the year award 2020 awarded to “Bank of Ghana”

- Bank of Ghana has won the Central bank of the year award 2020.
- Apart from this, Mark Carney (Governor of the Bank of England) has won the Governor of the year at the Central bank of the year award 2020.

Best Ships in FAF 2020: Indian Navy Ships Sahyadri and Kora

- The Fleet Award Function (FAF), 2020 was organised to mark the successful culmination of the Operational Cycle of the Eastern Fleet of the Indian Navy at Visakhapatnam.
- Indian Navy Ships Sahyadri and Kora is named as the Best Ships in FAF 2020.
- During the event, the Fleet Operations Officer presented the Annual Report of activities and achievements of the Fleet for 01 Apr 19 to 31 Mar 20.

Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences 2020 announced

- The 2020 Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences has been awarded jointly to Paul R. Milgrom and Robert B. Wilson “for improvements to auction theory and inventions of new auction formats”
- The award is officially known as the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel 2020.
- The laureates in economic sciences are selected by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences in Stockholm.
- It comes with a gold medal and a cash award of 10 million Swedish krona (\$1.12 million).

Sarah Hall becomes first writer to win BBC National Short Story Award twice

- Sarah Hall has become the first writer to win the BBC national short story award twice, with judges describing her as a virtuoso of the form.

Nobel Peace Prize 2020

- The Norwegian Nobel Committee has awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 2020 to World Food Programme (WFP) on 9th October 2020.
- The World Food Programme (WFP) has won the prestigious honor “for its efforts to combat hunger, for its contribution to bettering conditions for peace in conflict-affected areas and for acting as a driving force in efforts to prevent the use of hunger as a weapon of war and conflict.”

Nobel Prize in Literature 2020 announced

- The Nobel Prize in Literature for 2020 is awarded to the American poet Louise Glück “for her unmistakable poetic voice that with austere beauty makes individual existence universal”.
- The Nobel Prize in Literature is awarded by The Swedish Academy, Stockholm, Sweden.

Emmanuelle Charpentier and Jennifer A. Doudna wins Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2020

- The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences has awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2020 jointly to Emmanuelle Charpentier and Jennifer A. Doudna “for the development of a method for genome editing.”
- Emmanuelle Charpentier is a Director of the Max Planck Unit for the Science of Pathogens, Berlin, Germany. Jennifer A. Doudna is a Professor at the University of California, Berkeley, USA and Investigator, Howard Hughes Medical Institute.

Govt announces results of 1st National Startup Awards

- The Union Minister of Railways and Commerce & Industry Shri Piyush Goyal announced the Results of the first ever National Startup Awards 2020 on 6th October 2020.
- The award has been introduced by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) to recognize and reward outstanding Startups and ecosystem enablers that are building innovative products or solutions and scalable enterprises, with high potential of employment generation or wealth creation, demonstrating measurable social impact.
- The first edition of the Awards had applications from 12 sectors, which were further sub-classified into a total of 35 categories. A total of 1641 applications were received from startups from 23 States and 4 Union Territories.
- All applicants were evaluated against six broad parameters namely Innovation, Scalability, Economic Impact, Social Impact, Environmental Impact, and Inclusiveness and Diversity.

Roger Penrose, Reinhard Genzel and Andrea Ghez wins 2020 Nobel Prize in Physics

- The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences announced the 2020 Nobel Prize in Physics on 6th October 2020.
- One half of the award has been given to Roger Penrose for black hole discovery; and the other half jointly to Reinhard Genzel and Andrea Ghez.
- UK's Roger Penrose has been awarded “for the discovery that black hole formation is a robust prediction of the general theory of relativity”
- America's Reinhard Genzel and Andrea Ghez have jointly won “for the discovery of a supermassive compact object at the centre of our galaxy.”

IACC presents lifetime achievement award to Ratan Tata

- The Indo-American Chamber of Commerce (IACC) has presented the lifetime achievement award to business icon Ratan Tata for his pioneering role in the Business Relations of India-USA and for his lifetime achievement in Global Leadership.
- Tata, who grew the revenues for India's largest conglomerate ‘The Tata Group’ to nearly USD 100 billion by 2011-12, remains an influential industrialist, philanthropist and humanitarian to the day.
- This award was announced in the virtual event of IACC “C-19 Crusader Award-2020”. This is the 1st time IACC conferred the Lifetime Achievement award to any individual.

Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2020 announced

- The Nobel Assembly at Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, Sweden on October 5, 2020, announced that the 2020 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine has been jointly awarded to Harvey J. Alter, Charles M. Rice, and Michael Houghton for the discovery of the Hepatitis C virus.
- The discovery of the virus is termed as a landmark achievement in a battle against the virus that is a big threat to human health. The three scientists have made a crucial contribution in a fight against blood-borne hepatitis that causes liver cancer and cirrhosis in people.
- The discovery of the Hepatitis C virus by the three scientists revealed the cause of the remaining cases of chronic hepatitis and made possible blood tests and new medicines that have saved millions of lives.
- The prestigious Nobel prize award comes with a gold medal and prize money of 10 million Swedish Kronor.
- As per the World Health Organisation, over 70 million cases, and 4,00,000 deaths due to Hepatitis are recorded every year.

Right Livelihood Award 2020 announced

- The Right Livelihood Award Foundation has announced the four winners of the 2020 Right Livelihood Award 2020 which is also known as the alternative Nobel Prize in Stockholm.
- The four activists Ales Bialiatski of Belarus, Nasrin Sotoudeh of Iran, Bryan Stevenson of the United States(US) and Lottie Cunningham Wren of Nicaragua shared the 2020 award for their contribution towards equality, democracy, justice and freedom.

Robert Lewandowski wins UEFA Player of the Year award

- The Polish forward scored 15 goals on the way to Bayern Munich's sixth Champions League title, hitting the target in every match before the final except a group game against Tottenham Hotspur when he was rested.
- Other players in consideration were Manchester City's Kevin De Bruyne and Bayern goalkeeper Manuel Neuer.
- He also fired 34 goals in 31 Bundesliga matches and six in five German Cup games, helping Bayern win both competitions
- The German champions' manager Hansi Flick won UEFA's coach of the year of the award.

Founder of Sari Recycling Project Wins Goldman Sachs And Fortune Global Women Leaders Award

- Rayana Edwards, the South African who started a project to empower women to recycle saris into internationally-acclaimed fashion garments, has been named as a joint winner of this year's Goldman Sachs and Fortune Global Women Leaders award(USD 25,000).
- The other winner was Emma Dicks, founder of CodeSpace Academy, a coding school.

RANKING

Mukesh Ambani tops Hurun India Rich List for ninth consecutive year

- The Reliance Industries' Chairman, and Asia's richest man Mukesh Ambani has topped the IIFL Wealth Hurun India Rich List 2020 for the ninth consecutive year.
- He has a total net worth of Rs 6,58,400 crore.
- London-based Hinduja brothers (SP Hinduja, along with his three brothers) is at second position with combined net worth of Rs 1,43,700 crore followed by HCL's Shiv Nadar at third spot with net worth of Rs 1,41,700 crore.

"Crimes in India" Report, Released by NCRB – Crimes against women increased by 7.3%

- National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) which is an Indian government agency responsible for collecting and analyzing crime data released the Crimes in India Report for the year of 2019.
- As per the Report, crimes against women increased by 7.3% between 2018 and 2019.
- ✓ Crimes against women: Assam
- ✓ Crimes against scheduled castes: Uttar Pradesh
- ✓ Crimes against girl children: Uttar Pradesh
- ✓ Highest number of dowry cases: Uttar Pradesh
- ✓ Highest number of acid attack: Uttar Pradesh
- ✓ Rapes against Dalit women: Rajasthan

Dr Satish Mishra bags "Dr Tulsi Das Chugh Award-2020

- The National Academy of Medical Sciences (India) has selected the Principal Scientist, Division of Molecular Parasitology and Immunology, (CSIR-CDRI)-Lucknow, Dr Satish Mishra for "Dr.Tulsi Das Chugh Award 2020".
- He is awarded for his research work on Malaria parasite's life cycle which is a complex process involving two hosts and three invasive stages.

Haryana tops Anemia Mukht Bharat Index in country

- Haryana is the best State in Anemia Mukht Bharat (AMB) Index with 46.7 among 29 states in the country. Further, in the year 2019-20, the state had achieved 93 per cent of immunization.
- This information came to light during the 8th Governing Body Meeting of the State Health Society of the National Health Mission (NHM) in Chandigarh. The meeting was presided over by the Haryana chief secretary, Vijai Vardhan.

Samsung Tops Forbes' list of World's Best Employer 2020

- South Korea based electronics conglomerate, Samsung Electronics has topped the list of 'World's Best Employer 2020' published by Forbes'. Amazon, IBM, Microsoft and LG are among the top 5 in the list respectively. The global list features 750 multinational and large corporations headquartered in 45 countries.
- From India, HCL Technologies is the top industry in the list. It is placed at the 30th position globally. In the Banking sector, HDFC Bank is top from India. It is at 176th

position.

NTPC ranks 1st among Indian PSUs in Forbes' World's Best Employer 2020

- National Thermal Power Corporation Limited (NTPC) has featured on the top on the list of Indian PSUs under the 'World's Best Employer 2020', published by Forbes. The recognition is testimony to NTPC's commitment towards inculcating best in class practices that are thoughtfully designed and robustly executed, the company stated in a statement.
- The modules have helped thousands of workers from NTPC to grow and think beyond the professional sphere.

India ranked 2nd in OECD International Migration Outlook report

- India has acquired the second rank in terms of the number of migrants going to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries and acquiring the citizenship of those countries. China retained its top spot with 4.3 lakh migrants, which was 1 per cent lower than the 2019 report.
- This is the 44th edition of the annual report. The data was released by the OECD in its 2020 edition of the annual International Migration Outlook report, which analyses the recent developments in migration movements and policies in its countries.
- From India, 3.3 lakh migrants moved, and this is 10 per cent more than the last edition. Romania emerged as the third-largest exporter of human capital to these countries. Paris-based OECD is an association of 37 developed countries which often attract immigrants for work opportunities, education and asylum.

India 4th most powerful country in Asia Power Index 2020

- India has been ranked at 4th position, with a score of 39.7 out of 100, in the Asia Power Index 2020, released by the Sydney-based Lowy Institute. The Asia Power Index 2020 ranks 26 countries and territories to assess the relative power of states in Asia.
- The United States has retained its position as the most powerful country influencing the Asia-Pacific with a score of 81.6. It is followed by China (76.1) and Japan (41) at second and third spot respectively. The annual Asia Power Index is an analytical tool that ranks countries in terms of what they have, and what they do with what they have (resources and influence) to have dominant power in Asia.

India ranked 94 in Global Hunger Index 2020

- India ranked 94 among 107 nations in the Global Hunger Index 2020. With a score of 27.2, India has been placed in the "serious" category in the GHI scale. Although there is an improvement in a score as compared to 38.9 in 2000, 37.5 in 2006, and 29.3 in 2012 but still it represent a serious level of hunger. Last year, India's rank was 102 out of 117 countries. According to the report, 14 per cent of India's population is undernourished. It also showed the country recorded a 37.4 per cent stunting rate among children under five and a wasting rate of 17.3 per cent. The under-five mortality rate stood at 3.7 per cent.
- The neighbouring Bangladesh, Myanmar and Pakistan too are in the 'serious' category

but ranked higher than India in this year's hunger index. While Bangladesh ranked 75, Myanmar and Pakistan are in the 78th and 88th position. Nepal in 73rd and Sri Lanka in 64th position are in 'moderate' hunger category, the report showed.

Commitment to Reducing Inequality (CRI) Index 2020

- The international charitable organisation 'Oxfam International' released a report on 2020 Commitment to Reducing Inequality (CRI) Index.
- India has been ranked 129 among 158 countries. The 2020 CRI index has been topped by Norway. South Sudan is the lowest ranking country in the index at 158th position.

Forbes India Rich List

- The Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) Chairman Mukesh Ambani, has topped the Forbes India Rich list for 2020, released on 8th October 2020.
- He has retained his position as the wealthiest Indian for the 13th consecutive year on Forbes India list.
- The second spot has been retained by Adani Group Chairman Gautam Adani, with a net worth of \$25.2 billion.
- Tech tycoon Shiv Nadar acquired the third spot with net worth of \$20.4 billion.

World Water Development Report 2020 released by United Nations

- The World Water Development Report 2020 and PCRWR Groundwater Investigation and Mapping report released by the United Nations.
- Around 74% of all-natural disasters between 2001 and 2018 were water-related and during the past 20 years.
- Floods could cost South Asia as much as US\$215 billion each year by 2030
- Global floods and extreme rainfall events have increased by more than 50% this decade, and are now occurring at a rate four times higher than in 1980.

Mumbai ranks second after Delhi in crimes against women, shows NCRB data

- According to the latest data released by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), Mumbai recorded 6,519 cases, after national capital Delhi at 12,902 cases during the year 2019.
- Mumbai is ranked second among 19 cities in the country in recording the highest number of crimes against women after Delhi. Mumbai has 76.5 rate of crime against women as compared to other cities such as Jaipur (235), Lucknow (175.4), Delhi (170.3), Indore (169.1), Patna (102.3), Kanpur (98.5), Nagpur (93.6) and Bengaluru (85.9).
- Delhi and Mumbai are ranked in the top two, respectively, for reporting the maximum number of cases of crimes against children.
- Mumbai also has the highest number of sexual harassment incidents on public transport and recorded the highest number of cases for use of children in pornography.
- The financial capital also ranked third on the list of rape cases after Delhi and Jaipur.

Puducherry airport becomes AAI's first 100% solar-powered airport

- The Puducherry airport has become the first airport of the Airports Authority of India (AAI) which is entirely solar-powered.
- The 500KWp ground-mounted solar power plant was commissioned on 2nd October 2020. The approx cost of the plant is Rs 2.8 crore.
- With becoming absolutely power-neutral, the Puducherry airport will be able to meet its entire power requirement through the solar power plant.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

A book titled "Night of the Restless Spirits" authored by Sarbpreet Singh

- A book titled "Night of the Restless Spirits: Stories from 1984" authored by Sarbpreet Singh. The author Sarbpreet Singh's recounts the Sikh massacre of 1984 in this book.
- The book is a fictionalised version of real happenings comprising just eight chapters. It shows the events of 1984 through the prism of many lives & impact on Sikhs. The book is published by Penguin Publication.

NK Singh launches his autobiography 'Portraits Of Power'

- Veteran Economist and bureaucrat N K (Nand Kishore) Singh has released his autobiography titled "Portraits of Power: Half a Century of Being at Ringside".
- The book portrays the life of NK Singh who played an active role in the development of the Indian economy. He is currently serving as the Chairman of the 15th Finance Commission. The book is published by Rupa Publications India.

A book titled 'The Battle of Belonging' authored by Shashi Tharoor

- Renowned Author and Politician, Shashi Tharoor is set to release his new book titled "The Battle of Belonging" is set to be released in November 2020. The book is published by Aleph Book Company. Shashi Tharoor described this book as his "magnum opus" on the Theory, evolution and practice of Nationalism across the globe and especially in India.
- The book appears to be an extension of his book "Why I Am a Hindu".
- It provides the historical context to the ideas of nationalism, patriotism, humanism, democracy and their origins.
- This book established the actual Indianism and what it means to be a patriotic and nationalistic Indian in the 21st century.

Autobiography of former Union Minister Balasaheb Vikhe Patil

- Prime Minister released the autobiography of former Union Minister Dr Balasaheb Vikhe Patil through video conferencing on 13 October 2020.
- The autobiography of Dr. Patil has been titled 'Deh Vechwa Karani,' means 'dedicating one's life for a noble cause.'
- Dr Patil was a prominent leader from Maharashtra who served as seven time Member of Lok Sabha.

A former RAW officer unravels the path to 1984 in his book 'The Khalistan Conspiracy'

- A former intelligence officer with the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), GBS Sidhu has written the book titled "The Khalistan Conspiracy".
- The book published by HarperCollins will be released on October 24.
- The contents of this book revolve around a two-phased, top-secret operation, which he named "Operation Bhindranwale-Khalistan".

Book named "Bapu-The Unforgettable" released by Delhi Deputy CM Manish Sisodia

- The Deputy Chief Minister of Delhi, Manish Sisodia released the book named "Bapu-The Unforgettable".
- The book was released on Gandhi Jayanti virtually through video conferencing.
- The event was organised by the Delhi Archives & Department of Art, Culture and Language, Government of Delhi.
- A webinar titled "Footprints of Gandhi Ji in Delhi" also took place in that event.

"Baahubali" series author Anand Neelakantan pens debut kids' book

- The author of Baahubali series, Anand Neelakantan has authored his first kid's book titled "The Very, Extremely, Most Naughty Asura Tales for Kids", published by Puffins Publishers Private Limited under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs.
- The illustrations of the book are made by Subhadeep Roy and Shiladitya Bose.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

RBI sets WMA Limit for Govt at Rs 1,25,000 crore for the second half of FY21

- The Reserve Bank of India has set the limits for Ways and Means Advances (WMA) for the second half of the financial year 2020-21 (October 2020 to March 2021) for Central Government at Rs. 1,25,000 crore.
- The Reserve Bank will trigger fresh floatation of market loans when the Government of India utilizes 75% of the WMA limit.
- The interest rate on WMA/overdraft will be:
WMA: Repo Rate
Overdraft: Two percent above the Repo Rate

RBI Excludes 6 PSBs from Second Schedule of RBI Act

- The RBI has excluded six public sector banks, including OBC and Allahabad Bank, from the Second Schedule of the RBI Act following their merger with other banks.
- The six banks are Syndicate Bank, Oriental Bank of Commerce (OBC), United Bank of India, Andhra Bank, Corporation Bank, and Allahabad Bank.
- These six banks merged with other public sector banks (PSBs) with effect from April 1. There were as many as 27 PSBs in 2017. The total number of PSBs in the country has now come down to 12.

SBI Card joins hands with American Express to offer premium benefits, services

- SBI Card has joined hands with American Express to offer global benefits and exclusive

privileges for consumers in India.

- Under this agreement, SBI Card's top-end products SBI Card ELITE and SBI Card PRIME will be available on American Express' global network.
- Customers will also get benefits like pre-ticketing access to sporting and entertainment events such as the Wimbledon and the US Open which are presently accessible virtually.

BRICS Bank approves loans for Mumbai Metro, Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut Rapid Rail

- The New Development Bank (NDB) of the BRICS countries has approved loan for Mumbai metro and for the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) project.
- \$241 million loan for the Mumbai metro rail-II project will be used for implementing a metro rail line 6 with a length of 14.47 km in Mumbai
- A loan of \$500 million has been approved for the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut RRTS project.

SBI signs MoU with HUL for an end to end digital solutions for ecosystem

- India's largest lender State Bank of India has entered into a partnership with FMCG major Hindustan Unilever to offer corporate solutions to its trade partners.
- The partnership aims to make availing of credit easy for channel partners, provides UPI based payment solutions and PoS terminals to retailers & distributors
- The objective of the partnership is to augment the width of credit and will be beginning a pilot in Mumbai and Bengaluru.

DMRC & SBI card launch multi-purpose smart card

- The SBI Card in association with the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation launched a contactless multi-purpose card that can function as a credit card and as a metro smart card.
- The credit card Delhi Metro SBI Card is designed for regular commuters on Delhi Metro.
- It will enable its users to use it as a smart card with an auto-top up facility whenever the balance is below Rs 100.
- The credit card facility will automatically recharge a top-up value of Rs 200 from the user's linked card/bank account.
- The card offers an enhanced daily commute experience to millions of metro commuters together with a rewarding experience on their daily purchases.
- The DMRC has identified 100 stations to put up kiosks from where commuters can purchase the card.

SBI signs \$1 billion loan agreement with JBIC

- State Bank of India (SBI) has signed a loan agreement of up to \$1 billion with The Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC). The loan will facilitate the operations of Japanese car companies in India. The financing will assist in Government of India's 'Make in India' initiative.
- While \$600 million will be financed by JBIC, the rest will come from other participating

lenders which include the Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation, MUFG Bank, Mizuho Bank, Shizuoka Bank and Bank of Yokohama. JBIC will provide a guarantee for the portion co-financed by the participating banks. The loan is intended to promote the smooth flow of funds for the whole range of business operations of Japanese automobile manufacturers in India.

RBI bars payment system operators from launching any new QR codes

- The Reserve Bank of India has barred Payment System Operators (PSOs) from launching any new proprietary QR code for payment transactions.
- Currently, there are two interoperable QR codes — UPI QR and Bharat QR.
- The decision to continue with the two existing Quick Response (QR) codes was based on the recommendations of the committee which was set up by the Reserve Bank under the chairmanship of Deepak Phatak to review the current system of such codes in India and suggest measures for moving towards interoperable QR codes.

Mastercard partners with Atlantis to expand Digital First Program in India

- Mastercard has entered into a partnership with Atlantis to expand the Digital First Program in India.
- The partnership aims to provide the users of Mastercard, a technology solution that enables them to enjoy a best-in-class digital banking experience.
- After the launch in India, the partnership will expand to Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. The partnership allows the users of the Mastercard to have immediate account access and convenient payments.

Bank of Baroda ties up with Toyota Kirloskar Motor

- Bank of Baroda (BoB) has entered into a tie-up with Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM), whereby the bank will be one of the preferred financiers for the entire range of vehicles sold by the latter.
- India's third-largest public sector bank, in a statement, stated that under the tie-up, customers can avail customised solutions such as high on-road funding of 90 per cent, long repayment period of 84 months, no prepayment or foreclosure charges.
- On the other hand, TKM dealers will benefit from 'digitised supply chain finance' with competitive interest rates.

Indian Bank, IIT-Madras in pact for start-up funding

- Indian Bank has introduced an initiative for funding start-ups, 'IND Spring Board', in collaboration with the IIT-Madras Incubation Cell (IITMIC).
- The Chennai-headquartered bank seeks to bridge the gap in funding for start-ups through this collaboration with IITMIC.
- Under the deal, IITMIC will refer start-ups with proven technology and established cash flows to the bank and also extend advisory to the bank on the business model.
- The bank will extend loans of up to 50 crores to these start-ups for their working capital requirements or purchase of machinery, equipment.

ECI constitutes committee to examine issues concerning expenditure limits

- The Election Commission of India has set up a 2-member committee to examine the issue of revising the expenditure limit for candidates for Lok Sabha and assembly polls.
- The committee will comprise of Shri Harish Kumar, Ex. IRS and DG (Investigation), Shri Umesh Sinha, Secretary-General and DG (Expenditure). The need to set up this committee was felt in view of the increase in the number of electors and the rise in the Cost Inflation Index.
- It will submit its report within 120 days of its constitution.

IDBI Bank launches banking services on WhatsApp

- IDBI Bank announced the launch of banking services on WhatsApp. The WhatsApp Banking service is being offered through a dedicated WhatsApp verified number ensuring end-to-end encryption, the Bank stated.
- The facility will enable IDBI Bank customers to avail various essential services such as account balance information, last five transactions, request for a cheque book and an email statement, interest rates, as well as details of IDBI Bank branches/ATMs in the vicinity, to begin with.

Govt to borrow Rs 1.1 lakh crore to meet shortfall of GST compensation

- The central government will borrow Rs 1.1 lakh crore under the special window to meet the shortfall of Goods and Services Tax (GST) compensation. Under the Special Window, the estimated shortfall of Rs 1.1 lakh cr (assuming all States join) will be borrowed by Government of India in appropriate tranches. The borrowed amount will be passed on to the States as a back-to-back loan in lieu of GST Compensation. This will not have any impact on the fiscal deficit of the Government of India.
- The amounts will be reflected as the capital receipts of the State Governments and as part of the financing of its respective fiscal deficits. This will avoid differential rates of interest that individual States may be charged for their respective SDLs and will be an administratively easier arrangement. The govt also clarified that the General Government (States+Centre) borrowings will not increase by this step. The States that get the benefit from the Special Window is likely to borrow a considerably lesser amount from the additional borrowing facility of 2% of GSDP (from 3% to 5%) under the Aatma Nirbhar Package.

IMF projects India's GDP to contract 10.3% in 2020

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has projected the Indian economy to contract by 10.3 percent in 2020-21, from its earlier prediction of -4.5 percent due to rise in C-19 cases.
- IMF estimates the GDP of India to grow at 8.8 percent in 2021-22, as compared to 6 percent predicted earlier, regaining the position of the fastest growing emerging economy.

Banks' aggregate exposure limit for small businesses raised to Rs 7.5 crore by RBI

- The credit card named Axis ACE Credit Card to entities with turnover up to Rs 50 crore

to Rs 7.5 crore by Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

- RBI has also decided to extend the existing enhanced Held to Maturity (HTM) limit of 22 percent for SLR securities acquired between September 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021, up to March 31, 2022.

IMF projects India's GDP to contract 10.3% in 2020; rebound with 8.8% growth in 2021-22

- In its latest 'World Economic Outlook' report, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has projected the Indian economy to contract by 10.3 percent in 2020-21, from its earlier prediction of 4.5 percent due to rise in C-19 cases.
- However, IMF estimates the GDP of India to grow at 8.8 percent in 2021-22, as compared to 6 percent predicted earlier, regaining the position of the fastest growing emerging economy.
- On the other hand, the Fund expects the world economy to contract by 4.4 percent in 2020. This projection was -5.2 percent earlier

Axis Bank launches ACE Credit Card in collaboration with Google Pay and Visa

- Axis Bank has launched a new entry-level credit card named Axis ACE Credit Card, with focus on increasing participation of users in the digital economy.
- The card has been launched in collaboration with Google Pay and will run on Visa (Signature) platform.
- ACE Credit card users would get 5% Cashback on Bill payments (electricity, internet, gas and more), DTH and mobile recharges done through Google Pay.

Nirmala Sitharaman Announces Rs.73,000-Crore Measures To Boost Consumer Demand

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman chaired the 43rd GST Council meeting through video conferencing in New Delhi on 12 October 2020.
- Sitharaman announced several measures to boost capital expenditure and stimulate consumer demand in the economy, which are estimated to cost Rs 73,000 crore by 31 March 2021.
- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman today announced that government employees can avail cash voucher for LTC if they can't travel due to pandemic. Employees can use the money to buy items attracting 12 per cent or more GST, increasing consumer demand. However, employees can spend an LTC cash voucher only through digital mode and at places registered under GST before 31 March 2021.
- The government also announced that the north-east states will get 50-year interest-free loans of Rs 1,600 crore and Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand will get Rs 900 crore. The amount has to be spent by 31 March 2021. Other states will also get Rs 7,500 crore loans in proportion to their share in Finance Commission evolution.
- FM Sitharaman added that half of the amount will be disbursed initially and the second part will be disbursed once the previous amount is utilised. Further, the government increased the centre's capital expenditure budget by Rs 25,000 crore from Rs 4.13 lakh crore for expenditure on the road, water supply, urban development, and defence infrastructure including manufacturing domestic equipment.

WTO revises up forecast for goods trade to 9.2% decline in 2020

- The World Trade Organization upgraded its forecast for trade in goods this year to a level still comparable to the decline during the global financial crisis, but better than initially predicted due to a rebound in June and July.
- The WTO said that global merchandise trade would fall by 9.2% this year and then increase by 7.2% in 2021.
- The WTO forecast in April that merchandise trade would decline by between 13 and 32% this year, figures described by the WTO chief as “ugly”, before rebounding by between 21 and 24% in 2021 if countries worked together.

Tamil Nadu government to set up advanced manufacturing hub in partnership with WEF

- Tamil Nadu’s Guidance, nodal investment promotion and facilitation agency of the state of Tamil Nadu has partnered with the World Economic Forum (WEF) to establish India’s first advanced manufacturing hub (AMHUB) in Tamil Nadu.
- The Advanced Manufacturing HUB or AMHUB is one of the 19 platforms designed by the WEF.
- This platform focuses on engaging entire regional production ecosystems to identify and address regional opportunities and challenges brought by the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) by amplifying regional success stories, sharing best practices & incubating new partnerships.

NABARD inks 3 MoUs with SBI to extend credit support for various projects in Gujarat

- The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development -NABARD has inked three Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with Public Sector Bank- State Bank of India(SBI) to extend credit support for various projects in Gujarat.
- The MoUs were signed for financing joint liability groups and Self-Help Groups-support credit inflows to Farmer Producers’ Organizations and economic support for watershed development projects.
- These will help in providing credit support to the different sections of the society including the priority sector.

RBI keeps key interest rates unchanged; projects GDP to shrink by 9.5% in FY21

- The Reserve Bank of India in its Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting on October 9, 2020 has decided to:
- keep the policy repo rate under the liquidity adjustment facility (LAF) unchanged at 4.0 percent.
- reverse repo rate remains unchanged at 3.35 percent
- decided to maintain its accommodative stance.
- The MPC has projected the Indian economy to contract 9.5 percent in the current fiscal 2020-21.

World Bank report states India's Economy to contract by 9.6% in FY21

- India's economy is expected to contract by 9.6 per cent in the current fiscal year (2020-21) because of C-19 pandemic, the World Bank said on October 8, 2020. India's economy is the largest in South Asia.
- The World Bank in its biannual regional update stated that South Asia is set to plunge into its worst-ever recession as the devastating impacts of C-19 on the region's economies linger on. This would take a toll on the informal workers and push millions into extreme poverty in South Asia.
- As per the World Bank report, the regional growth of South Asia is expected to contract by 7.7 per cent in 2020 after topping 6 per cent annually in the past five years. However, the regional growth is projected to rebound to 4.5 per cent in 2021.
- The income-per-capita in the region will remain 6 per cent below 2019 estimates, factoring growth in population. This indicates that the expected rebound will not offset the lasting economic damage caused by the pandemic.

API integration between PM SVANidhi and SBI portal launched

- With an aim to ease processing of loan applications, the Housing and Urban Affairs Secretary Durga Shanker Mishra has initiated the Application Programming Interface (API), integration between the PM SVANidhi Portal and the State Bank of India (SBI) portal.

ICICI becomes the first Bank to offer debit card to customers availing LAS

- ICICI Bank and Visa has partnered to launch a debit card facility for the customers who avail Loans Against Securities (LAS) from the bank.
- Thus ICICI Bank has become the first bank in India to launch this facility after RBI allowed banks to issue electronics cards to customers who avail OD (Overdraft) facility.
- Customer can make use of this card to make payments through POS (Point of Sale) and online transactions by making use of sanctioned LAS account. The maximum daily transaction limit is Rs 3 lakhs.

Sebi introduces 'very high risk category' in risk-o-meter tool for mutual fund schemes

- Market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has introduced a new "very high risk" category on its Mutual Funds (MF) riskometer tool, to warn investors, investing in mutual fund schemes.
- Currently the mutual fund (MF) risk-o-meter has five categories – low, moderately low, moderate, moderately high and high. It indicates the scheme's risk level.
- The revamped 6 categories Risk-o-meter will come into effect from 01 January 2021.

NABARD launches refinance scheme for WASH programme, earmarks Rs 800 cr for FY'21

- In a bid to promote sustainable and healthy lifestyle in rural areas, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) announced a special refinance facility to support the government's Water, Sanitisation and Hygiene (WASH) programme.
- An amount of Rs 800 crore has been earmarked for this purpose for the financial year

2020-21.

- NABARD will provide concessional refinance to all eligible financial institutions, including commercial banks, regional rural banks and cooperative banks, with a repayment period of up to 36 months.

