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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Quarantine' named Cambridge Dictionary's Word of the Year 2020

- Cambridge Dictionary has named 'quarantine' as Word of the Year 2020. The word has been named the word of the year based on data that showed that it was one of the most highly searched words on the Cambridge Dictionary this year. Cambridge editors have noticed that people are using the word in a new way this year describing a "general period of time in which people are not allowed to leave their homes or travel freely so that they do not catch or spread a disease." This new sense of quarantine has now been added to the Cambridge Dictionary.
- "Quarantine was the only word to rank in the top five for both search spikes and overall views (more than 183,000 by early November), with the largest spike in searches (28,545) seen in the week of March 18-24, when many countries around the world went into lockdown as a result of C-19," as per an official release.

Russia test-fired Tsirkon hypersonic missile in the Arctic

- Russia successfully test-fired a Tsirkon hypersonic cruise missile in the Arctic. the frigate Admiral Gorshkov in the White Sea fired a Tsirkon hypersonic cruise missile, hitting a naval target 450 km away in the Barents Sea at a speed of over Mach 8.
- In early January, the same frigate test-fired a Tsirkon missile for the first time, striking a ground target over 500 km away. Last month, the warship deployed in the White Sea destroyed a naval target in the Barents Sea with a Tsirkon missile.

Malaysia hosted 2020 APEC Summit

- The 2020 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Economic Leaders' Meeting was held under the Chairmanship of Malaysian Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.
- This was the first time that all 21 APEC Economic Leaders met virtually due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The APEC 2020 ended with the adoption of the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040 and the 2020 Kuala Lumpur Declaration. The APEC Summit 2021 will be hosted by New Zealand.

This is the second time Malaysia hosted an APEC meeting, having hosted one in 1998.

- The theme of the APEC Malaysia 2020 was "Optimising Human Potential Towards a Resilient Future of Shared Prosperity: Pivot. Prioritise. Progress".

China to launch spacecraft to Moon to bring back lunar rocks, first attempt since 1970s

- China is all set to launch an unmanned spacecraft to the moon this week for bringing back the lunar rocks. It will be the first attempt by any nation in the world for retrieving the samples from the natural satellite of Earth since the 1970s.
- Named after the ancient Chinese Goddess of the moon, Chang'e-5 probe will seek on collecting the materials from the moon. It will help the scientists to understand more about its origin and surface.
- If China becomes successful in its mission, it will become the third country to retrieve moon samples, following the Soviet Union and the United States decades ago. The mission will also be testing China's ability to remotely acquire the samples from space.
- China also plans on retrieving the samples from Mars by 2030. In July 2020, China had also launched an unmanned probe to Mars. It was its first independent mission to another planet.

Maia Sandu Wins Moldova Presidential Election

- Maia Sandu has won Moldova's presidential election after a run-off vote against the incumbent Igor Dodon. Ms Sandu has won 57.7% of the vote compared to Mr Dodon's 42.2%.
- Sandu is a former World Bank economist who favours closer ties with the European Union. Mr Dodon, meanwhile, is openly backed by Russia.

Japan & Australia signs defence deal to counter China

- Japan and Australia have signed a 'landmark' defence pact in a bid to counter China's growing influence in the South China Sea and over the Pacific island nations. The deal called Reciprocal Access Agreement (RAA) was signed between Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga and his Australian counterpart Scott Morrison.

- RAA will allow Japanese and Australian troops to visit each other's countries and conduct training and joint operations. The treaty will strengthen its security ties and facilitate cooperation between defence forces.

RCEP: 15 Asia-Pacific countries form world's largest trading bloc

- 15 Asia Pacific countries have signed the world's biggest free trade deal, led by China, on 15 November 2020, on the sidelines of the 37th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) Summit.
- The deal called as 'Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)', is the world's largest trading bloc, comprising of 10 Southeast Asian countries, as well as South Korea, China, Japan, Australia and New Zealand.
- Members of the RCEP accounts for nearly a third of the world's population and around 29% of global gross domestic product (GDP).

Aung San Sui Kyi Party claims to win Myanmar Elections

- Myanmar's ruling party led by Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi claimed a resounding victory.
- National League for Democracy (NLD) party has won close to 400 seats while the opposition Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) has secured only 21 seats.
- Around 38 million voted to select the National League of Democracy (NLD) Party for a second term. NLD was required to win at least 2/3rd of the elected seats to win.

China successfully sends world's first 6G communications test satellite into orbit

- China successfully launched 13 satellites into orbit with a single rocket, including the world's first 6G experiment satellite.
- The satellites were launched into the orbit from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center in the Shanxi Province from Long March-6 carrier rocket
- With the launch of 6G communications test satellite, China has become the world's first country to test 6G technology.

Joe Biden wins the US presidential election

- Joseph Robinette Biden Jr. has defeated Donald Trump to become the 46th U.S. president. Biden

will become the oldest president-elect in U.S. history and the first to oust a sitting commander-in-chief after one term since Bill Clinton defeated George H.W. Bush in 1992. Biden's electoral college vote to 290, surpassing the 270 needed to win the White House. Biden's running mate, California Senator Kamala Harris, becomes the first Black and Indian-American woman to serve as vice president.

- Biden Jr. was born November 20, 1942, at St. Mary's Hospital in Scranton, Pennsylvania. A member of the Democratic Party, Biden previously served as the 47th vice president from 2009 to 2017 and United States Senator for Delaware from 1973 to 2009.

United States Formally Exits Paris Climate Accord

- The United States has officially withdrawn from the Paris climate accord on 04 November 2020. With this, the US has now become the only country to formally pull out of the deal since it was adopted in 2015.
- The landmark Paris climate agreement was signed in 2015 to protect the planet from the worsening impacts of the climate crisis. As per the rules of the agreement, a country cannot officially leave before one full year of notifying the UN of its intent to withdraw. The United States notified the United Nations of its withdrawal on November 4, 2019.

Tanzania President John Pombe Magufuli wins second term

- The President of Tanzania, John Pombe Magufuli has been sworn for a second five-year term. He took the oath of the office on 05 November 2020.
- Magufuli won 84% of the total votes in elections held on October 28. He was elected as the fifth President of Tanzania and is in office since 2015. CHADEMA party candidate Tundu Lissu took the second position.

Ivory Coast President Alassane Ouattara wins 3rd term

- The incumbent President of Ivory Coast, Alassane Ouattara, has won a third 5-year term in a landslide victory, gaining more than 94 per cent of the votes polled.

- The 78-year-old, Mr Ouattara was first sworn in as the president in 2010 and then re-elected in 2015. Apart from this, he has also served as the Prime Minister of Côte d'Ivoire from November 1990 to December 1993.

Sarbananda Sonowal lays foundation stone of Indo-Israeli CoE

- The Chief Minister of Assam, Sarbananda Sonowal has laid the foundation stone of Indo-Israeli Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Vegetables Protected Cultivation at Khetri on the outskirts of The Indo-Israeli Centre of Excellence for Vegetables Protected Cultivation is estimated to be set up at an investment of Rs 10.33 Crore.
- The CoE will provide exposure to the latest Israeli technologies to the farmers of Assam and help them in maximizing their production and income. It would also boost agricultural and horticultural production in Assam leading to greater economic rewards to state's farmers.

Portugal's Duarte Pacheco elected as President of IPU for 2020-23

- Portugal MP, Duarte Pacheco has won the elections for the post the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). The term of the Duarte Pacheco will be from 2020-2023. He will be the 30th President of the IPU and will succeed Mexican MP Gabriela Cuevas Barron who completed the tenure in October 2020.
- Candidates from four countries were in the race for elections. The other three participants were Pakistan's Muhammad Sanjrani, Uzbekistan's Akmal Saidov and Canada's Pakistani origin Salma Ataullahjan.

Priyanca Radhakrishnan becomes first Indian-origin minister of New Zealand

- Indian-origin New Zealand politician, Priyanca Radhakrishnan has created history by becoming the first Indian-Kiwi woman to become a minister in New Zealand. Radhakrishnan was born in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.
- The 41-year-old was one of five new ministers inducted into the Cabinet. She was appointed as Minister for the Community and Voluntary Sector, Minister for Diversity, Inclusion and Ethnic Communities, Minister for Youth and Associate Minister for Social Development and

Employment in Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern's cabinet.

IBM, Indian Oil Corporation collaborate for digital services

- Tech giant IBM stated it has collaborated with Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL) to transform the latter's customer experience using digital tools. Around 12,400 IOCL distributors covering about 130 million consumers can now use the IndianOil One mobile app and portal, developed by IBM Services. The IndianOil One mobile app and portal are part of Indian Oil's Project ePIC, an integrated platform for Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and Distribution Management System (DMS).
- This platform ensures real-time updates to inventory, orders, and invoices, thereby reducing the time to order fulfilment. Indian Oil can respond more quickly to customer service requests, including grievances using the platform. The platform also presents a unified customer experience across various access devices such as mobile phones, tablets, and desktops.

NATIONAL NEWS

PM Modi Chairs 33rd PRAGATI Meet

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has chaired the 33rd PRAGATI meeting to review multiple projects, grievances and programmes. PRAGATI stands for "Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation".
- The projects worth around Rs 1.41 lakh crore, related to ten states and union territories, were reviewed. They included Odisha, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Gujarat, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Dadra and Nagar Haveli.
- These projects were related to the Ministry of Railways, MORTH, DPIIT and Power Ministry.

PM Modi visits 3 cities to review vaccine development

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has embarked on a three-city visit on 28 November 2020, to personally review the C-19 vaccine development and manufacturing process at facilities in these cities.

Facilities visited by PM Modi are:

Zydus Biotech Park in Ahmedabad,
Bharat Biotech in Hyderabad
Serum Institute of India in Pune

- The scientists at these facilities expressed their joy that the Prime Minister met them face to face in order to boost their morale and help accelerate their efforts in the vaccine development journey.

Bengaluru's Bowring Medical College named after Atal Bihari Vajpayee

- The Bowring and Lady Curzon Medical College and Research Institute in Bengaluru have been named after former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. The institute was set up in 2018-19 on the campus of Bowring and Lady Curzon Hospital in Shivajinagar in the heart of Bengaluru.
- Atal Bihari Vajpayee was the first leader from the Bharatiya Janata Party to become the Prime Minister. He served as Prime Minister thrice — briefly in 1996, from 1998 to 1999, and then for a full five-year term between 1999 and 2004. Among his several portfolios, Vajpayee had also served as External Affairs Minister during PM Morarji Desai's tenure during 1977 and 1979.

Indian Army launches cycling expedition in Gujarat & Rajasthan

- Konark Corps of Indian Army has launched a 1971 kilometres cycling expedition in Gujarat and Rajasthan to commemorate the commencement of the Golden Jubilee Victory Celebrations of Indian Armed Forces in the Indo-Pak War of 1971. 1971 Kilometers 'Swarnim Vijay Varsh Cyclothon' across Gujarat & Rajasthan has been joined by the relay teams of 20 participants each of the various Army Formations across the two states.
- The cycle expedition was flagged off from an outpost near Lakhpat in Kutch by Honorary Captain Gumansinh Jhala, an 87-year-old War Veteran who had participated in both Indo-Pak wars of 1965 & 1971 then serving with 7 Grenadiers.

Prakash Javadekar launches India Climate Change Knowledge Portal

- Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Prakash Javadekar has launched the "India Climate Change Knowledge Portal". According to Prakash Javadekar, India has

practically achieved its pre-2020 climate action targets. He said, though India is not responsible for climate change it is taking responsible action to mitigate the challenge.

- The portal will have all the major steps the Government is taking at both national and international levels to address the climate change issues.
- Portal will be a single-point information resource that provides information on the different climate initiatives taken by various Line Ministries enabling users to access d status on these initiatives.

SpiceJet launches dedicated freighter services to Leh in Ladakh

- SpiceJet has launched dedicated freighter services connecting Leh with the rest of the country. This is the first time a civil airliner has started freighter services to Leh. Accordingly, the airline operated its first freighter flight from Delhi to Leh carrying 13 tonnes of cargo supplies. SpiceXpress, the dedicated cargo arm of SpiceJet, will deploy its Boeing 737 freighter on this route.
- The dedicated cargo flights will help transport fresh fruits, vegetables, flowers, perishables, pharmaceuticals, medical equipment, and other general cargo. Besides improving logistics and connectivity, the new freighter service will ensure transportation of these essential commodities remains unaffected due to dipping temperatures and adverse weather conditions during these winter months.
- The new flights launched are seasonal and will operate during the winter months when surface transportation is disrupted owing to harsh weather conditions. In line with its commitment to ensuring seamless transportation of essential commodities, SpiceJet aims to address the geographical challenges while offering seamless connectivity through its cargo service.

Nitin Gadkari inaugurates Highway projects in Uttar Pradesh

- Union Minister Nitin Gadkari has inaugurated and laid the foundation stones of 16 National Highway projects in Uttar Pradesh. The construction cost of these infra projects is estimated to be around Rs 7477 crore.

- These highway projects include a road length of 505 kilometres and will provide better connectivity, convenience to the public as well as lead to economic growth in the state. National Highways works worth two lakh crore rupees are being undertaken in UP.

Uttar Pradesh Cabinet has cleared the proposal to rename the Ayodhya airport as Maryada

- Purushottam Sri Ram Airport, Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh. The proposal for the same will be sent to the Ministry of Civil Aviation after it is passed by the state Assembly.
- Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Adityanath had announced on the occasion of Deepotsav on Diwali eve in November 2018 that Ayodhya will have both international and domestic terminals and could potentially be one of the largest airports of UP.

Ladakh gets largest solar project at Leh Indian Air Force station

- The Union Territory of Ladakh has got the largest solar power project set up under the Centre's 'Make In India' initiative at Leh IAF station to provide sustainable energy alternative to fossil fuel and traditional methods of energy generation. The project namely 'Provision of Solar Photo Voltaic Powerplant 1.5 MW' has been completed within 12 months well before the completion deadline of March 31, 2021.
- The largest solar project at a high altitude in the entire Leh in the Union Territory of Ladakh has been established at IAF Station Leh.
- The project was conceptualised under Make In India, and executed to provide sustainable energy alternative to fossil fuel and traditional methods.
- It is the largest installed solar project till date out of the target of 300 MW in three phases for defence sectors and 14 MW for Leh region as set by the Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.
- The project worth Rs 122 crore was recently inaugurated by Air Marshal V R Chaudhari, Commander-in-chief, Western Air Command.

PM Modi Inaugurates 3rd global renewable energy event "RE-INVEST" 2020

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has inaugurated the 3rd Global Renewable Energy Investment Meeting and Expo (RE-Invest 2020) through video conferencing. The summit is organised by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy. The theme for RE-Invest 2020 is 'Innovations for Sustainable Energy Transition'. The first two editions of RE-Invest were held in 2015 and 2018.
- The two day virtual programme will provide an international forum for investment promotion in renewable energy sector and an opportunity to various countries, states, business houses & organizations to showcase their strategies, achievements and expectations. It must be noted that India has set an ambitious target of having 175GW of renewable energy by 2022 and 450GW by 2030.

Thaawarchand Gehlot e-launches National Portal for Transgender Persons

- Union Minister for Social Justice & Empowerment, Thaawarchand Gehlot has e-launched a 'National Portal for Transgender Persons' and e-inaugurated a 'Garima Greh: A Shelter Home for Transgender Persons' in Vadodara, Gujarat.
- This National Portal for Transgender Persons has been developed within 2 months of Notification of Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Rules, 2020 on 29 September 2020.
- This highly useful Portal would help a transgender person in applying for a Certificate and Identity card digitally from anywhere in the country.
- The most important benefit is that it helps the transgender person to get the I-Card without any physical interface and without having to visit any office.
- Through the Portal, they can monitor the status of their application that ensures transparency in the process. The issuing authorities are also under strict timelines to process the applications and issue certificates and identity cards without any necessary delays.
- Once the Certificate and I-card are issued, the applicant can download them from the Portal itself. In case of delay or rejection, the applicant

has the options to submit grievances through the Portal which are forwarded to the concerned person and will be resolved at the earliest.

- This portal will help a lot of people from the community to come forward and get Transgender Certificate and Identity Cards as per their self-perceived identity which is an important provision of The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019.

‘Garima Greh: A Shelter Home for Transgender Persons’

- ‘Garima Greh: A Shelter Home for Transgender Persons’ will be run in association with Lakshya Trust, a Community based organisation entirely run by the Transgenders.
- The purpose of the Shelter Home is to provide shelter to Transgender persons, with basic amenities like shelter, food, medical care and recreational facilities.
- Besides, it will provide support for the capacity-building/skill development of persons in the Community, which will enable them to lead a life of dignity and respect.
- The Scheme of ‘Shelter Home for Transgender Persons’ includes shelter facility, food, clothing, recreational facilities, skill development opportunities, yoga, meditation/prayers, physical fitness, library facilities, legal support, technical advice for gender transition and surgeries, capacity building of trans-friendly organizations, employment and skill-building support, etc.
- The Nodal Ministry has taken the first step in improving the conditions of Transgender persons and has identified 10 cities to set up the 13 Shelter Homes and extend the facilities to Transgender persons, in association with selected 13 CBOs in the country on a pilot basis.
- The cities include Vadodara, New Delhi, Patna, Bhubaneswar, Jaipur, Kolkata, Manipur, Chennai, Raipur, Mumbai, etc. The scheme will rehabilitate a minimum of 25 transgender persons in each home identified by the Ministry.
- This is a pilot project, and on its successful completion, similar schemes will be extended to other parts of the country.

Centre, States can't have indefinite right over citizens' acquired properties: Supreme Court

- The Supreme Court on November 24, 2020 ruled that the central and state governments cannot have an indefinite or overriding right over the acquired properties of citizens.
- The court ruled that though the right to properties is not a fundamental right, the governments cannot occupy citizens' properties.
- The ruling was made by a bench comprising Justices Indira Banerjee and S Ravindra Bhat.

Tenth edition of National Science Film Festival kicks off virtually

- The tenth edition of prestigious National science film festival kicked off on 24th November 2020 in a virtual mode.
- The four-day long film festival has been jointly organized by Vigyan Prasar, an autonomous agency under the Department of Science and Technology, Govt. of India and the Tripura State Council of Science and Technology, Govt. of Tripura from 24 to 27 November 2020.
- A total of 372 films in different languages were received for participation, of which 115 films have been shortlisted by the ten-member jury to be screened during the festival.

Himachal Pradesh govt launches ‘Him Suraksha Abhiyan’

- Himachal Pradesh government has launched ‘Him Suraksha Abhiyan’ to sensitize the people regarding C-19 pandemic and also to collect information regarding symptoms of diseases like TB, Leprosy, sugar and blood pressure by the door to door campaign throughout the State.
- Under this Abhiyan about 8000 teams comprising of Health, Ayurveda, Women and Child Development, Panchayati Raj Departments, District Administration and NGOs would be involved in this campaign. It would ensure door to door data collection of health parameters of the people.

Narendra Singh Tomar virtually inaugurates Phagwara mega food park

- Union Food Processing Industries Minister Narendra Singh Tomar has virtually inaugurated the Rs 107.83 crore mega food park at Phagwara in Kapurthala district of Punjab.

- So far, 37 mega food parks have been sanctioned across the country, of which 20 have started functioning.
- The mega food park, spread over 55 acres of land and that will benefit 25,000 farmers, is equipped with warehouses in 3,944 square meters, silos with 20,000-tonne capacity, cold storage with 3,000-tonne capacity as well as individually quick-frozen and deep freezer units and other facilities.

43 mobile apps banned by Indian Government for users

- The Union Electronics and Information Technology Ministry has banned 43 more mobile apps for the users. The Ministry issued an order on November 24, 2020, blocking access to 43 apps under section 69A of Information Technology Act.
- Earlier in September 2020, the Government had banned 118 mobile apps and banned 59 apps in June 2020.

IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad launches International version of UMANG to mark 3 years of App

- On November 23, 2020, Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad, the Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology, Communications and Law & Justice launched the international version of the UMANG app, to mark the occasion of 3 years of UMANG and also celebrate over 2000 services milestone.
- The international app has been launched for select countries that include USA, UK, Canada, Australia, UAE, Netherlands, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand.
- The UMANG (Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance) was launched on 23 November 2017 by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the fifth edition of the Global Conference on Cyberspace in New Delhi.

First cow hospital of Northeast inaugurated in Assam's Dibrugarh

- A cow shelter in Assam's Dibrugarh inaugurated Northeast's first-ever cow hospital, on the occasion of Gopashtami.
- The hospital, Surbhi Aarogyashala, is set up by Shree Gopal Gaushala at a cost of Rs 17 lakh.

- There are 368 cows in the shelter. The hospital will provide services in 30 km radius.

India to host G-20 Summit in 2023

- India will host the Summit of the G20 Group in 2023. India was earlier slated to host the summit in 2022.
- However, now the G20 Summit be hosted by Italy in 2021, Indonesia in 2022, India in 2023 and Brazil in 2024.
- India and Indonesia have swapped their respective hosting year of G20 as Indonesia would also chair the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 2023.

5th India International Cherry Blossom Festival cancelled

- The 5th India International Cherry Blossom Festival has been cancelled due to C-19 pandemic. The festival is held every year in Shillong, the capital of Meghalaya, to celebrate the unique autumn flowering of the Himalayan cherry blossoms and mark the beginning of India's version of autumn.
- Every year, Shillong hosts a plethora of events like fitness art, fashion show, rock concerts and much more to mark the festival.

India becomes 4th nation to have navigation satellite system as IRNSS Gets IMO Recognition

- The Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS) has been recognised by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) as a part of the World Wide Radio Navigation System (WWRNS) for operation in the Indian Ocean Region.
- With this, India has become the only fourth country in the world to have its independent regional navigation satellite system recognised by IMO.
- The other three countries that have its navigation systems recognised by the IMO are the US [Global Position System (GPS)], Russia and China.
- The IRNSS will now be officially used to provide accurate position information services to assist in the navigation of ships in Indian ocean waters within the area of approximately 1,500 km from the Indian boundary

PM Modi called for Spirit of trusteeship towards planet Earth at 15th G20 Summit

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in the 15th G20 Leaders Summit on November 21, 2020. The two-day summit was convened by Saudi Arabia, chair of G20 for this year.
- The summit saw the participation of the heads of governments of 19 member countries, the European Union and other invited countries and international organizations. It was conducted virtually due to the C-19 pandemic.
- While speaking at the summit, PM Narendra Modi congratulated the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its leadership for its successful Presidency of the G20 in 2020 and for organizing the second virtual G20 Summit in 2020 despite the challenges posed by the C-19 outbreak.

Second Trilateral Maritime Exercise SITMEX-20 held in Andaman Sea

- The 2nd edition of India, Singapore and Thailand Trilateral Maritime Exercise SITMEX-20 was conducted from 21 to 22 November 20 in Andaman Sea.
- The 2020 edition of the exercise is being hosted by Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN).
- Indian Navy (IN) Ships including indigenously built ASW corvette Kamorta and missile corvette Karmuk participated in the exercise.
- The SITMEX series of exercises are conducted to enhance mutual inter-operability between IN, RSN and Royal Thai Navy (RTN) and also strengthen mutual confidence and develop common understanding and procedures towards enhancing the overall maritime security in the region.
- The first edition of SITMEX was hosted by Indian Navy in 2019 off Port Blair.

PM lays the foundation stone of rural drinking water supply projects in Vindhyachal region of Uttar Pradesh

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of rural drinking water supply projects in Mirzapur and Sonbhadra districts of Vindhyachal region in Uttar Pradesh on 22 November 2020 via video conference.
- The total estimated cost of the projects is around Rs 5,555.38 Crore.

- The projects are planned to be completed in 24 months.
- It will provide household tap water connections in all rural households of 2,995 villages and will benefit about 42 lakh population of these districts.

Mastercard & USAID Partners to launch "Project Kirana"

- Mastercard and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) have collaborated under Women's Global Development and Prosperity Initiative (W-GDP) to launch 'Project Kirana' in India, to help women entrepreneurs grow and thrive.
- Project Kirana is a two-year programme, and initially, it will be rolled out in select cities of Uttar Pradesh, including Lucknow, Kanpur and Varanasi. The programme will be implemented by DAI Digital Frontiers and ACCESS Development Services.
- Build financial and digital literacy skills;
- Improve basic business management skills including inventory management, accounting, budget management and customer loyalty;
- Addressing cultural and other barriers to women becoming successful Kirana entrepreneurs;
- It will work to increase revenue streams, expand financial inclusion and digital payments adoption of Kirana shops that are owned or operated by women.

Ravi Shankar Prasad releases "My Stamp on Chhath Puja"

- Union Minister of Communications, Electronics & Information Technology and Law and Justice, Ravi Shankar Prasad has released a "My Stamp on Chhath Puja". My Stamp is an innovative concept initiated by the Department of Posts. Any common person or corporate organisation can now book order and get a personalised photograph or an image of a Postage Stamp.
- My Stamp is one of the unique products being offered by India Post, which has gained its popularity in the customised gifting category. My Stamp on Chhath Puja is available in all Philatelic bureaus and major post offices across the country. A special cover on the theme "Chhath-A symbol of Simplicity and Cleanliness" was also released.

CBIC Chairman Ajit Kumar inaugurates GST Bhawan

- Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) Chairman M. Ajit Kumar, along with members of the Board inaugurated the GST Bhawan, Panchkula, Haryana. The state of the art building will house the offices of Central GST at Panchkula. It has been built at a cost of about 31 crores rupees.
- This is the first major infrastructure project of CBIC completed in these times of C-19. The building is a fully air-conditioned three-storied building built on a plot of about 1.4 acres with 7600 square metres covered area and seating capacity of about 200 persons.

Dr Harsh Vardhan addresses 33rd Stop TB Partnership Board meet

- The Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan has addressed the 33rd Stop TB Partnership Board meeting in New Delhi through Video Conference. During the meet, the minister has stressed on the need to create a mass movement for the elimination of TB with strategized advocacy, thought leadership, disruptive social entrepreneurship, powerful, societal and political commitment.
- It must be noted that India is running the "TB Harega, Desh Jeetega" campaign that targets to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal target related to TB by 2025, five years ahead of the global target of 2030.

Vijayanagara becomes 31st District of Karnataka

- The world heritage site of Hampi, the erstwhile capital of the Vijayanagar empire, will soon be part of a new district. The Karnataka Government has approved to carve out Vijayanagara as a new district of the state.
- Vijayanagara will be the 31st district of the State. The new district would be carved out of Ballari and named after the Vijayanagara empire that ruled from this region.

Narendra Singh Tomar inaugurates capacity building component of PM-FME

- Union Minister for Food Processing Industries, Narendra Singh Tomar has virtually inaugurated the capacity building component of the Pradhan

Mantri Formalisation of Micro food processing Enterprises scheme (PM-FME Scheme). PM-FME Scheme has been launched with an outlay of Rs 10,000 crore for a period of five years from 2020-21 to 2024-25. He also launched the GIS One District One Product (ODOP) digital map of India.

- The component envisages imparting training to food processing entrepreneurs, various groups, viz., self-help groups (SHGs), Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), Co-operatives, workers, and other stakeholders associated with the implementation of the PM-FME scheme.
- Training would be given to the master trainers through online mode, classroom lecture and demonstration, and self-paced online learning material.
- The master trainers will then train the district-level trainers, who will eventually train the beneficiaries.

Madhya Pradesh govt announces 'Gau Cabinet' for protection of cows

- The Madhya Pradesh government, led by Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, has decided to set up a 'Gau Cabinet' for the protection, conservation and promotion of cows in the state. The Cabinet will comprise of the departments of animal husbandry, forests, panchayat and rural development, revenue, home and farmers welfare.
- The first meeting of the Cabinet will be held at 12 pm on 'Gopashtami' on November 22 at the Cow Sanctuary in Agar-Malwa district named 'Kamdheni Gau Abhyaranya'. It is India's first cow sanctuary which was set up by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led Madhya Pradesh government in September 2017.

PM Modi addresses 3rd Annual Bloomberg New Economy Forum

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has addressed the 3rd Annual Bloomberg New Economy Forum through video-conferencing. The forum witnessed discussions on refuelling the economy and charting a course for the future, as the world economy is grappling with the C-19-19 pandemic.
- Some other Speakers of the forum included Director-general of the World Health Organisation (WHO) Tedros Adhanom

Ghebreyesus, former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair, former US President Bill Clinton, Microsoft founder Bill Gates, and Secretary-General of the United Nations Antonio Guterres.

- The Bloomberg New Economy Forum was established in 2018 by Michael Bloomberg, to build a community of leaders to engage in real conversations leading to actionable solutions about the critical challenges facing a world economy in the throes of a historic transition. The inaugural Forum was held in Singapore and the Second Annual Forum was hosted in Beijing.

Asia's 1st solar power-enabled Textile Mill to be unveiled in Maharashtra

- The first solar power-enabled Textile Mill in Asia is set to be set up in Parbhani district, Maharashtra. Spread across 30 acres of land, the Jai Bhawani women's cooperative textile mill will be first in Asia that will operate entirely on solar power. The overall cost of setting up the project is around Rs. 100 crore.
- Once functional, the mill will process cotton to cloth and would provide jobs to many women in the district. Parbhani is the leading cotton-producing district in Maharashtra and with the operationalization of the mill, it will give momentum to the industrial sector in the district.

PM Narendra Modi unveils 'Statue of Peace'

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually unveiled the 'Statue of Peace' on November 16, 2020 to mark the 151st birth anniversary celebrations of a Jain saint - Shree Vijay Vallabh Surishwer Ji Maharaj.
- The 151-inch tall statue has been built from eight metals (Ashtadhatu) with Copper as the major constituent. It has been installed at Vijay Vallabh Sadhana Kendra, Jetpura in Pali, Rajasthan.
- Jainacharya Shree Vijay Vallabh Surishwer Ji Maharaj had lived during 1870-1954 and had led an austere life as a Jain Saint, working selflessly and dedicatedly to spread the message of Lord Mahavira.

Nitish Kumar sworn-in as Chief Minister of Bihar for 7th term

- The Chief of Janata Dal (United), Nitish Kumar has taken an oath as the Chief Minister of Bihar

and he will begin his 7th term on 16th November 2020.

- Bihar Governor Phagu Chauhan administered the oath of office and secrecy to Mr Kumar at Raj Bhavan in Patna.
- BJP legislature party leader Tarkishore Prasad and Deputy leader Renu Devi have been made the new Deputy Chief Ministers.

Dr Harsh Vardhan attends 8th BRICS STI Ministerial Meet

- The 8th BRICS Science, Technology and Innovation Ministerial Meeting was held through a virtual platform for Science and Technology cooperation among the member countries, which are Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.
- The meeting was held under the Chairmanship of the Russian Federation. (Russia is the Chair for 12th BRICS Summit).

Jaishankar Represents India at 15th East Asia Summit 2020

- The External Affairs Minister Dr S. Jaishankar has represented India at the 15th East Asia Summit (EAS) on behalf of PM Modi. The Summit was chaired by the Prime Minister of Vietnam Nguyen Xuan Phuc because Vietnam is ASEAN Chair in 2020 (ASEAN holds the central role and leadership in the forum). All the 18 EAS countries participated in the virtual Summit.
- Jaishankar underlined the key role played by the East Asia Summit (EAS) as a leading mechanism of the Indo-Pacific region and reiterated India's support to make it stronger and more responsive. He also re-affirmed the importance of EAS as the Leaders-led forum to exchange views on strategic issues. On C-19, he briefed the EAS leaders about India's response to the pandemic and highlighted India's efforts to support the international community.

India Extends USD1 Million Aid For C-19 ASEAN Response Fund

- India has extended financial contribution of USD 1 million to the C-19 ASEAN Response Fund. This was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the 17th ASEAN-India Summit, which was held virtually.

- Leaders from the 10 ASEAN countries welcomed the adoption of the new ASEAN-India Plan of Action for 2021-2025, at the conclusion of the Summit. PM Modi, participated in the 17th ASEAN-India Summit at the invitation of the Prime Minister of Vietnam Nguyen Xuan Phuc, who is the current chair of ASEAN.

Ministry of Textiles launches “Local4Diwali” campaign

- The Union Ministry of Textiles has launched a campaign for Diwali- “Local4Diwali”.
- The campaign has been launched to promote the Indian handicraft which is the cultural heritage of the country and also a source of livelihood for many.
- As per the available data, the handicrafts sector is a major sector of women empowerment as almost 55% of the workers and artisans are women.
- The main aim of the #Local4Diwali campaign is to urge people to buy and gift Indian handicraft products on this Diwali.
- The basic aim of the campaign is to give a boost to Indian handicrafts and artisans.
- This campaign will help the handicraft artisans and workers in increasing their sales and promoting their business.
- After the promotion of the idea of “Vocal for Local” by PM Modi, every sector is working towards promoting local businesses and strengthening Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.

IRCTC to start ‘Bharat Darshan Yatra’ on December

- Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) will be starting ‘Bharat Darshan–Dakshin Bharat Yatra’ from December 12.
- The Bharat Darshan Yatra will start from Hyderabad and Secunderabad from December 12 to 18. The theme of this yatra will be ‘Show India to Indians’.
- The facility of boarding and de-boarding this tourist train will be available at Secunderabad, Khammam, Nellore, Vijayawada, Warangal, Ongole, and Renigunta.
- The train will have 12 sleeper coaches, one 3-tier AC coach and a pantry car.
- The standard fare for sleeper coaches will be Rs 7,140 and that for three-tier AC will be Rs 8,610.

- The facility of night stays for all the tourists will be made at dormitories or dharmasalas.
- Tourists will also be provided with the morning tea, breakfast, lunch, dinner and a water bottle per day.
- The authorities will arrange non-AC bus transportation on sharing basis and tour escort and security on the train.
- In January 2019, IRCTC also started booking for Shirdi Sai Baba darshan tickets on its website.

PM inaugurates future-ready Ayurveda institutions at Jamnagar and Jaipur

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda (ITRA) at Jamnagar and National Institute of Ayurveda (NIA) at Jaipur on 5th Ayurveda Day via video conferencing.
- These institutions are expected to play global leadership roles in the growth and development of Ayurveda in the 21st Century.
- This will provide them the autonomy to upgrade the standard of Ayurveda education, frame various courses as per emerging national and international demand.

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- The Summit was chaired by the Prime Minister of Vietnam Nguyen Xuan Phuc because Vietnam is ASEAN Chair in 2020 (ASEAN holds the central role and leadership in the forum).
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Harsh Vardhan attends 8th BRICS Science, Technology and Innovation Ministerial Meet

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- The meeting was held under the Chairmanship of Russian Federation. (Russia is the Chair for 12th BRICS Summit)

- The Union Minister of Science and Technology, Dr Harsh Vardhan represented the Indian delegation at the meeting
- The meeting concluded with the adoption of BRICS STI Declaration 2020.

Atmanirbhar Bharat Rozgar Yojana: Government launches new employment scheme

- The Government has launched a new employment scheme Atmanirbhar Bharat Rozgar Yojana to incentivise the creation of new employment opportunities during the C-19 recovery phase.
- The scheme was launched as a part of a fresh stimulus worth Rs 2.65 lakh crore announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on November 12, 2020 to boost the C-19-hit Indian economy.
- The Finance Minister had announced 12 new measures under Atmanirbhar Bharat 3.0 during her press conference. She had announced the launch of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Rozgar Yojana' alongside other key announcements to revive employment opportunities in India.

Government expands credit guarantee scheme to include 26 stressed sectors

- The Government has decided to expand the scope of emergency credit guarantees to include 26 sectors that are stressed due to the C-19 pandemic.
- This was announced during Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's press conference on November 12, 2020 when she had announced few new measures as a part of the new stimulus package worth Rs 2.65 lakh crore to boost the recovery of the Indian economy.
- Under the expansion of the credit guarantee scheme, the entities will get additional credit up to 20 percent of outstanding credit. The repayment can be done in five years, which includes 1-year moratorium and 4 years of repayment.

India's First Sandalwood Museum to come up in Mysuru, Karnataka

- The Mysuru Forest Division has set up India's first Sandalwood Museum at its premises at the

Sandalwood Depot in Aranya Bhavan, Mysuru, Karnataka.

- The museum has been conceptualised to spread awareness about the history and cultivation of sandalwood products as well as behold their awe-inspiring variety in the display.
- The Sandalwood museum will be inaugurated after November 25 and the state government will make efforts to shift the museum to the luxurious Mysuru Palace.

Finance Minister announces Economic Stimulus Package 4.0

- The Finance Minister Smt Nirmala Sitharaman announced the Economic Stimulus Package 4.0.
- Production Linked Incentive Scheme for 10 sectors. Rs 1.46 trillion to be provided.
- Rs 6,940 crore scheme to promote manufacture of API (Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients).
- Rs 18,000 crores allocated to Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban). The implementation of the programme will generate 7.8 million jobs.

Operation Green Scheme: Centre announces 50 percent subsidy for air transportation of fruits, vegetables

- The central government on November 11, 2020 announced a new scheme- Operation Green- under which a 50 percent subsidy will be provided to the Himalayan and North-Eastern states for air transportation of 41 notified fruits and vegetables to any place in the country.
- Under the scheme, the airlines will provide direct air transport subsidy to the supplier, consignor, consignee or agent by charging only 50 percent of the actual contracted freight charges. The balance 50 percent will be claimed by the airlines as subsidy from the Ministry of Food Processing Industries.

Digital/Online media now under govt regulation

- Digital/Online media has been brought under the purview of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
- Currently, there is no law or autonomous body governing digital content.
- The 2nd Schedule of the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules 1961 has been amended to include following entries viz. Films

and Audio-Visual programmes, News and current affairs content.

Government scales up goal of PM-KUSUM scheme to 30.8 GW of solar capacity by 2022

- The Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) issued an order to scale-up and expand Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha Evam Utthan Mahabhiyaan (PM-KUSUM) Scheme.
- According to the new order by the Ministry, the target of the scheme now is to achieve an enhanced solar capacity of 30.8 GW (gigawatt) by the year 2022. For the target to be achieved, the central financial support has also been revised to Rs. 34,035 crores.
- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs had earlier in February 2019 the launch of PM-KUSUM Scheme and aimed at providing water and financial security to the Indian farmers. At that time, the scheme had the aim of adding a solar capacity of 25,750 MW by 2022 and the total financial support to be provided was Rs. 34,422 crores.

Union Cabinet approves PLI scheme for ten key sectors to boost manufacturing

- The Union Cabinet on November 11, 2020, approved the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for ten major sectors including pharmaceutical drugs, auto components, and automobiles for enhancing India's manufacturing capabilities and export.
- The financial outlay approved by the government for the 10 sectors over a period of 5 years is worth nearly Rs. 2 lakh crores.
- The Union Minister, Prakash Javadekar also informed that the Production Linked Incentive Scheme will also help in creating jobs. He also added that manufacturing is 16% of GDP and it needs to increase.

India's first solar-based water supply project launched in Arunachal Pradesh

- India's first solar-based Integrated Multi-Village Water Supply Project (IMVWSP) was dedicated to the people of Arunachal Pradesh by Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat.
- The solar-based lift water supply project for 39 villages in Lower Dibang Valley district in

northeastern Arunachal Pradesh was commissioned at a cost of Rs 28.50 crore.

- The project is designed to provide drinking water to 17,480 people and has been conceived as an integrated project with an element of drinking water, green energy and tourism component in it.
- He also launched the "Arunachal Jal Sankalp", a state government dedicated flagship programme to supplement the Jal Jeevan Mission and to sustain the drinking water systems.

Prime Minister addressed at the 20th Summit of SCO Council of Heads of State

- The 20th Summit of SCO Council of Heads of State was held on November 10, 2020, in Video Conference Format.
- The Meeting was chaired by the Russian President Vladimir Putin. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi led the Indian delegation.
- All SCO Member States were represented by their Presidents, while India and Pakistan were represented at the level of Prime Minister.
- The Secretary General of the SCO Secretariat, Executive Director of the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure, the Presidents of the four Observers (Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran, Mongolia) of the SCO also attended the meeting.
- This was the third meeting that India participated after becoming a full member in 2017.
- India will host the next regular Meeting of SCO Council of Heads of Government on November 30, 2020 in virtual format.

Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri to inaugurate 13th Urban Mobility India Conference 2020

- The 13th Urban Mobility India (UMI) Conference was organized by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs on 09 November 2020. It was inaugurated by Shri Hardeep S. Puri, Minister of State (IC) Housing and Urban Affairs.
- The day-long Conference was held via Video Conference on the theme "Emerging Trends in Urban Mobility".
- The conference focused on innovative measures taken at national and international level to address the challenges posed by Covid-19

pandemic to provide accessible and convenient transport to the people.

- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, had issued the National Urban Transport Policy, 2006 (NUTP) to ensure safe, affordable, quick, comfortable, reliable and sustainable access for the growing number of city residents to jobs, education, recreation and such other needs within our cities.

Nagaland's Hornbill Festival to be celebrated virtually

- Nagaland govt decides to celebrate Hornbill Festival virtually this year, amid the surge in C-19 cases in the country. This festival is also called the Festival of Festivals. It is held every year from December 1 to 10, showcases the culture, heritage, food and customs of Naga tribes.
- 16 tribes come together to celebrate their traditions with dance performances. Tourists from across the globe attend the 10-day gala.

Pakke Tiger Reserve provide C-19 Insurance to Green Soldiers

- Pakke Tiger Reserve (PTR) in Arunachal Pradesh has become the first in the eight-State northeast to provide insurance cover against C-19 for "green soldiers". Eight-State northeast includes Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura.
- 57 frontline staff (referred to as green soldiers) of the Park have been insured for nine months against health issues due to the infection by the C-19. The forest guards are rightly the green soldiers in the frontline of India's wildlife, and the onus of wildlife conservation pretty much falls on them.

FASTags mandatory for all four-wheelers from January 1, 2021

- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) has issued a notification that FASTags will become mandatory for all four-wheelers, including old vehicles, from January 1, 2021. For this government has made an amendment in FORM 51 (certificate of Insurance), wherein the details of FASTag ID shall be captured. This shall be applicable w.e.f. April 1, 2021.
- Government has amended the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989 to make FASTag mandatory for registration of new four-wheeled vehicles,

including for those sold before December 1, 2017.

- FASTag would be supplied by the vehicle manufacturers or their dealers during registration.
- Apart from this, a valid FASTag will also be mandatory while getting new third party insurance. The initiative aims to promote electronic toll collection and ensure that payment of fees is done at toll plazas through the electronic means only so that the vehicles pass seamlessly through the toll plazas.

NGT bans sale and use of firecrackers in Delhi-NCR

- The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has imposed a total ban on the sale and use of firecrackers in the Delhi-NCR region from 9 November to 30 November. The ban will be applicable in cities and towns where the air quality is in the "poor" category.
- NGT further added that in cities or towns where the air quality is "moderate" or below, only green firecrackers will be sold and the time duration of bursting them will be restricted to two hours during festivals such as Diwali, Chhath, New Year/Christmas Eve as may be specified by the state. Currently, the state governments have their own set of guidelines with regard to permitting/banning the sale and use of firecrackers during the festive season.

Kerala launches "Parivarthanam" scheme for better livelihood of fisherfolk

- The government of Kerala has launched a pioneering eco-sustainable programme called 'Parivarthanam', to improve the livelihood of the fishing community. The scheme aims at improving the livelihood skills of youngsters along the coastline and also enable socio-economic uplift of the fishermen community.
- Parivarthanam, which means change, will be headed by Kerala State Coastal Area Development Corporation (KSCADC).
- The scheme will promote the processing and marketing of clean fish and its fresh products.
- Parivarthanam will also guarantee a fixed price to fish-catchers as fair compensation.
- It would also provide jobs to college dropouts and migrant workforce returning home due to C-19.

- Apart from this, the Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT) of Union governments will monitor the procurement and processing of fish besides ensuring its quality.

1st solar-based water supply project of India launched in Arunachal Pradesh

- Union Jal Shakti Minister, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat has launched India's first solar-based Integrated Multi-Village Water Supply Project (IMVWSP) in Arunachal Pradesh. The solar-based lift water supply project is 'first of its kind' in the country, and has been commissioned at a cost of Rs 28.50 crore. However, such projects will be carried out in other parts of the country too.
- The project would provide drinking water to 17,480 people in 39 villages of Lower Dibang Valley district in Arunachal Pradesh.
- The solar-based Integrated Multi-Village Water Supply Project has been designed as an integrated project with three components, which are drinking water, green energy and tourism.
- The project uses a green energy-solar grid, SCADA automation system, pre-fabricated zinc alum storage tank and HDPE conduit for mains, sub-mains and distribution networking system. The project also includes amusement park including swimming pool, amphitheatre, fountains, and sit-outs.

AIM and Sirius jointly launch 'AIM-Sirius Innovation Programme 3.0'

- The Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), a flagship initiative by the NITI Aayog, and Russia's Sirius (Scientific International Research In Unique Terrestrial Station) have jointly launched 'AIM-Sirius Innovation Programme 3.0'. AIM-Sirius Innovation Programme 3.0 is a 14-day virtual programme for Indian and Russian schoolchildren.
- It is the first Indo-Russian bilateral youth innovation initiative, which seeks to develop technological solutions, both web-based and mobile-based, for the two countries.
- During the event, around 48 students and 16 educators and mentors will create 8 virtual products and mobile applications to address global challenges across a wide range of areas, in the wake of the C-19 pandemic.

- These areas include culture, distance education, applied cognitive science, health and well-being, sports, fitness, and games training, chemistry, artificial intelligence, and digital financial assets.

PM Modi: Shipping ministry to be renamed

- The Ministry of Shipping is being expanded and renamed as the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways. This information was given by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 8 November 2020, during a launch event of Ro-Pax terminal at Hazira and flagging off the Ro-Pax ferry service between Hazira and Ghogha in Gujarat, which will reduce the 370-km road distance between the two places to 90-km by sea route.
- The service will also cut the travel time between the two places to about four hours from 10 to 12 hours. The ferry will make three trips daily, annually transporting five lakh passengers, 80,000 passenger vehicles, 50,000 two-wheelers and 30,000 trucks, as per the release.

India-Italy Virtual Bilateral Summit 2020

- The Bilateral Summit between India and Italy was held virtually on 6th November 2020. The Summit was attended by the Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Prime Minister of Italy Prof. Giuseppe Conte. The two leaders reviewed the broad framework of the bilateral relationship and reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen cooperation against common global challenges, including the Covid-19 pandemic.
- A wide range of issues was discussed including political, economic, scientific & technological, space and defence cooperation. 15 MoUs/Agreements were signed during the Summit in various sectors such as energy, fisheries, shipbuilding, design etc.

ISRO launches PSLV C49 with 10 satellites

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has launched the 51st mission of Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV). This is the first mission by ISRO in 2020. The carrier vehicle PSLV C49 will deliver 10 satellites in all with EOS-01 as the primary one. It is the 51st mission of Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV). The carrier was launched from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.
- The EOS-01, an earth observation satellite, was intended to provide agriculture, forestry and

disaster management support. The nine customer satellites are from Lithuania (1), Luxembourg (4) and USA (4). The customer satellites were being launched under a commercial agreement with NewSpace India Limited (NSIL), department of space. Two-day joint coastal security exercise 'Sagar Kavach' begins

- A two-day joint coastal security exercise, "Sagar Kavach" was launched at Paradip Coast, Odisha. The exercise is being carried out by a joint effort of the state of Odisha and West Bengal governments.
- The main purpose of the exercise is to carry out the exercise on the coast of Paradip this year, just like every year after the 26/11 Mumbai attacks. The exercise is being carried out to prevent a repeat of the Mumbai attacks by sea. More than 10 such departments, including the Indian Navy, the Indian Coast Guard, the Odisha Police, the local fishermen, the forest department, and the port marine department, have joined the joint exercise.
- It will run for two days, with red and green forces being formed to infiltrate and prevent attacks. This year for coastal security the exercise was named "Sagar Kavach".

PM Modi Chairs Virtual Global Investor Roundtable (VGIR) 2020

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi chaired the Virtual Global Investor Roundtable (VGIR) 2020 Conference, aimed at attracting investment in the country. It provided a platform for exclusive dialogue between leading global institutional investors, Indian business leaders and the highest decision-makers from the government of India and financial market regulators. The Indian side included business leaders, financial market regulators, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman and RBI governor Shaktikanta Das.
- The conference focused on discussions around India's economic and investment outlook, structural reforms and the government's vision for making the country a \$5 trillion economy.
- The Virtual Global Investor Roundtable (VGIR) was organised by the Ministry of Finance and the National Investment and Infrastructure Fund.
- The roundtable witnessed participation from 20 of the world's largest pension and sovereign

wealth funds with total assets under management of about USD 6 trillion.

- These global institutional investors represent key regions including the US, Europe, Canada, Korea, Japan, Middle East, Australia, and Singapore.

Manipur's Gyanendro Ningombam becomes new president of Hockey India

- Manipur's Gyanendro Ningombam was elected unopposed as the President of Hockey India, while former President Mohd Mushtaque Ahmad is back in the Hockey India Executive Board after being Elected Unopposed for the Senior Vice President post.
- Earlier, Gyanendro Ningombam has been serving as the Officiating President of Hockey India since July 2020.

Two-day joint coastal security exercise 'Sagar Kavach' begins

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India's special forces conducted 'Bull Strike' triservice exercise

- Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC) has conducted a three-day Tri-Service Combat Exercise code-named "Bull Strike" at Teressa Island in Nicobar Group of Islands. The exercise focussed on interoperability and synergy among three services – Army, Navy and Air Force to maximise combat potential.

- The exercise saw participation from three services components of ANC, elements of Indian Army's Parachute Brigade, MARCOS (Marine Commando Force) and Special Forces.
- The training activities included combat free fall and paradrop from Advanced Airlifter C-130J "Super Hercules" by a company of Para Commandos, action by MARCOS of Indian Navy and Special Heli Borne Operations (SHBO) by Indian Army Ghatak platoons.
- Search and rescue (SAR) and medical evacuation procedures were also practised by the participating troops.

Centre forms committee to assess existing TRP system of TV channels

- The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting has constituted a four-member committee, to assess the existing Television Rating Points (TRP) of TV channels. The committee will be chaired by Prasara Bharati CEO, Shashi S Vempati.
- The committee will be responsible to address the 'needs of the stakeholders' and make necessary recommendations for a rating system which shall be 'robust, transparent and accountable'.
- It will have to submit its report to the Information and Broadcasting minister within two months.
- The need to form such committee was felt after the alleged TRP scam in which it was alleged that certain TV channels manipulated TRPs in return for payment.
- TRP is calculated in India by the Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) using a device called Bar-O-Meter, which is installed in over 45,000 households across the country.
- The device collects data about a programme or channel watched by members of these households on the basis of which weekly ratings are issued by BARC.

DMC launched "Plastic Lao MASK LE JAO" initiative

- In Uttarakhand, Dehradun Municipal Corporation (DMC) has launched an initiative named Plastic Lao MASK LE JAO to fight against the menace of plastic waste and contain the spread of C-19.

- It has distributed Five thousand face masks in exchange for plastic waste.
- Municipal commissioner of Dehradun, Vinay Shankar Pandey, who was the first to bring plastic waste from his house and get a face mask, and create awareness in the public against plastic waste and also the importance of masks.

India receives 2nd batch of Three Rafale Aircraft

- India receives the second batch of three Rafale Aircraft, bringing total Rafale Jets with IAF to eight.
- The second batch of three Rafale jets landed in Jamnagar, Gujarat on 4th November 2020, after flying non-stop from France.
- Earlier, the first batch of five Rafale jets arrived in India on July 28 and they were officially inducted in the Indian Air Force on 10 September at Ambala Air Base in Haryana.
- With the arrival of the second batch, the IAF now has a total of eight Rafale fighter aircraft. As per the information by Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria, the induction of all 36 jets will be completed by 2023.

Chacha Chaudhary becomes the Brand Ambassador for NamamiGange Project

- The iconic Indian superhero, Chacha Chaudhary, whose brain works faster than a computer has now come forward to join hands with the NamamiGangeProgramme.
- Diamond Toons will conceptualize and publish this new 'Talking Comics' with Chacha Chaudhary spreading awareness on the cultural and spiritual significance of River Ganga and deploy best available knowledge across the masses for Ganga rejuvenation. The teaser was released during Ganga Utsav 2020.

Syska Group announces Rajkummar Rao as its new brand ambassador

- Fast Moving Electrical Goods (FMEG) company Syska Group, has roped in actor Rajkummar Rao as the new face of the brand.
- Rao will work closely with the company to promote the Syska products across LED and fan segments.
- The partnership will also see Syska Group launch a new ad campaign with Rajkummar focusing on LED and fans.

- The company aims to leverage the actors strong connect with urban audiences, as well as with those from Tier 2 and 3 markets, which make up the large segment of its target groups.

Prahlad Singh Patel inaugurates "Tourist Facilitation Centre" in Kerala

- Union Minister of State (IC) for Tourism & Culture, Prahlad Singh Patel virtually inaugurated the "Tourist Facilitation Centre" facility at Guruvayur, in Kerala.
- The facility has been constructed under the project "Development of Guruvayur, Kerala" under PRASHAD Scheme of the Ministry of Tourism, at the cost of Rs. 11.57 Crores.
- The 'National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive' (PRASHAD) were launched by the Ministry of Tourism in the year 2014-15.
- The objective of PRASHAD scheme is integrated development of identified pilgrimage and heritage destinations.
- It includes infrastructure development such as entry points (Road, Rail and Water Transport), last-mile connectivity, basic tourism facilities like Information/ Interpretation Centers, ATM/ Money exchange, eco-friendly modes of transport, area Lighting and illumination with renewable sources of energy, parking, drinking water, toilets, cloakroom, waiting rooms, first aid centres, craft bazaars /haats/ souvenir shops/ cafeteria, rain shelters, Telecom facilities, internet connectivity etc.

Indian Army chief made honorary General of Nepal Army

- The Chief of Army Staff General, MM Naravane was conferred the honorary rank of General of the Nepali Army by President Bidya Devi Bhandari. He was honoured at a special ceremony at the President's official residence 'Shital Niwas' in Kathmandu, Nepal.
- The ceremony was attended by the Prime Minister of Nepal K.P. Sharma Oli, Indian Ambassador Vinay M. Kwatra and other senior officials of both the countries.
- The practice follows a seven-decade-old tradition of conferring Army Chiefs of each other's country with the honorary title.

- Commander-in-Chief General KM Cariappa was the first Indian Army Chief to be decorated with the title in 1950.
- In January last year, Chief of Nepali Army, General Purna Chandra Thapa, was also made the honorary General of the Indian Army by President Ram Nath Kovind at a ceremony in New Delhi.

NMCG organises three-day virtual 'Ganga Utsav 2020'

- Ganga Utsav-2020 has been organised by the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) jointly with the Ministry of Jal Shakti. The three-day-long Ganga Utsav-2020 has been organised from 02 to 04 November 2020, virtually amidst C-19 precautions.
- The annual event is organised to spread awareness about river Ganga and the need to keep the river clean and rejuvenated. The 2020 edition marks the 12th anniversary of Ganga being accorded the status of National River, on 4th November 2008.

India-US-Japan-Australia kick-starts Malabar Naval Exercise-2020

- The Navies of India, the US, Japan and Australia began the four-day-long phase first of the Malabar naval exercise in the Bay of Bengal.
- From the Indian side, destroyer Ranvijay, frigate Shivalik, off-shore patrol vessel Sukanya, fleet support ship Shakti and submarine Sindhuraj will be part of the drill. US Navy Ship USS John S McCain (Guided-missile destroyer), Australian Navy Ship HMAS Ballarat (long-range frigate) and Japan Maritime Self Defence Ship (JMSDF) Ship JS Onami (destroyer) are participating along with Indian Navy units.
- The Malabar exercise started in 1992 as a bilateral drill between the Indian Navy and the US Navy in the Indian Ocean. Japan became a permanent member of the exercise in

Indian Naval Ship 'Airavat' reaches Port Sudan under 'Mission Sagar-II'

- As a part of Mission Sagar-II, the Indian Naval Ship (INS) Airavat has reached Sudan with 100 tonnes of food aid. Under Mission Sagar-II, INS Airavat will deliver food aid to Sudan, South Sudan, Djibouti and Eritrea amid the C-19 pandemic.

- The government of India has launched this initiative to provide assistance to friendly foreign countries to overcome natural calamities and C-19 pandemic.
- Mission Sagar-II follows the Mission Sagar-I, which was undertaken in May-June 2020, wherein India provided food and medicines to Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles, Madagascar and Comoros.
- It is in line with the Prime Minister's vision of Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) and highlights the importance accorded by India to relations with her maritime neighbours and further strengthens the existing bond.

CJI inaugurates e-resource centre, virtual court in Nagpur

- The Chief Justice of India (CJI) Sharad Arvind Bobde and Justice DY Chandrachud of the Supreme Court, jointly inaugurated India's first-ever E-resource centre and the virtual court called "Nyay Kaushal" at Judicial Officers Training Institute in Nagpur.
- The Nyay Kaushal will facilitate electronic-filing of cases in the Supreme Court, any High Court as well as district courts across the country to enable speedy justice for litigants, by utilising technology. The virtual court will be working from Katol in Nagpur district of Maharashtra.

India's 1st solar-powered miniature train launched in Kerala

- India's first of its kind solar energy-driven miniature train was inaugurated at the Veli Tourist Village, Kerala by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.
- The train, which would be an attraction for children especially, was part of a string of projects totally worth Rs 60 crore taken up to elevate the facilities at the panoramic destination to international standards.

AAI hands over Lucknow airport to Adani group

- The Airports Authority of India (AAI) has handed over the Lucknow airport to the Adani group on lease for a period of 50 years.
- Apart from this, the Adani group has taken over/will take over operations of 5 more airports. In February 2019, the Central Govt had

privatised six major airports of the country namely Lucknow, Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Mangaluru, Thiruvananthapuram, and Guwahati.

- The right to run all these 6 airports has been won by Adani Group for 50 years.
- Adani group has taken over the operations of Jaipur, Guwahati and Thiruvananthapuram in September 2020, Mangaluru on October 31, 2020, Lucknow on November 02, 2020, and will take on the operations of Ahmedabad Airport on November 11, 2020.

India-Pak border to light up with 8000MW renewable park

- India's border areas with Pakistan in Rajasthan would soon be illuminated with renewable energy. The state government will soon ink an MoU with National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) and Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) to establish Ultra Mega Renewal Energy Power Park.
- The park to be set up near borders areas will be of 8,000 megawatts (MW) capacity, which will comprise 4,310 MW of wind energy; 3,760 MW of solar energy and 120 MW of power from biomass. Currently, Rajasthan's solar generation capacity is 4,883 MW.
- The Rajasthan Renewable Energy Corporation Limited (RRECL) would be signing a separate MoU with the NTPC and the SECI to materialise the Gol Mega Power Park project. Rajasthan has over 1000 kilometre-long international border which is currently supplied power through traditional methods. The Rajasthan government had also approved a proposal for setting up solar power parks to generate 10,000 MW green energy with an investment of Rs 50,000 crore. The state has given nod to the proposal of Adani Green Energy Limited to set up solar power parks at five locations and a solar panel manufacturing unit which will generate around 7,500 direct and indirect jobs.

India's first 'tyre park' to come up in West Bengal

- In West Bengal, Kolkata will soon feature India's first "Tyre Park", where artworks made from scrap and defective parts will be on display. The West Bengal Transport Corporation will launch this Tyre Park.

- The Tyre Park, which will come up at the Esplanade area, would have a small cafe where people can sit, relax and enjoy the craftsmanship made from tyres. No scrap material can be labelled as waste, it can be reused and converted into an art form. Scrap tyres, lying as waste in various bus depots, have been reworked and converted to colourful shapes by the in-house team of WBTC.

Indian Railways launches 'Meri Saheli' initiative for security of women

- The Indian Railways has introduced a new initiative called "Meri Saheli" to provide safety and security to women passengers during their train journeys. The Meri Saheli initiative has been launched by the Railway Protection Force (RPF) of Indian Railways.

PM Modi inaugurates 'Arogya Van' in Gujarat's Narmada district

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 'Arogya Van' in the Narmada district of Gujarat. PM Modi was accompanied by Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani and Governor Acharya Devvrat. PM also inaugurated Arogya Kutir, Ekta Mall, and Children Nutrition Park.

Harsh Vardhan launches SERB-POWER schemes to support women scientists

- The Union Minister of Science and Technology, Harsh Vardhan has launched the 'SERB – POWER' schemes which aim to encourage and support emerging as well as eminent women researchers to undertake R&D activities in frontier areas of science and engineering. SERB-POWER stands for Science and Engineering Research Board – Promoting Opportunities For Women in Exploratory Research.
- This scheme is formulated to mitigate gender disparity in science and engineering research funding in various S&T programs in Indian academic institutions and R&D Laboratories, to ensure equal access and weighted opportunities for Indian women scientists engaged in research and development activities.
- The schemes have been launched to provide two categories of research support which are:
 1. SERB – POWER Fellowship
 2. SERB – POWER Research Grants

3. SERB – POWER Research Grants

- This scheme will encourage emerging and eminent women researchers for the individual-centric and competitive mode of research funding. Under this, the funding will be under the following two categories:

Level I: The scale of funding up to 60 Lakhs for three years.

Level II: The scale of funding up to 30 Lakhs for three years.

2. SERB – POWER Fellowship

- The Power Fellowship scheme will identify and reward outstanding women researchers and innovators working in Indian academic institutions and R&D laboratories, holding Ph.D.degree in any branch of science and engineering.
- Fellowship of Rs. 15,000/- per month in addition to regular income.
- Research grant of Rs.10 Lakh per annum.

UNESCO allots India's Panna Tiger Reserve 'Biosphere Reserve' status

- In Madhya Pradesh, the Panna Tiger Reserve has been included in the 'World Network of Biosphere Reserves' list of the UNESCO. This is the 12th biosphere reserve from India to be included in the 'World Network of Biosphere Reserves', and third from Madhya Pradesh, after Pachmarhi and Amarkantak. Currently, Panna Tiger Reserve is home to 54 tigers.
- The UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR) covers internationally designated protected areas (known as biosphere reserves) that demonstrate a balanced relationship between people and nature (like encourage sustainable development).

PM Modi launches India's first seaplane service in Gujarat

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched the country's first seaplane service between the Statue of Unity near Kevadiya in Gujarat's Narmada district and Sabarmati Riverfront in Ahmedabad. He travelled in the maiden flight of the twin-engine plane from pond-3 close to Sardar Sarovar Dam and landed at Sabarmati riverfront where a water aerodrome has been set up.

- The 19-seater seaplane will be managed by private airline SpiceJet.

SPORTS

India rise four spots to 104th in latest FIFA rankings

- The Indian national team have moved up a spot to 104 in the latest FIFA Rankings. The Indian team were ranked 108th in the October 2020 rankings. In two months, India has climbed 5 spots after being 109th in September.
- Meanwhile, on the global scene, the top six remain unchanged. Belgium continues to lead the rankings followed by France, Brazil, England, Portugal and Spain. Argentina is seventh, having interchanged spots with eighth-placed Uruguay. Mexico and Italy complete the top 10.

Sports Minister launches 2nd edition of Fit India School Week

- Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju has launched the 2nd edition of the "Fit India School Week" program in the presence of Fit India Mission. Sports Minister encourages school children to participate in the Fit India movement.
- To participate in the program the schools have to register themselves on www.fitindia.gov.in/fiit-india-school-week. The Fit India School week program was launched in November last year and saw participation from over 15 thousand schools across the country.

Virat Kohli, R Ashwin nominated for ICC Player of the Decade Award

- India skipper Virat Kohli and spinner Ravichandran Ashwin have been nominated for the ICC Player of the Decade Award.
- Other cricketers nominated for the award include England's Joe Root, New Zealand's Kane Williamson, Australia's Steve Smith, South Africa's AB de Villiers and Sri Lanka's Kumar Sangakkara.
- For the ODI Player of the Decade award, India's MS Dhoni, Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma, Sri Lanka's Lasith Malinga & Kumar Sangakkara, Australia's Mitchell Starc and South Africa's AB de Villiers have been nominated.

Daniil Medvedev beat Dominic Thiem to win ATP Tour Finals 2020

- In Tennis, Daniil Medvedev (Russia) beat Dominic Thiem (Austria) to win the 2020 ATP Tour Finals, 4-6, 7-6, 6-4, held in London on 22 November 2020.
- This is the biggest title of his career. The 24-year-old will finish the year at fourth position in the world rankings.
- In the doubles final, Dutch-Croatian duo Wesley Koolhof and Nikola Mektić claimed their first title together after surpassing Jurgen Melzer and Edouard Roger-Vasselin 6-2, 3-6, 10-5.

BCCI announces MPL Sports as Official Kit Sponsor

- The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has announced its partnership with Mobile Premier League (MPL) Sports, the athleisure wear and sports merchandise brand from Mobile Premier League, India's largest esports platform, as the new kit sponsor and official merchandise partner for the Indian Cricket Team.
- MPL Sports has entered into a three-year agreement from November 2020 to December 2023.
- MPL Sports' association with the BCCI begins with upcoming India's tour of Australia, 2020-21, which will see Team India sporting the new jerseys.
- The senior men and women and the Under-19 teams are also a part of the deal for the new kits.
- Apart from Team India jerseys, MPL Sports will also sell licensed Team India merchandise.
- MPL Sports will offer the jerseys and its wide range of Team India merchandise to fans at affordable prices.

FIFA U17 Women's World Cup 2021 cancelled

- The 2021 U-17 Women's World Cup, which was scheduled to be held in India, has been cancelled due to the C-19 pandemic. It has also been decided that India will host the 2022 edition of the World Cup. The tournament was supposed to be held in November 2020 initially, only for the pandemic to force a postponement.
- FIFA then revised the schedule and the tournament was to be held in February and March in 2021 in India. The 2020 U20 Women's World Cup has also been cancelled along with

the U17 edition. While Costa Rica will get the chance to host the 2022 U20 Women's World Cup.

- Five venues had been selected as host cities for the tournament – the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan (VYBK) in Kolkata, Indira Gandhi Athletic Stadium in Guwahati, EKA Arena in Ahmedabad and the DY Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai.

Sudeep Tyagi announces retirement from all forms of cricket

- Indian cricketer, Sudeep Tyagi has announced his retirement from all forms of the cricket. The 33-year-old had played for the Indian national cricket team in four ODIs and a lone T20I as a fast bowler.
- Apart from this, the right-arm medium-fast bowler had also featured in 14 games in the Indian Premier League (IPL) for Chennai Super Kings (CSK) and Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH).

Novak Djokovic lifts ATP Year-end No. 1 Trophy for 6th time

- Serbian tennis star Novak Djokovic has given the ATP Tour No. 1 trophy on 15 November 2020, for finishing 2020 as the year-end No. 1 (world number one). With this, he has become the only second player in tennis history, after Pete Sampras, to receive the trophy sixth time.
- Earlier Djokovic had finished as world number one in 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015 and 2018. Before this, only Pete Sampras has managed to finish six years on top of the rankings which he did between 1993 and 1998.

Lewis Hamilton wins F1 Turkish Grand Prix 2020

- Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes-Great Britain) has won the Turkish Grand Prix 2020, held on 15 November 2020.
- This was his 10th victory of the season, and 94th F1 win of his career.
- Also, with this win, he claimed the seventh Formula One championships title of his career to equal the record of Michael Schumacher.
- Sergio Perez (Racing Point-BWT- Mexico) secured second position and Sebastian Vettel of Ferrari finished third.

Mumbai Indians wins IPL 2020 trophy

- Mumbai Indians defeated Delhi Capitals in the final of Dream11 Indian Premier League (IPL) 2020 to lift their fifth IPL trophy.
- Rohit Sharma adjudged Game Changer of the Match in the final of IPL 2020.
- Trent Boult named the Player of the Match in the final of IPL 2020.
- Kings XI Punjab skipper KL Rahul bags the Orange Cap.
- Game Changer of the Season: KL Rahul.
- Delhi Capitals' Kagiso Rabada wins the Purple Cap.
- Emerging Player of the season: Devdutt Padikkal (RCB).
- Rajasthan Royals speedster Jofra Archer emerges as the Most Valuable Player.

Russian Daniil Medvedev wins Paris Master 2020

- Russian, Daniil Medvedev has won Paris Master 2020 title in tennis, when he beat Alexander Zverev 5-7, 6-4, 6-1 in Paris. He became the fourth Russian to capture the Rolex Paris Masters title.
- The World No. 5 earned his first service break at 4-4 in the second set and charged to the title from that point by winning eight of the final nine games. Medvedev joins countrymen Marat Safin, Nikolay Davydenko and Karen Khachanov on the Paris honour roll.

West Indies batsman M. Samuels retires from all forms of cricket

- West Indies batsman, Marlon Samuels has announced his retirement from professional cricket.
- The 39-year-old had informed Cricket West Indies (CWI) about his retirement in June this year, having last played for his country in December 2018 against Bangladesh.
- He has played 71 Tests, 207 ODIs, and 67 T20s at the international level, has scored 11,134 international runs including 17 centuries across all formats. He also has 152 international wickets to his name.

Lewis Hamilton wins F1 Emilia Romagna Grand Prix 2020

- Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes-Great Britain) has won the Emilia Romagna Grand Prix 2020 at Autodromo Internazionale Enzo e Dino Ferrari race track, Italy.
- This was his 9th win of the season and 93rd F1 win of his career. Valtteri Bottas finished second while Daniel Ricciardo finished third. Mercedes won the seventh consecutive constructors' title for 2020.

Shane Watson retires from all forms of cricket

- Australian all-rounder, Shane Watson has announced his retirement from all forms of cricket.
- The 39-year-old will hang up his boots after an illustrious career during which he won two ICC Men's Cricket World Cups and two ICC Champions Trophy titles.
- He played 59 Tests, 190 ODIs and 58 T20Is.

Indian boxers Amit Panghal wins gold at the Alexis Vastine International

- Indian boxers Amit Panghal, Sanjeet and Ashish Kumar have won gold medals at the recently concluded Alexis Valentine International Boxing Tournament held in Nantes, France. The tournament was the first international event that Indian boxers were a part of since the c-19.
- Amit Panghal, the silver medalist at the 2019 AIBA World Boxing Championships in the 52 kg-weight categories, overcame the challenge from American boxer Rene Abraham.
- Sanjeet was up against France's Soheb Bouafia in the 91 kg final bout and produced a clinical performance to win the top honours.
- In the 75 kg weight category, Indian boxer Ashish Kumar won the gold medal after his opponent from the USA, Joseph Gerome Hiks, gave him a walkover due to injury.

Jio named title sponsor for BCCI's Women T20 Challenge 2020

- The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has announced Jio as the Title Sponsor of the 2020 edition of the Women's T20 Challenge. The partnership will also have the support of Reliance Foundation Education and Sports For All (RF ESA).

- This is a historic partnership, as for the first time a sponsor has signed with BCCI exclusively for the women's matches. The Jio Women's T20 Challenge to be played from 4th November to 9th November will be held in Sharjah. Three teams are Velocity, Supernovas and Trailblazers will play each other once to decide the finalists on November 9, a day before the IPL final.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

India test-fires land-attack version of BrahMos missile

- India successfully test-fired a land-attack version of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile from the Andaman and Nicobar Islands territory at 10 am on November 24, 2020.
- The supersonic cruise missile successfully hit its target, which was on another island. The test-firing was conducted by the Indian Army.
- The BrahMos supersonic cruise missile is the world's fastest operational system in its class and recently DRDO has extended the range of the missile system from the existing 298 km to around 450 km.

SpaceX, Nasa launches 4 astronauts on first operational mission in space

- A SpaceX spacecraft carried four astronauts into outer space on November 15, 2020. With this kick-off, NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) hopes that SpaceX will be helping in keeping the International Space Station (ISS) fully staffed.
- NASA astronauts, Victor Glover, Shannon Walker, Michael Hopkins, and Soichi Noguchi, who is an astronaut with a space agency of Japan, are now in the orbit. They are riding aboard a SpaceX Crew Dragon Capsule that has been expected to dock with ISS on November 16, 2020, at 11 pm ET (9.30 am IST).
- As it is the first fully operational crewed mission for SpaceX, it is for sure a landmark one for NASA and the company. It follows up a test mission that carried NASA astronauts Robert Behnken and Douglas Hurley, both the test pilots to the space station.

India Successfully Test Fires Quick Reaction Surface-To-Air Missile off Odisha Coast

- India successfully test-fired the Quick Reaction Surface to Air Missile (QRSAM) system off the coast of Balasore in Odisha on 13 November 2020.
- The system achieved a major milestone by a direct hit on to a Banshee Pilotless target aircraft at medium range and medium altitude.
- The QRSAM system has been developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in association with Bharat Electronics Limited and Bharat Dynamics Limited for the Indian Army.

India successfully test-fires enhanced version of PINAKA rocket system

- The enhanced version of PINAKA rocket system was successfully flight tested by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) from Integrated Test Range, Chandipur off the coast of Odisha. This enhanced version of the Pinaka rocket would replace the existing Pinaka Mk-I rockets. While Mk-1 had a range of 40 km, the new variant can hit a target 45 to 60 km away.
- The design and development of Pinaka were done by DRDO laboratories based in Pune, namely Armament Research and Development Establishment, ARDE and High Energy Materials Research Laboratory, HEMRL.

India Successfully test fires BrahMos Missile from Sukhoi 30 MKI

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) successfully test-fired an air-launched version of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile from a Sukhoi fighter aircraft in the Bay of Bengal. The aircraft took off from an airbase in Punjab & reached the Bay of Bengal after mid-air refuelling.

OBITUARY

British Actor David Prowse passes away

- British character actor David Prowse, best known for playing 'Darth Vader' in the original Star Wars trilogy, passed away. He was a weightlifter-turned-actor, was selected to portray Darth Vader for his imposing physique of 6-foot-7 inch. However, the role was voiced by James Earl Jones.
- Prowse wore the black suit and helmet to play Darth Vader.

Former World Bank President James Wolfensohn passes away

- Australian-American lawyer, investment banker, and economist James Wolfensohn, who served as the President of the World Bank for 10 years, passed away. He had served as the ninth president of the World Bank Group from 1995 to 2005.
- Together with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Wolfensohn launched the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative in 1996, a program that eventually provided more than \$53 billion in debt relief to 27 of the world's poorest countries.

Father of Indian IT industry FC Kohli passes away

- Founder of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Faqir Chand Kohli, better known as the Father of the Indian IT industry, passed away. Besides being the founder, he was also the first CEO of TCS.
- Kohli also worked as the deputy general manager of Tata Power Company and was the Chairman of the Board of Governors of College of Engineering, Pune. As the first CEO of TCS, he pioneered India's IT revolution and helped the country build the \$190-billion IT industry. A visionary and pioneer by nature, he was a recipient of Padma Bhushan from the Government of India.

AIMPLB vice president Maulana Kalbe Sadiq passes away

- Vice president of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB), Maulana Kalbe Sadiq passed away. He was born in Lucknow and was known for his lectures, mostly during Muharram. He was an educationist, Islamic scholar and ambassador of communal amity.
- Sadiq was the first to organise a Shia-Sunni namaz in the history of Lucknow. He received his early education from madrasa Sultan ul Madaris. He then moved to Aligarh Muslim University where he obtained a bachelor of arts degree. He later went on to pursue his master's degree in Arabic literature from the same University. He then secured a doctoral degree from Lucknow University.

Football legend Diego Maradona passed away

- Football legend from Argentina, Diego Maradona passed away on November 25, 2020, after suffering a heart attack. He was 60-years old.
- The Footballer suffered cardiac arrest and paramedics failed to revive him.
- The star footballer had begun his professional career at the age of 16 with Argentinos Juniors and later he went on to become one of the greatest players ever to play football.
- Maradona represented Boca Juniors, Napoli, Barcelona, Newell's Old Boys as a player. He was also considered the main player in taking Argentina to the country's second World Cup title in 1986.

Congress veteran Ahmed Patel passes away

- Senior Congress leader and Rajya Sabha MP, Ahmed Patel passed away. He was Lok Sabha MP for three terms from 1977 to 1989 and Rajya Sabha MP since 1993 representing Gujarat.
- He also served as the political secretary to Congress president Sonia Gandhi and was one of the party's top negotiators during the UPA regime.

Veteran TV actor Ashish Roy passes away

- Television actor Ashish Roy has passed away, suffering from kidney ailment during the C-19. He was 55.
- Some of his famous television shows include Movers & Shakers, Yes Boss, Remix, Baa Bahoo Aur Baby, Chaldi Da Naam Gaddi, Burey Bhi Hum Bhale Bhi Hum, Sasural Simar Ka, Kuch Rang Pyar Ke Aise Bhi, Mere Angne Mein, Aarambh.

Indian Navy gets 9th P-8I anti-submarine warfare aircraft

- Indian Navy has got its ninth Boeing P-8I long-range maritime reconnaissance and anti-submarine warfare aircraft, part of the nearly \$1 billion deal with the US for four additional planes signed in 2016.
- India, which had first signed a contract for eight such aircraft in 2009, is also negotiating a deal for six more P-8Is with the US under the government-to-government route. While the ninth aircraft was scheduled to be handed over to the Indian Navy in July this year, the C-19 pandemic delayed plans.

- The remaining three are scheduled to be handed over to India in 2021. Incidentally, the aircraft, the latest of which landed at INS Hansa in Goa.

Former Assam Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi passes away

- Three-time Assam Chief Minister from Congress party Tarun Gogoi, has passed away after been undergoing treatment for post-Covid complications. He was 84.
- Tarun Gogoi had served as the Chief Minister of Assam between 2001 and 2015. He was the longest serving chief minister of Assam.
- Apart from this, Gogoi had also served as the food and food processing industry minister in the Union Cabinet of India under Prime Minister Narasimha Rao between 1991 and 1996.

Sahitya Academy award winner Shaik Khaja Hussain passes away

- Noted Telugu poet, journalist, scriptwriter Shaik Khaja Hussain, has passed away after brief illness. He was 70.
- Popularly known as Devi Priya, the renowned poet bagged the Kendra Sahitya Akademi Award in 2017, for his book Gaali Rangu.

Former Goa Governor Mridula Sinha passes away

- Former Governor of Goa and veteran BJP leader, Mridula Sinha passed away. She was the first woman Governor of Goa. She was also a proficient writer, making extensive contributions to the world of literature as well as culture. She has served as the head of the BJP's women's wing and Chairperson of Central Social Welfare Board in the Ministry of Human Resource Development.
- A native of Muzaffarpur, Sinha will be remembered for starting cultural events called 'Chaand ke Saath' in the lawns of Governor House. She had also opened a cattle shed inside the Raj Bhawan.

Rajasthan Minister Bhanwarlal Meghwal passes away

- Rajasthan Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Bhanwarlal Meghwal passed away.
- The five-time MLA represented the Sujargarh assembly constituency of Churu district of the state.

Japanese Nobel-prize-winning Masatoshi Koshiba passes away

- Physicist Masatoshi Koshiba, who shared 2002 Nobel prize for the detection of cosmic neutrinos, passed away. Koshiba's most famous work involved detecting neutrinos from a distant supernova explosion using a vast detector based in a mine in central Japan. Koshiba, a distinguished professor at the University of Tokyo.
- Koshiba devised the construction of giant underground chambers to detect neutrinos, elusive particles that stream from the sun. Neutrinos offer a unique view of the sun's inner workings because they are produced in its heart by the same process that causes the sun to shine. His student, Takaaki Kajita, won the Nobel Prize in physics in 2015 for research at the Super-Kamiokande facility that found neutrinos have mass.

Former Pondicherry Lt Guv Chandrawati passes away

- Former Lt Governor of Pondicherry, Chandrawati passed away. She has a number of 1st to her credit as she was the 1st Member of Parliament (1977), the 1st MLA, 1st minister (1964-66 and 1972-74) & 1st leader of Opposition in the Haryana assembly (1982-85).
- Chandrawati had also served as the president of the Janata Party from 1977 to 1979.

Veteran Bengali Actor Soumitra Chatterjee passes away

- The legendary Bengali actor and Dadasaheb Phalke award recipient Soumitra Chatterjee passed away. He became famously known after his collaborations with Oscar-winning film director Satyajit Ray, with whom he worked in fourteen films. He had won a number of awards in home and abroad.
- Soumitra Chatterjee was awarded the Padma Bhushan by the Government of India in 2004, Dadasaheb Phalke Award, India's highest award for cinema, in 2012. In 1999 Soumitra Chattopadhyay became the first Indian film personality to be conferred with the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, France's highest award for artists.

Noted journalist and writer Ravi Belagere passes away

- Noted journalist and writer Ravi Belagere passed away. He was from Karnataka. He was famous for writings on the crime world and his column 'Paapigala Lokadalli' was very popular.
- Belagere was honoured with many awards, including the Karnataka Sahitya Academy award, Kannada Rajyotsava awar, Karnataka Media Academy award and many more. Also an educationist, Belagere started Prarthana School, where his mortal remains were kept for the public to view, before being taken to the crematorium. He penned a book on the real-life story of the gangsters, titled Bheema Theerada Hanthakaru, which was published in 2001, and turned into a bestseller.

Former CM of Sikkim Sanchaman Limboo passes away

- Former Sikkim chief minister Sanchaman Limboo passed away. He was 73.
- He was the fourth Chief Minister of Sikkim from 17 June 1994 – 12 December 1994 from Sikkim Sangram Parishad Party.

Bollywood actor Asif Basra passes away

- Bollywood actor Asif Basra, who was known for his role in the recent thriller series Paatal Lok, has passed away. Apart from this, Basra had appeared in a number of Bollywood films, including a movie on the 1993 Mumbai blasts Black Friday, the 2002 Gujarat riots Parzania and Kai Po Che.
- He had also starred in several plays in India and abroad, performing in English, Hindi and Urdu theatre productions.

Bahrain PM Sheikh Khalifa dies at 84

- The Prime Minister of Bahrain, Sheikh Khalifa passed away on November 11, 2020. He was 84. Prince Khalifa bin Salman al-Khalifa was the world's longest-serving Prime Minister.
- Prince Khalifa took over the post of Bahrain's Prime Minister since its independence in 1971.

'Scooby-Doo' Co-creator Ken Spears passes away

- American television editor, writer, and producer Ken Spears, who co-created the beloved

animated series "Scooby-Doo" has passed away. He was 82.

- Ken was also the co-founder of television animation production company, Ruby-Spears Productions, along with the late Joe Ruby.
- Together, Spears and Ruby created Scooby-Doo, Dynomutt, Dog Wonder, and Jabberjaw, among other programs.

Filmmaker Sudarshan Rattan passes away

- Bollywood filmmaker Sudarshan Rattan passed away due to C-19. He was known for his 1986 film Manav Hatya, starring Madhuri Dixit and Shekhar Suman.
- Apart from this, the late filmmaker had also written, directed and produced the 1996 action drama film Hahakaar, starring Sudhir Pandey, Shafi Inamdar, Neelima Azeem and Johnny Lever among others.

Kannada actor HG Somashekar Rao passes away

- Veteran Kannada theatre and film actor, HG Somashekar Rao passed away. He had appeared in more than 60 movies during his career spanning about five decades.
- He made his big-screen debut with 1975 Kannada film Geejagana Goodu. Apart from this, HG Somashekar Rao was also a published author. He has written 25 books, including an autobiography.

Bollywood Actor Faraaz Khan passes away

- Bollywood actor Faraaz Khan passed away. He had acted in several popular Bollywood films in the late 1990s and early 2000s.
- Some of them include Mehndi (1998), Fareb (1996), Dulhan Banoo Main Teri (1999) and Chand Bujh Gaya (2005) among others.

Violin Maestro, Padma Awardee TN Krishnan passes away

- Noted violin maestro and Padma awardee, TN Krishnan passed away. His full name was Tripunithura Narayanaier Krishnan.
- He was born on 6 October 1928, in Tripunithura, Kerala and later around 1942, he settled in Chennai. He was conferred with many prestigious awards such as the Padma Shri (1973), the Padma Bhushan (1992) and the

Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (1974) among others.

6th & shortest served CM of Bihar Satish Prasad Singh passes away

- Former Chief Minister and Socialist of Bihar, Satish Prasad Singh passed away. He was born on January 1, 1936, in Korchakka(now known as Satish Nagar) Village, Khagaria district, Bihar.
- Satish Prasad Singh, the leader of Soshit Samaj Dal became the 6th and the shortest- served CM of Bihar for 5 days(28 January to February 1, 1968) with the support of Indian National Congress(INC).

James Bond actor Sean Connery passes away

- The Scottish actor, best known for his portrayal of James Bond, Sean Connery passed away.
- Scottish movie legend Connery, who shot to international stardom as the suave and sophisticated British agent James Bond and went on to grace the silver screen for four decades. Connery will be remembered first as British agent 007.

Filmmaker-actor Ashish Kakkad passes away

- Noted actor, filmmaker and voiceover artiste, Ashish Kakkad, has passed away. He was one of the most prominent artists from the Gujarati film industry. As a filmmaker, Ashish was known for his Gujarati projects namely Better Half (2010) and Mission Mummy (2016).
- As an actor, he was seen in several Hindi films such as Kai Po Che! in 2013, and psychological thriller 'Beyond Blue: An Unnerving Tale of a Demented Mind' in 2015, including other Gujarati films.

Former Turkish Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz passes away

- Veteran Politician and former prime minister of Turkey, Mesut Yilmaz has passed away. He was the Chief of the now-defunctional centre-right Motherland Party or ANAP from 1991 to 2002. He served as prime minister of Turkey three times in the 1990s. His first two prime-ministerial terms lasted for just one month, in 1991 and then in 1996, while the third term was from June 1997 to January 1999.

Former Gujarat CM Keshubhai Patel passes away

- Former Chief Minister of Gujarat, Keshubhai Savdasbhai Patel passed away. He had served as the Chief Minister of the state for a few months in 1995 and then from March 1998 to October of 2001.
- He was a six-time member of the Gujarat Legislative Assembly and was a part of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) till 2012.

APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

Lt Gen Harpal Singh appointed new Engineer-in-Chief of Indian Army

- Lt Gen Harpal Singh has appointed new Engineer-in-Chief of Indian Army. He is presently the Director-General of Border Roads Organisation and would take over his new appointment on 1 December.
- Lt Gen Harpal Singh, an alumnus of National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla, was commissioned into the Corps of Engineers on 24 December 1982. He later commanded a Border Roads Task Force, in Jammu and Kashmir valley. He has also been the Chief Engineer of Project Dantak (BRO) at Bhutan, Chief Engineer (Navy), Mumbai and Chief Engineer HQ Eastern Command. Lt Gen Harpal Singh is a graduate of the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington, the Higher Command and National Defence College courses.
- Major Gen Rajeev Chaudhary has been appointed as the new Director-General of the Border Roads Organisation. The BRO is responsible for the construction and maintenance of roads along the borders with China and Pakistan.

Greg Barclay of New Zealand elected as ICC Chairman

- Greg Barclay of New Zealand was appointed as the Chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC). Barclay, an Auckland-based commercial lawyer, will succeed Shashank Manohar, who resigned from the post earlier in 2020.
- Barclay is currently the representative of New Zealand Cricket (NZC) on the board of the ICC.

ED Director SK Mishra's tenure extended by one year

- The Union government has extended the tenure of Enforcement Directorate (ED) Director Sanjay Kumar Mishra by a year after modifying his appointment order that was issued in 2018. His tenure was to end next week as the ED director's post comes with a fixed term of two years.
- As per an order issued by the Department of Revenue under the Union finance ministry on Friday, the 2018 order for appointment of Mishra has been modified. "The President of India is pleased to approve the modification in the earlier order dated November 19, 2018, appointing Shri Sanjay Kumar Mishra as director of enforcement in the Enforcement Directorate.
- The ED is a central investigative agency that enforces two central laws, the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) and the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA). These laws were enacted to curb money laundering, terror financing, black money and hawala or illegal financial transactions that have cross-border ramifications.

Kash Patel named Chief of Staff to acting US Defence Secretary

- Indian-American Kash Patel has been named as the Chief of Staff to the Acting US Defence Secretary Chris Miller. The new appointment comes a day after Donald Trump fired Defence Secretary Mark Esper and designated Chris Miller, as the Acting Secretary.
- Kash Patel, currently on the National Security Council staff. He replaces Jen Stewart, who resigned earlier in the day.

Former chief secretary MM Kutty to be chairperson of CAQM

- Former Chief Secretary of Delhi, M.M. Kutty was appointed as the chairperson of Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas.
- The CAQM was formed on October 28 after dissolving several pollution-monitoring bodies, including most prominently the 22-year-old, Environment Pollution Prevention & Control Authority (EPCA) that has so far addressed air pollution in the Delhi NCR.

Indian Oil Corp (IOC) director Akshay Kumar Singh appointed as new MD & CEO of Petronet LNG

- Akshay Kumar Singh, the Indian Oil Corp (IOC) director-pipelines, has been appointed as the new managing director and chief executive of Petronet LNG Ltd, India's biggest gas importer.
- Singh replaces Prabhat Singh who completed his five-year term on September 13, 2020.
- Petronet is a joint venture of IOC, GAIL, Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC) and BPCL.

Indian diplomat Vidisha Maitra elected to UN advisory committee

- Indian diplomat, Vidisha Maitra has been elected to the UN's Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ). The election was a tightly contested one but Maitra won with 126 UN members supporting her candidature for the only post for the Asia-Pacific group while 64 voted for the opposing candidate who was from Iraq.
- India has been a member of the committee since its inception in 1946. India's win in this committee comes as India also prepares to take a seat as one of 10 non-permanent members in the UN Security Council for a two year period starting 1 January 2021.

West Indies Great Michael Holding Appointed MCC Foundation Patron

- Former West Indies fast bowler, Michael Holding has been appointed as a new patron of Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) Foundation. The 66-year-old Holding is a passionate advocate for equality in cricket and the wider community. The MCC Foundation is the charitable arm of the Marylebone Cricket Club, custodian of the game's laws, and was created with the aim of enhancing lives through cricket.
- Last month, actor, mental health advocate and cricket-lover Stephen Fry had joined the Foundation as a patron. The pair join the list which includes Claire Taylor, Mike Brearley, Mike Atherton, Mike Gatting.

NDDB Chairman Dilip Rath elected to IDF

- National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) Chairman, Dilip Rath has been unanimously

elected to the board of global dairy body International Dairy Federation (IDF).

- He has been associated with IDF for the last 10 years as Member Secretary of Indian National Committee and as a member of the Standing Committee on Dairy Policy and Economics.
- Rath has played a key role in signing the Dairy Declaration at the IDF World Dairy Summit in Rotterdam in October 2016 between IDF and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).
- India ranks first among the world's milk-producing nations and has the largest bovine population in the world.

AK Gupta becomes new MD and CEO of ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL)

- AK Gupta, the new Managing Director and CEO of ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL) took charge. Before this, he was Director (Operations) of the company.
- Gupta was also the Head of New businesses in Marketing in ONGC and Head Business development in ONGC Videsh, both for the domestic and international markets.
- He has handled commercial negotiations with alliance partners, regulators, customers and National Oil Companies.

PVG Menon appoints as CEO of Electronics Sector Skill Council of India

- The Electronics Sector Skill Council of India (ESSCI) announced the appointment of PVG Menon as its chief executive officer. Menon will be responsible for overseeing the operations of ESSCI and work closely with its governing Council on strategic issues related to the growth of the electronic systems design and manufacturing (ESDM) industry in India.
- ESSCI works with industry, the National Skill Development Corporation, and the Ministry of Electronics and IT to provide both skilling and re-skilling services to the industry.

Rajiv Jalota becomes new chairman of Mumbai Port Trust

- Indian Administrative Services (IAS) officer, Rajiv Jalota has been appointed as the chairman of Mumbai Port Trust (MbPT). The appointment committee of the Union cabinet issued the order for the central deputation. The post of MbPT

chairman was vacant after former chairman Sanjay Bhatia retired on July 31 and was appointed as Lokayukta of Maharashtra.

- Jalota, who is the first Goods and Services Tax (GST) commissioner of Maharashtra, is currently the additional chief secretary in the higher and technical education department of the state government. He first served as sales tax commissioner and then as GST commissioner from January 2015 to January 2020.

IMPORTANT DAYS

Day of Remembrance for all Victims of Chemical Warfare

- The United Nation recognised Day of Remembrance for all Victims of Chemical Warfare on 30th November every year since 2005. The day marks a tribute to the victims of chemical warfare, as well as to reaffirm the commitment of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to the elimination of the threat of chemical weapons, thereby promoting the goals of peace, security, and multilateralism.
- The history of the serious efforts to achieve chemical disarmament that culminated in the conclusion of the Chemical Weapons Convention began more than a century ago. Chemical weapons were used on a massive scale during World War I, resulting in more than 100,000 fatalities and a million casualties.

Indian Constitution Day

- Constitution Day (National Law Day), also known as Samvidhan Divas, is celebrated in India on 26 November every year to commemorate the adoption of Constitution of India. Previously this day was celebrated as Law Day
- The Government of India under Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi declared 26 November as Constitution Day on 19 November 2015.
- On 26 November 1949, the Constituent Assembly of India adopted the Constitution of India, and it came into effect on 26 January 1950.

National Milk Day

- In India, November 26 is celebrated as National Milk Day, since 2014, to commemorate the birthday of the father of India's White

Revolution, Dr. Verghese Kurien (also nicknamed as Milkman of India).

- The day was fixed by all the dairy majors of the country including the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB), the Indian Dairy Association (IDA), along with 22 state level milk federations.

International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

- The United Nations designated International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women is celebrated worldwide on November 25.
- Purpose: to raise awareness of the fact that women around the world are subject to various forms of violence and true nature of the issue is often hidden.
- 2020 Theme "Orange the World: Fund, Respond, Prevent, Collect!".

World Television Day: 21 November

- World Television Day is observed on 21 November every year. The day is observed to acknowledge the role of broadcast media. On this day, the journalists, writers, bloggers, and others who are associated with the medium promote the role of television in communication and globalization.
- The 21 November was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in December 1996, because the first World Television Forum was held in 1996.

World Fisheries Day: 21 November

- World Fisheries Day is celebrated on 21 November every year throughout the world by the fisherfolk communities. It highlights the importance of healthy oceans ecosystems and to ensure sustainable stocks of fisheries in the world. 2020 is the fourth World Fisheries Day.
- The World Fisheries Day helps in highlighting the critical importance to human lives, of water and the lives it sustains, both in and out of water. Water forms a continuum, whether contained in rivers, lakes, and ocean. Fishing communities worldwide celebrate this day through rallies, workshops, public meetings, cultural programs, dramas, exhibition, music show, and demonstrations to highlight the importance of maintaining the world's fisheries.

Africa Industrialization Day: 20 November

- Africa Industrialization Day is celebrated on November 20 each year. It is a time when governments and other organizations in many African countries examine ways to stimulate Africa's industrialization process. It is also an occasion to draw worldwide media attention to the problems and challenges of industrialization in Africa.
- Theme 2020: "Inclusive and sustainable industrialisation in the AfCFTA era".

World Children's Day is celebrated on 20 November

- World Children's Day is observed globally on 20 November every year. The day is celebrated to promote international togetherness, awareness among children worldwide, and improving children's welfare. November 20th is an important date as it is the date in 1959 when the UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child.
- World Children's Day was first established in 1954 as Universal Children's Day and is celebrated on 20 November each year. It is also the date in 1989 when the UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

World Toilet Day: 19 November

- World Toilet Day (WTD) is observed globally on 19 November to inspire action to tackle the global sanitation crisis. World Toilet Day celebrates toilets and raises awareness of the 4.2 billion people living without access to safely managed sanitation. It is about taking action to tackle the global sanitation crisis and achieve Sustainable Development Goal 6: water and sanitation for all by 2030.
- The day was established by the World Toilet Organization in 2001 and officially declared by the UN General Assembly in 2013. This year the theme remarks on the importance of "Sustainable sanitation and climate change".

World Philosophy Day: 19 November

- World Philosophy Day is observed on the third Thursday of November every year. This year World Philosophy Day falls on 19 November 2020. The Day encourages academic exchange and highlights the contribution of philosophical

knowledge in addressing global issues. The 2020 edition invites the world to reflect on the meaning of the current pandemic, underlining the need, more than ever before, to resort to philosophical reflection in order to face the multiple crises we are going through.

- In 2005 the UNESCO General Conference proclaimed that World Philosophy Day would be celebrated every third Thursday of November. In establishing World Philosophy Day UNESCO strives to promote an international culture of philosophical debate that respects human dignity and diversity.

World COPD Day 2020: 18 November

- World COPD Day is observed on the third Wednesday of November every year to raise awareness about chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and improve COPD care throughout the world. World COPD Day 2020 falls on 18 November 2020.
- The 2020 theme: Living Well with COPD- Everybody, Everywhere.
- The day is organized by the Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease (GOLD) in collaboration with health care professionals and COPD patient groups throughout the world. The first World COPD Day was held in 2002. Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease is a lung disease that blocks airflow and makes it difficult to breathe.

3rd Naturopathy Day is celebrated on 18 November

- The National Naturopathy Day is observed in India on 18 November every year, to promote positive mental and physical health through a drugless system of medicine, called as Naturopathy. The 48-day program of webinars will continue till the third National Naturopathy Day, which falls on 18 November 2020. The day was declared by the Ministry of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy), Government of India, on November 18, 2018.
- As a part of the occasion, National Institute of Naturopathy (NIN), Pune under Ministry of AYUSH has organised a series of webinars on 'Gandhian philosophy of Self Reliance through Self Health Reliance' on Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary celebrations from 2nd

Oct 2020. It was on this day in 1945 when Mahatma Gandhi became lifetime Chairman of the All India Nature Cure Foundation Trust and signed the deed with the object of making the benefits of Nature Cure available to all classes of people.

International Day for Tolerance

- The International Day for Tolerance is observed annually on 16 November.
- The day was declared by UNESCO in 1995, on its fiftieth anniversary, to generate public awareness of the dangers of intolerance.

National Press Day: 16 November

- National Press Day is observed on 16th November every year to celebrate free and responsible press in India. On this day the Press Council of India started functioning as a moral watchdog to ensure that the press maintains high standards and is not constrained by any influence or threats. It also commemorates the day when the Press Council of India started functioning.
- In 1956, the First Press Commission was planned to form a Press Council to protect freedom of the press in India. On 4 July 1966, the Press Council was established in India. It came into effect from 16 November 1966. Therefore, 16 November is celebrated as National Press Day every year.

Children's Day

- On 14th November, Children's Day is celebrated every year to mark the birth anniversary of India's first Prime Minister Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru. Children's Day is popularly known as 'Baal Diwas' in India.
- The day aims at increasing the awareness of the rights, care and education of children. On this day, many educational and motivational programs are organised across the country, by and for children.
- Notably, Children's Day was celebrated in India first on November 20, 1956, along with the Universal Children's Day.

World Diabetes Day

- World Diabetes Day is observed on 14th November every year. The campaign aims to

raise awareness around the crucial role that nurses play in supporting people living with diabetes.

- The theme for World Diabetes Day 2020 is "The Nurse and Diabetes."
- In 2007 General Assembly adopted resolution 61/225 designating 14 November as World Diabetes Day.
- The document recognized "the urgent need to pursue multilateral efforts to promote and improve human health, and provide access to treatment and health-care education."

India Ayurveda Day

- In India, the 'Ayurveda Day' is observed every year on the occasion of Dhanwantari Jayanti (Dhanteras). Dhanvantari is the Hindu god of medicine
- The day was declared by the Ministry of AYUSH, in 2016, to focus on the strengths of Ayurveda and its unique treatment principles.
- In 2020, India is observing the 5th National Ayurveda Day on 13 November 2020.
- The theme of the 2020 National Ayurveda Day is — Ayurveda for C-19 pandemic.

World Kindness Day

- World Kindness Day is held globally on 13 November to highlight good deeds in the community focusing on the positive power and the common thread of kindness which binds us.
- The theme for 2020 World Kindness day is Kindness: The World We Make – Inspire Kindness.
- World Kindness Day was first celebrated in 1998 by The World Kindness Movement.

Public Service Broadcasting Day

- Public Service Broadcasting Day is celebrated every year on November 12 to commemorate the first and only visit of the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, to the studio of All India Radio, Delhi in 1947.
- Mahatma Gandhi addressed the displaced people (refugee from Pakistan), who had temporarily settled at Kurukshetra in Haryana after partition.

World Pneumonia Day

- World Pneumonia Day is observed globally on 12th November every year. The day is celebrated to raise awareness, promote prevention and treatment and produce action to combat the disease.
- The day was celebrated on November 12 in 2009 by the Global Coalition against Child Pneumonia.

National Education Day

- In India, the National Education Day is celebrated on 11 November every year to commemorate the birth anniversary of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the first education minister of independent India.
- The day was announced by the Ministry of Human Resource Development on 11 September 2008.
- Maulana Abul Kalam Azad served as education minister from 15 August 1947 to 2 February 1958.

World Science Day for Peace and Development

- World Science Day for Peace and Development is celebrated each year on November 10 every year. This day is celebrated to highlight the important role that science play in society and the need to engage the wider public in debates on emerging scientific issues.
- This year World Science Day for Peace and Development theme is "Science for and with Society".
- This year the focus of World Science Day is on "Science for and with Society in dealing with the global pandemic."

National Legal Services Day: 09 November

- In India, 09 November is celebrated as "National Legal Services Day" every year by all Legal Services Authorities, to commemorate the enactment of the Legal Services Authorities Act 1987.
- The Day is celebrated to make people aware of the various provisions under the Legal Services Authorities Act and the right of the litigants. The aim of celebrating this day is to offer free of charge, proficient and legal services to the people belonging to weaker sections of society. It also seeks to make sure the availability of free

services to weaker section people as well as making them conscious about their rights.

- On 11 October 1987, the Legal Services Authorities Act 1987 was enacted, while the act took effect on 9 November 1995. The day was started by the Supreme Court of India in 1995 to provide help and support to poor and weaker sections of the society. It was established with a mandate to offer help and support to a weaker and poor group of sections of people which may be women, disabled persons, Scheduled Tribes (STs), children, Scheduled Castes (SCs), human trafficking victims as well as natural calamities victims.

International Day of Radiology: 08 November

- International Day of Radiology is observed globally on 8th November every year. The day is celebrated to promote the awareness of the value that radiology contributes to safe patient care, and improving public understanding of the vital role radiologists and radiographers play in the healthcare continuum.
- In 2020, the International Day of Radiology will therefore be dedicated to all imaging professionals and their essential role in fighting the C-19 pandemic making an indispensable contribution to the diagnosis and treatment of C-19 patients. The motto of International Day of Radiology 2020: 'Radiologists and radiographers supporting patients during C-19'.

National Cancer Awareness Day 2020

- The National Cancer Awareness Day is observed annually in India on November 7, to spread awareness on cancer, its symptoms and treatment. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), cancer is the second leading cause of death globally.
- In 2018, approximately 18 million cases were there globally, of which, 1.5 million were in India alone. In 2018, there were around 0.8 million cancer deaths in India against 9.5 million globally.

International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict

- The International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict is an international day observed

annually on November 6. On 5 November 2001, the UN General Assembly declared 6 November of each year as the International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict.

- At the time of war, it affects the ecosystem such as water supply is poisoned, the forest is burnt, animals killed, etc. Though humanity has always counted its war casualties in terms of dead and wounded soldiers and civilians, destroyed cities and livelihoods, the environment has often remained the unpublicized victim of war. Water wells have been polluted, crops torched, forests cut down, soils poisoned, and animals killed to gain military advantage.

World Tsunami Awareness Day: 5 November 2020

- World Tsunami Awareness Day was observed across the world on 5 November. The day is celebrated to spread awareness among people across the world in matters related to the dangers of tsunami.
- In 2020, World Tsunami Awareness Day encourages the development of national and community-level, local disaster risk reduction strategies to save more lives against disasters. This year's observance promotes "Sendai Seven Campaign," target.
- In December 2015, the UN General Assembly designated 5 November as World Tsunami Awareness Day, calling on countries, international bodies and civil society to raise tsunami awareness and share innovative approaches to risk reduction.
- World Tsunami Awareness Day was the brainchild of Japan, which due to its repeated, bitter experience has over the years built up major expertise in areas such as tsunami early warning, public action and building back better after a disaster to reduce future impacts.
- UN Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) facilitates the observance of World Tsunami Awareness Day in collaboration with the rest of the United Nations system.

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International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists

- The International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists is an UN-recognized day observed annually on 2 November. The day draws attention to the low global conviction rate for violent crimes against journalists and media workers, estimated at only one in every ten cases.
- The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 2 November as the 'International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists' in General Assembly Resolution A/RES/68/163. The Resolution urged the Member States to implement definite measures countering the present culture of impunity. The date was chosen in commemoration of the assassination of two French journalists in Mali on 2 November 2013.

World Vegan Day: 01 November

- World Vegan Day is observed globally on 1st November every year. This day is celebrated to spread benefits of veganism for humans, non-human animals, and the natural environment. Vegan Day is an opportunity to promote the benefits of a vegan diet and veganism in general.
- The term vegan was coined by Donald Watson and derived from the word Vegetarian. At that time, the differentiation was that Vegans did not consume dairy products. Later this extended to eggs, and by 1951, veganism had become a movement of people who did not partake in the exploitation of animals. Each year there are a number of festivals and exhibitions held around the world by vegan societies. In addition, there are many local events, talks and cooking demonstrations organised by individuals. Vegan Day is an opportunity to promote the benefits of a vegan diet and veganism in general.

World Cities Day: 31 October

- The United Nations General Assembly has designated the 31st of October as World Cities Day. The Day is celebrated to promote the international community's interest in global urbanization, push forward cooperation among countries in meeting opportunities and addressing challenges of urbanization, and contributing to sustainable urban development around the world.
- 2020 Theme: Valuing Our Communities and Cities

National Unity Day: 31 October

- In India, the Rashtriya Ekta Diwas or National Unity Day is observed every year on October 31 since 2014, to commemorate the birth anniversary of the Iron Man of India, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. This year marks the 145th anniversary of the great leader who played an instrumental role in India's struggle for independence, and later during the integration of the country.
- He was born on 31st October 1875 in Nadiad, Gujarat.
- He was the first Home Minister and Deputy Prime Minister of independent India.
- He played an important role in the integration of many Indian princely states to make an Indian federation.

International Internet Day 2020

- International Internet Day is observed on 29th October every year. It aims to honour a momentous day in the history of telecommunications and technology. This day also highlights the sending of the 1st electronic message which was conveyed from one computer to another computer in the year 1969.
- Charley Kline who was a student programmer at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), he discovered the transmission of first-ever electronic message in the world 'LO' on 29th October 1969.

SUMMITS AND MOU'S

L&T bags Rs 7,000-cr order to construct part of Bullet Train project

- Infrastructure major Larsen and Toubro (L&T) has bagged an order worth over Rs 7,000 crore

to construct a part of the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail (MAHSR), also known as the Bullet Train Project. The scope of the order includes the construction of viaducts, one station, major river bridges, maintenance depots, and other auxiliary works.

- The approximately 508 km Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail project will cover Maharashtra, Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Gujarat, with 12 stations along the route. Upon completion, the high-speed rail will operate at a speed of 320 kmph, covering the entire distance in approximately 2 hours with limited stops and in 3 hours with all stops.

UNDP and Invest India tie-up to launch the SDG Investor Map for India

- The National Investment Promotion and Facilitation Agency, Invest India has partnered with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) India to develop the first-ever 'SDG Investor Map for India'. The map lays out 18 Investment Opportunities Areas (IOAs) in six critical SDG enabling sectors, that can help India to move forward on Sustainable Development path. This initiative is an instrumental stride in India's development trajectory.
- The Map comes at a critical time for India. With the emergence of the C-19 pandemic, the financing gap for the SDGs in India has only widened further and decades of development progress is nearly on the verge of a reversal. Investing in the SDGs at this point is crucial to 'Building Back Better' and making the economy and our societies more resilient and sustainable. Enhanced productivity, technology adoption and increased inclusion are all critical factors that

SBI Signs Pact With Luxembourg Stock Exchange

- State Bank of India (SBI) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Luxembourg Stock Exchange (LuxSe).
- The MoU will help SBI and LuxSE set up a long-term cooperation mechanism, and promote ESG (Environmental, Social, and Corporate Governance) and green finance.
- Through this MoU, the Luxembourg Stock Exchange would work towards creating a sustainable environment for issuers, asset managers, and investors in terms of ESG focused funds and bonds.

IBM to Acquire SAP Consulting Partner TruQua

- IBM said that it has acquired TruQua, an IT services and consulting company focused on SAP's finance and analytics technologies.
- Big Blue said the deal will support its hybrid growth strategy and expand its breadth of consulting services.
- IBM said the deal is expected to close in Q4 2020. Financial terms of the deal were not disclosed.

RBL Bank selects Amazon Web Services to drive digital transformation

- RBL Bank has selected Amazon Web Services (AWS) as its preferred cloud service to drive digital transformation. At present, around 40 per cent of the bank's mission-critical applications are on the cloud.
- The bank first migrated its corporate website to AWS cloud and with the experience gained initiated a 10-in-10 project (a complete migration of 10 applications in 10 days).
- The bank chose AWS for its commitment to security and highly reliable global infrastructure.

World Bank Signs \$120 Million Project to Improve Connectivity in Meghalaya

- The Government of India, the Government of Meghalaya and the World Bank has signed a \$120-million project to improve and modernize the transport sector of Meghalaya. This will help Meghalaya to harness its vast growth potential for high-value agriculture and tourism. The \$120 million loans from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), has a maturity of 14 years including a grace period of six years. The International Bank of Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) is a development bank administered by the World Bank.
- The Meghalaya Integrated Transport Project (MITP) will improve about 300 km of strategic road segments and stand-alone bridges by using innovative, climate-resilient, and nature-based solutions.
- The segments will serve major agriculture areas, important tourist destinations, small-scale industries, major towns and underserved populations by linking them to markets, health

and education centres, and national and international corridors.

- It will also support innovative solutions such as precast bridges to reduce both time and cost of construction.
- This operation will also support the state's government "Restart Meghalaya Mission" to revive and boost development activities affected due to C-19 pandemic.
- It will help restore transport services for the movement of agricultural produce, improve access to health facilities during C-19 type medical emergencies, benefit about 500,000 inhabitants, and generate direct employment of about 8 million person-days.

DIPAM inks agreement with World Bank

- Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) has signed an agreement with the World Bank, to provide advisory services to DIPAM for asset monetization. DIPAM is mandated with facilitating monetization of non-core assets of government CPSEs under strategic disinvestment or closure and enemy property of the value of 100 crore and above. DIPAM has a framework for monetizing non-core assets.
- The World Bank advisory project, approved by the Finance Minister, is aimed at analyzing public asset monetization in India and benchmarking its institutional and business models against international best practices as well as supporting the development of operational guidelines and capacity building for their implementation.

Reliance Retail Ventures acquires 96% holding in Urban Ladder

- Reliance Retail Ventures Limited (RRVL), a subsidiary of Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) has acquired equity shares of Urban Ladder Home Decor Solutions Private Limited (UrbanLadder) for a cash consideration of Rs 182.12 crore.
- The investment represents 96 per cent holding in the equity share capital of UrbanLadder. RRVL has a further option of acquiring the balance stake, taking its shareholding to 100 per cent of the equity share capital of UrbanLadder.
- UrbanLadder was incorporated in India on February 17, 2012. UrbanLadder is in the

business of operating a digital platform for home furniture and decor products.

TCS to acquire Deutsche's Postbank Systems AG

- Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) announced an agreement under which the company will acquire 100% of the shares of Postbank Systems AG (PBS) from Deutsche Bank AG.
- PBS has close to 1,500 employees and post the acquisition, they will become a part of TCS. The acquisition is expected to finalise by year end.
- The transaction is subject to customary regulatory and governmental approvals.

Dharmendra Pradhan co-chairs 4th Meeting of the OPEC-India Dialogue

- The 4th High-Level Meeting of the OPEC-India Dialogue was hosted by the OPEC Secretariat. The Meeting was co-chaired by HE Mohammad Sanusi Barkindo, Secretary-General of OPEC and Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, India's Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas and Minister of Steel.
- Key matters discussed at the meeting included rapidly changing global energy landscape, overcoming energy challenges, global oil price mechanisms, measures being taken by OPEC and its partners for balancing oil markets, and on ensuring oil supply security for India.
- This was the first time that the meeting of this Institutional Dialogue was held virtually due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The virtual meeting was joined by OPEC Member countries, Secretary Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India and CMD & MDs of India's oil and gas industry from both the public and the private sector.
- The first such dialogue was held in 2015. It was informed that the next High-Level Meeting of the OPEC-India Dialogue will be held in 2021, and if possible in person, in New Delhi.

Whatsapp Partners with 5 Banks for UPI Payment

- WhatsApp has partnered with five Indian banks to process its payment services. These are State Bank of India, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Axis Bank and Jio Payments Bank. The Facebook-owned messaging platform, WhatsApp Inc., has received the approval from the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) to launch

its Unified Payments Interface (UPI) based payments services in India, to let users send or receive money across the country.

- The service can however be expanded in a graded manner. It means that initially, Whatsapp can only roll out the payments service to only its 20 million users. The payment system will be rolled out in ten Indian regional languages in the latest version of WhatsApp app.

AAI Signs MoU With NTPC Subsidiary, NVVN

- The Airports Authority of India (AAI) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with a subsidiary of NTPC Ltd, NTPC Vidyut Vyapar Nigam (NVVN), to promote usage of electric vehicles and set up solar power plants at the airports managed and operated by AAI.
- NTPC Vidyut Vyapar Nigam (NVVN) will be provided adequate land and rooftop space by AAI, free of cost, at identified AAI airports to set up solar power plants.
- Initially, NVVN will begin working on the projects at airports in Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan.
- The solar capacity required at airports in Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan is around 55 MW and 8 MW, respectively to become 100% solar-powered airports.
- Apart from this, AAI and NVVN will jointly work towards supporting the government of India's initiatives for the adoption of electric vehicles by the creation of public charging infrastructure and promoting the usage of electric vehicles at airports.

Shaktikanta Das Chairs 40th SAARC Central Bank Governors Meet

- The 40th Meeting of the SAARCFINANCE Governors' Group was held virtually, under the Chairmanship of Shri Shaktikanta Das, Governor, RBI.
- The meeting was attended by the Governors from SAARC central banks. During the meeting, Mr Das also inaugurated the SAARCFINANCE Sync, a closed user group secure communication network.
- In his opening remarks, Governor Shri Das highlighted the close partnership and co-operation among the member countries in jointly fighting the pandemic.

- The group took stock of the macroeconomic situation in the SAARC region; discussed the current SAARCFINANCE initiatives; and the way ahead.
- The Governors reaffirmed their commitment to continued co-operation and sharing of central bank experiences.
- SAARCFINANCE is a network of central bank governors and finance secretaries of the SAARC region.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is the current chair of SAARCFINANCE.

IISc and Indian Oil R&D inks MoU for hydrogen-generation technology

- The Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and the Research and Development Centre of Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) have signed an MoU to develop and demonstrate biomass gasification-based hydrogen generation technology. This technology will be used for producing fuel cell-grade hydrogen at an affordable price.
- The IISc and IndianOil will work jointly on the optimisation of both biomass gasification and hydrogen purification processes, The developed technology will be scaled up and demonstrated at IndianOils R&D Centre at Faridabad, Haryana.
- Hydrogen generated from this demonstration plant will be used to power fuel cell buses.
- This initiative to produce fuel cell grade hydrogen from biomass is another step by IndianOil jointly with IISc to bring hydrogen fuel to the major energy matrix of India while using the agricultural forces of India.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Malayalam film Jallikattu is India's official Oscar entry

- Malayalam film Jallikattu has been selected as India's official entry for Oscars in the foreign-language film category. The film was unanimously chosen among 27 entries across Hindi, Marathi and other languages.
- Directed by Lijo Jose Pellissery, Jallikattu revolves around a bull that escapes from a slaughterhouse in a hilly remote village on the eve of its scheduled slaughter and an entire tribe of men coming together to stop the bull.

Delhi Crime bags Best Drama Series at the International Emmy Awards

- The Netflix show, Delhi Crime has won the Best Drama Series award at the 48th International Emmy Awards 2020. Delhi Crime is the first web-series from India to win an International Emmy Award.
- The show is written and directed by Richie Mehta and features actress Shefali Shah as the main character.

Pilibhit Tiger Reserve gets global award 'TX2' for doubling tiger population

- The Pilibhit Tiger Reserve (PTR), situated in the Pilibhit district and Shahjahanpur District of Uttar Pradesh has won the first-ever international award, TX2, along with the state Forest department, for doubling the number of tigers.
- *TX2 stands for 'Tigers times two', signalling the goal to double wild tigers.

ISRO Chairman K Sivan Conferred with Doctor of Science honorary doctorate by Karnataka Governor Vajubhai Vala

- The Visvesvaraya Technological University, of the Government of Karnataka, has conferred the Doctor of Science honorary doctorate upon ISRO Chairman K Sivan.
- The doctorate was presented to the ISRO Chief by Karnataka Governor Vajubhai Vala on 21 November 2020.

Department of Fisheries presents Fisheries Sector Awards for the first time on World Fisheries Day

- Department of Fisheries presents Fisheries Sector Awards for the first time on World Fisheries Day The Department of Fisheries under the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying awarded best performing States for 2019-20 on 21 November 2020 on the occasion of the 'World Fisheries Day', to recognise their accomplishments in the field and their contribution into the growth of the sector.

Top States

1. Marine states – Odisha
2. Inland states – Uttar Pradesh
3. Hilly and NE states – Assam

Top Organisations

1. Tamil Nadu Fisheries Development Corporation Ltd. (for Marine)
2. Telangana State Fishermen Cooperative societies Federation Ltd (for Inland)
3. Assam Apex Cooperative Fish Marketing and Processing Federation Ltd. (for Hilly region)

Top Districts

1. Best Marine District – Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh
2. Best Inland District – Kalahandi, Odisha
3. Best Hilly and NE District – Nagaon, Assam

Naseeruddin Shah honoured with Aditya Vikram Birla Kalashikhar Puraskar

- Veteran actor Naseeruddin Shah has been honoured with the 2020 Aditya Vikram Birla Kalashikhar Puraskar at annual Sangit Kala Kendra Awards.
- Alongside, two emerging stars, in the firmament of theatrics – Neel Choudhary and Irawati Karnik were awarded the Aditya Vikram Birla Kalashikhar Puraskars. "Theatre" is the central theme, for this year's awards.

Scottish Author Douglas Stuart wins 2020 Booker Prize

- Scottish writer Douglas Stuart has won the 2020 Booker Prize for Fiction. He has been awarded for his debut novel, "Shuggie Bain". The 44-year-old Stuart is only the second Scot to have won the prestigious literary prize.
- The Booker Prize for Fiction, (formerly known as the Booker-McConnell Prize (1969–2001) and the Man Booker Prize (2002–2019)), is a literary prize awarded each year for the best original novel written in the English language and published in the United Kingdom. It carries £50,000 prize (\$66,000).

Dr Pokhriyal to be conferred with Vatayan Lifetime Achievement Award

- Union Education Minister, Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' will be conferred with the Vatayan Lifetime Achievement Award. This award will be conferred to the Minister for writing, poetry and other literary works. The Minister has penned more than 75 books on wide-ranging issues, which have also been translated into many

national and foreign languages. Vatayan International Awards given by the Vatayan-UK organization in London honours poets, writers and artists for their exemplary work in their respective fields.

- Mr Pokhriyal has earlier received several awards in the field of literature and administration including Sahitya Bharati Award by the then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Sahitya Gaurav Samman by Former President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, Bharat Gaurav Samman, Good Governance Award by Dubai Government, outstanding Achievement Award by Global Organization of Person of Indian Origin by Mauritius, awarded in Ukraine in the area of environmental protection, among others. Mr Nishank is also honoured with "Himal Gaurav Samman" by Nepal.

Dr Susanta Kar Honoured with Prof. A N Bhaduri Memorial Lecture Award-2020

- Dr Susanta Kar, Senior Scientist, Molecular Parasitology and Immunology, Council of Scientific & Industrial Research- Central Drug Research Institute (CSIR-CDRI) was honoured with "Prof. A N Bhaduri Memorial Lecture Award 2020" by Society of Biological Chemists (India), Bengaluru. The award is given to him for his contribution towards defining the survival tactics of Leishmania Donovanii.
- Leishmania Donovanii is a protozoan parasite that infects the macrophages and the causative agent of visceral leishmaniasis (Kala-Azar).

Bangladeshi teen Sadat Rahman wins International Children's Peace Prize 2020

- Sadat Rahman from Bangladesh has been awarded the prestigious International Children's Peace Prize 2020.
- The award was presented to 17-year-old Sadat by Nobel Peace Prize laureate Malala Yousafzai on 13 November 2020, during a ceremony in the Netherlands. He was selected out of 142 applicants from 42 countries.
- He was awarded the prize for his involvement in setting up his social organization and mobile app 'Cyber Teens' to stop cyberbullying.
- The International Children's Peace Prize is given annually since 2005 by the International children's rights organization KidsRights based in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu presents 2nd National Water Awards

- The Vice President of India, Shri M Venkaiah Naidu presented the National Water Awards (NWAs) for 2019 on 11 November 2020. This is the second edition of the award.
- The award ceremony has been organised by the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation is from 11 & 12 November, 2020 through virtual platform.
- Among the states category, Tamil Nadu bagged the Best State Award, followed by Maharashtra and Rajasthan.
- The NWA awards are given to motivate the individuals/organizations to adopt the best usage practices in the field of water resources conservation and management and create awareness among the people about importance of water.

Ruskin Bond conferred with Tata Literature Lifetime Achievement Award

- Ruskin Bond, one of India's most cherished authors, has been conferred the 11th Tata Literature Live! Lifetime Achievement Award for 2020, to recognise his very long literary life of almost seventy years.
- Apart from this, renowned poet, lyricist and screenwriter Javed Akhtar has been named as the Poet Laureate of the Tata Literature Live! The Mumbai LitFest 2020.

Indian Astronomers collaborate with 2020 Nobel Physics Nobel Laureate for Thirty Meter Telescope Project

- Indian astronomers have collaborated with the 2020 Physics Nobel Laureate Prof. Andrea Ghez for the design of back-end instruments and possible science prospects of the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) project.
- The Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) is a proposed extremely large telescope (ELT) which is planned to be installed at Maunakea on the island of Hawaii.
- The TMT project is an international partnership between CalTech, Universities of California, Canada, Japan, China, and India, to revolutionize the understanding of the universe and the enigmas in it.

China's Chen Meng claims ITTF Women's World Cup title

- The world number one Chen Meng beat Chinese compatriot Sun Yingsha to win her maiden International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) Women's World Cup table tennis title in held in Weihai, China.
- The 2020 ITTF Women's World Cup was the 24th edition of the ITTF-sanctioned event.

Malayalam author S Hareesh wins the JCB Prize for Literature

- Malayalam author, S Hareesh has won the JCB Prize for Literature 2020 for his novel Moustache. It has been translated into English by Jayasree Kalathil & published by HarperCollins India.
- The JCB Prize for Literature is regarded as the richest literary prize in India. As per the norm, the Malayalam author will receive a Rs 25 lakh cash prize and the translator will receive an additional Rs 10 lakh.

Vidya Balan's short film 'Natkhat' eligible for Oscar nomination

- The Indian film 'Natkhat', starring and co-produced by Vidya Balan, has won the top prize at the third edition of Best Of India Short Film Festival 2020. By winning the festival, the film has become eligible for 2021 Oscar qualification. The film has been directed by Shaan Vyas and co-produced by Ronnie Screwvala and Vidya Balan.
- The film also won cash prize money of \$2,500 (approximately Rs 1,85,497) and an opportunity for a television broadcast deal on ShortsTV. The Best of India Festival has been established by ShortsTV since 2018 to honour and recognize the exceptional work of the Indian (India) filmmaker.

Hariharan wins JC Daniel award for lifetime contributions in Malayalam cinema

- Noted filmmaker Hariharan has been selected for the JC Daniel Award, the state government's highest honour for lifetime contributions to Malayalam cinema.
- The award carries a purse of Rs 5 lakh, a citation, and a sculpture. Hariharan was chosen for the prestigious award by a jury chaired by MT Vasudevan Nair with director Harikumar, actor Vidhubala, State Chalachitra Academy chairman

Kamal and Cultural Department Secretary Rani George as members.

- Hariharan, who initially skilled with cinematographer U Rajagopal in Madras, later assisted administrators M Krishnan Nair, AB Raj, and JD Thottanm for seven years. In 1972 he directed the film 'Girls Hostel'. Later he got here up with a few of the evergreen films in Malayalam.

Malayalam writer Paul Zacharia selected for Ezhuthachan Puraskaram 2020

- Noted Malayalam writer, Paul Zacharia has been selected for this year's Ezhuthachan Puraskaram, the Kerala government's highest literary honour. Zacharia was chosen for his contribution to Malayalam literature during the past five decades.
- A five-member jury, headed by Kerala Sahitya Akademi President Vyshakhan, selected him for the award. 'Salam America', 'Oridath', 'Aarkkariyam', 'Bhaskara patelarum ente jeevithavum' are among his various literary works. Zacharia also won the Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award in 1979 and the Kendra Sahitya Akademi Award in 2004.

Om Puri awarded Lifetime Achievement Award posthumously at IIFFB 2020

- Late Indian actor, Om Puri was honoured with a Lifetime Achievement Award at the third edition of the India International Film Festival of Boston (IIFFB 2020). The award was received by his wife Nandita Puri. The three-day film festival, based in Boston USA. Another highlight of the festival was a conversation with chef Vikas Khanna, recipient of the "Pride of India Award".
- Malayalam film "Kaanthi" bagged the Best Feature Film Award, while the Best Male Actor was won by Victor Banerjee for playing a priest in Josef: Born In Grace. The Best Female Actor went to Shylaja Ambu for Kaanthe at the Boston festival.

RANKING

Hong Kong, Zurich, and Paris most expensive cities in EIU's Worldwide Cost of Living (WCOL) Index

- The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) has released its biannual 'Worldwide Cost of Living

(WCOL)' report of the World's Most Expensive Cities in 2020, based on their cost of living.

- Hong Kong, Paris and Zurich shares the top spot as the most expensive cities in the list, which comprises of 133 cities.
- The report took into account the price of 138 items, used in every day for survival, and the falling or rising value of that country's currency due to C-19 to rank the cities accordingly.

India Ranks 77 in TRACE Bribery Risk Matrix 2020

- India is placed at 77th position in the TRACE Bribery Risk Matrix 2020. India has achieved a score of 45 in a global list that measures business bribery risks of 2020. India's rank stood 78 positions in 2019. It was a better performance than neighbouring nations such as Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal and China. But, Bhutan scored better than India and got 48th place in the list.
- North Korea, Turkmenistan, South Sudan, Venezuela and Eritrea had the highest commercial bribery risk. Denmark, Norway, Finland, Sweden and New Zealand showed the lowest bribery risk.
- The TRACE Matrix list is released by TRACE International, an anti-bribery standard-setting organisation, which measures business bribery risk in 194 countries, territories, and autonomous and semi-autonomous regions.

India's Param Siddhi ranked 63rd in most powerful supercomputers

- According to the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Indian supercomputer, Param Siddhi has achieved 63rd rank in the list of 500 most powerful supercomputers in the world. Param Siddhi is the high-performance computing-artificial intelligence (HPC-AI) supercomputer established under National Supercomputing Mission (NSM) at C-DAC. The Top 500 project which ranks the top 500 non-distributed computer systems in the world is published twice a year.
- The first of these updates always coincides with the International Supercomputing Conference in June, and the second is presented at the ACM/IEEE Supercomputing Conference in November.

- The AI system will strengthen application development of packages in areas such as advanced materials, computational chemistry & astrophysics, and several packages being developed under the mission on the platform for drug design and preventive health care system, flood forecasting package for flood-prone metro cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, Patna and Guwahati.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

PM Modi releases book on the Life of Sri Guru Nanak Dev ji

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has released a book on the life and ideals of Guru Nanak Dev, the founder of Sikhism and first of its ten gurus.
- The book has been penned by Kirpal Singh Ji. Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi was also present during the book release.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh unveils two books

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has unveiled two books 'The Republican Ethic Volume III' and 'Loktantra Ke Swar' which are a collection of selected speeches of President Ram Nath Kovind during the third year of his presidency. Information and Broadcasting Prakash Javadekar unveiled the e-book versions of the two books.
- Mr Rajnath Singh stated that the President's speeches depict his concern towards issues such as girls education, empowerment of women, and welfare of the weaker sections. All the speeches in this book reflect on the self-confidence in this country. This book comprises speeches on the country's efforts to fight C-19, where India is faring much better than other countries, to bravely defending its borders. This compilation of speeches of President Kovind presents a comprehensive picture of his work, personality and values.

A New Book on Gulzar "Boskiyana" by Radhakrishna Prakashan

- 'Boskiyana', a new Hindi book on Gulzar, veteran Indian poet-lyricist has been published by Radhakrishna Prakashan. The book portrays the life of Gulzar through his films, poetry, philosophies, lifestyle, likes and dislikes.

- The 228- page book is edited and compiled by Yashwant Vyas. 'Boskiyana' is the name of the house of Gulzar in Mumbai.

Sonu Sood's autobiography to be titled 'I Am No Messiah'

- Actor Sonu Sood, is all set to bring out his autobiography titled 'I Am No Messiah', which is set to be out in mid-December 2020.
- In the book, the Dabangg actor, who is often dubbed as the 'Messiah of migrants' for his philanthropic work during the on-going C-19 pandemic, has revealed the emotional challenges faced by him while extending help.
- The book will be published by Penguin Random House India.
- It is co-written by Meena Iyer.

Maharashtra Governor releases a book 'Majhi Bhint'

- Maharashtra Governor, Bhagat Singh Koshiyari has released the book 'Majhi Bhint' (My Wall) authored by former Maharashtra Minister of Education Rajendra Darda at Raj Bhavan, Mumbai.
- The book is a compilation of selected Facebook posts of Rajendra Darda pertaining to a range of issues written over the last four years.

Nepal President unveils pictorial anthology on Mahatma Gandhi

- A pictorial anthology on Mahatma Gandhi in the Nepali language was released by President Bidya Devi Bhandari to mark his 151st birth anniversary and bring the Nepalese youth closer to the revered global peace icon.
- The book titled Maile Bujheko Gandhi or the Gandhi as I understood, was released at a special function at Rashtrapati Bhawan in Kathmandu in the presence of Ambassador of India to Nepal, Vinay Mohan Kwatra.
- The book has been published by the Embassy of India along with the B P Koirala India-Nepal Foundation to "cherish the values of the Mahatma's universal teachings with our Nepali friends.

Thavaasmi book launched by Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu

- Vice President of India, Venkaiah Naidu has launched the book titled “Thavaasmi: Life and Skills through the lens of Ramayana”.
- The book was authored by Rallabandi Srirama Chakradhar and co-author by Amara Sarada Deepthi.

Anupam Kher’s new book titled ‘Your Best Day Is Today!’

- Actor Anupam Kher’s latest book is titled “Your Best Day Is Today!”. He had announced the book, in which he experiences during the C-19-induced countrywide C-19. Through this book, Kher will recount his experiences during the C-19, several ups and downs, including the time when his mother Dulari and brother Raju Kher had contracted the virus.
- His previous books are his biography Lessons Life Taught Me Unknowingly & The Best Thing About You is You. He is also a recipient of two National Film Awards.

Ex-SPG officer pens novel “Rasaathi” on transgenders

- Ex-SPG officer, Sasindran Kallinkeel’s has penned a novel named “Rasaathi: The Other Side of a Transgender”. The main character in the novel, published by BookMitra, is a transgender named Rasaathi born in a well-to-do family in South India.
- Rasaathi, meaning princess, is in the late 40s who wants people to treat transgenders like human beings by showering love, affection, sympathy and recognise their pathetic and horrible life.

‘Till We Win’: Book on C-19 by AIIMS Director

- A new book titled “Till We Win” by AIIMS Director Randeep Guleria and two other doctors will give a definitive account of India’s fight against C-19 and how to deal with the pandemic in the days to come.
- The book has been co-written by leading public policy and health systems expert Chandrakant Lahariya and renowned vaccine researcher and virologist Gagandeep Kang.
- The book deals with the “realization of inner strength and unity” amongst people of all walks

of life in a country known for its cultural and linguistic diversity. It will hit the stands this month and published by Penguin Random House India.

- The book delves into how learnings from C-19 pandemic can be used to strengthen the Indian health system, for better, forever. It is up to all of us to convert the challenge posed by pandemic as an opportunity to strengthen health systems.

A book titled “Pandemonium: The Great Indian Banking Tragedy” by T. Bandyopadhyay

- Tamal Bandyopadhyay has authored a book titled “Pandemonium: The Great Indian Banking Tragedy” and will be released on November 09, 2020. This book, published by Roli Books, provides an understanding of the challenges and economic potential of India.
- The book “Pandemonium” accounts how many promoters had swapped equity with debt while the managements of the banks were finding a way to protect their balance sheets until the intervention of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) against their bad loans.
- The Same issue trouble also affected the developing non-banking financial companies of India who were quick to identify the post-demonetisation easy liquidity and the reluctance of banks to lend which promoted them to borrow short to lend long.

World’s first scientoon book “Bye Bye Covid-19” by Anandiben Patel

- World’s 1st scientoon book entitled “Bye Bye Covid-19”, was released by Anandiben Patel, Governor, Uttar Pradesh. The book was written by ‘scientoonist’ Dr Pradeep Srivastava, former Senior Principal Scientist at CSIR-Central Drug Research Institute, Lucknow. It is further planned to make a 3D version of the book. The book has been published by Vigyan Prasara.
- The 220 pages book contains comprehensive information on novel Covid-19 pandemic, its symptoms and its prevention through precautions.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

UBS Projects India's GDP at -10.5% for FY21

- The UBS has projected India's real GDP to contract 10.5% in FY21, in its Global Economics & Markets Outlook 2021-2022 report. For the fiscal 2021-22 (FY22) UBS expect India's real GDP growth to rebound to +10% in FY22. UBS also estimates India's GDP to stabilise at 6.2 per cent YoY in FY23.

YES Bank launches 'SMS Pay' on POS Terminals

- Private lender YES Bank has launched an 'SMS Pay' functionality on POS terminals, which would allow merchants to accept contactless and remote payments from their customers. YES Bank has collaborated with French payment services company Worldline to launch the new facility.
- SMS Pay will facilitate merchants to accept remote payments on their POS machines and enable their customers to transact safely without leaving the comfort of their homes.
- Through SMS Pay, local merchants & department stores could request payments from their customers by entering their contact details in the POS terminal following which an SMS would be triggered to the customer's mobile number instantly, with a payment URL link.
- Customers can complete the payment through their domestic debit and credit cards.

IRDAI approves ICICI Lombard acquisition of Bharti Axa General

- The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has given its in-principle approval for the merger of Bharti AXA General Insurance with ICICI Lombard. The merged entity will have a market share of around 8.7 per cent on a proforma basis in the general insurance business.
- Based on the share exchange ratio recommended by independent valuers, shareholders of Bharti AXA will receive two shares of ICICI Lombard for every 115 shares of Bharti AXA. At present, promoter ICICI Bank Ltd holds 51.89% stake in ICICI Lombard, while the rest is with the public. After the proposed deal, the promoter stake will come down to 48.11%.
- The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has already approved the acquisition of the two

entities while approvals request from other concerned regulators for the transaction has been applied. The policyholders should benefit from an enhanced product suite and deeper customer connects touchpoints.

India's GDP Contracts 7.5% in September Quarter

- The National Statistical Office (NSO) has released the estimates of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the second quarter (July-September) Q2 of 2020-21.
- The GDP at Constant (2011-12) Prices in Q2 of 2020-21 is estimated at Rs 33.14 lakh crore, as against Rs 35.84 lakh crore in Q2 of 2019-20, showing a contraction of 7.5% as compared to 4.4% growth in Q2 2019-20.

Mercedes-Benz joins hands with SBI to target HNI customers

- Mercedes-Benz has joined hands with State Bank of India (SBI) to offer financial benefits to the lender's High Net Worth Individual (HNI) customers. This collaboration will give the luxury automobile manufacturer access to State Bank of India's High Net Worth Individual (HNI) customer base, while the bank's customers will enjoy exclusive benefits at the time of booking a Mercedes-Benz car. The collaboration with SBI gives an exciting opportunity to expand our customer base and reach out to the potential HNI customers of the bank with products and services.
- This collaboration includes financial benefits like 'attractive' rate of interest on loans with tenure up to five years and offers on the processing fee.
- There is also an additional benefit of Rs 25,000 for customers booking a Mercedes-Benz vehicle via SBI Yono platform.
- They can even get a car loan sanctioned through SBI Yono after fulfilling the eligibility criteria.
- The customers need to produce online booking confirmation and SBI loan sanction letter at the Mercedes-Benz dealership to avail the benefits.

HDFC Bank signs MoU with ICCI to support SMEs and Start-ups

- HDFC Bank has signed an MoU with Inventivepreneur Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ICCI) to support SMEs and Start-ups.

Through this association, ICCI will engage, enrol and support various Startups /SMEs /MSMEs to facilitate inter-alia financial and other facilities to/from HDFC Bank.

- ICCI and HDFC Bank jointly conduct diverse networking activities, awareness camps and interactive sessions, Business Events.

Merger of Lakshmi Vilas Bank & DBS Bank approved by Union Cabinet

- The Union Cabinet on November 25, 2020 approved the merger of Lakshmi Vilas Bank Limited (LVB) with Singapore-based DBS Bank India Limited. With this development, there will be no restrictions on the depositors for withdrawing money from their deposits from Lakshmi Vilas Bank.
- Under the 'Scheme of Amalgamation of Lakshmi Vilas Bank with DBS Bank India Limited', DBS would invest Rs 2,500 crore in the equity of the bank, to improve the capital position of the merged entity.
- DBIL is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Singapore based DBS Bank Ltd. The merger will increase the branches of DBIL to around 600 from the current 27 branches.

India Post Payments Bank launches PM Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana

- India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) has launched a low-cost insurance scheme 'Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY)' for its customers to bring large sections of the underserved and unserved population into the financial mainstream.
- IPPB has collaborated with PNB MetLife India Insurance Company for this product.

RBI imposes six-month ban on Manta Urban Cooperative Bank

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has banned the Manta Urban Cooperative Bank in Jalna district of Maharashtra for six months for payment of money and loan transactions.
- The central bank has given some instructions to this bank, which will be effective for six months since the bank closed on 17 November 2020.

LIC launches 1st digital app 'ANANDA'

- Life Insurance Corporation of India has launched a digital application for agents for onboarding to get a life insurance policy. The Digital Application is called "ANANDA", which is an acronym for Atma Nirbhar Agents NewBusiness Digital Application.
- The Digital application is a tool for the onboarding process to get the life insurance policy through a paperless module with the help of the agent or intermediary.

Bank Credit Rises 5.67%, Deposits Up 10.63%, RBI Data Shows

- Bank credit grew by 5.67 per cent to Rs 104.04 lakh crore, while deposits increased by 10.63 per cent to Rs 143.80 lakh crore in the fortnight ended November 6, according to RBI data.
- In the fortnight ended November 8, 2019, bank credit stood at Rs 98.46 lakh crore and deposits at Rs 129.98 lakh crore.
- On a year-on-year basis, non-food bank credit growth decelerated to 5.8 per cent in September 2020 from 8.1 per cent in the same month of the previous year.
- Credit to industry recorded 'nil' growth in September 2020 as compared to 2.7 per cent rise in September 2019.
- Credit to agriculture and allied activities rose by 5.9 per cent during the reporting month, as against a growth of 7 per cent in the same month last year.
- Loan growth to the services sector accelerated to 9.1 per cent in September 2020 from 7.3 per cent in September 2019.
- Personal loans registered a growth of 9.2 per cent in the month compared to 16.6 per cent growth in September 2019.

RBI becomes world's first central bank with a million Twitter followers

- Reserve Bank of India, in a first among Central Banks, has become the first monetary authority that has gained 1 million followers on its official Twitter Handle.
- Shaktikanda Das, RBI Governor congratulated his colleagues on this occasion. He also has a separate Twitter Handle with 1.37 lakh followers. He shared the news of achievement

through Twitter and congratulated everyone for the new milestone.

- India's monetary authority has beaten the European Central Bank and US Federal Reserve on Twitter by becoming the most popular central bank to be followed on the microblogging site. Currently, the Reserve Bank of India is followed by as many as 10,00,513 followers on Twitter.

Indian students contributed over \$7 billion to US economy in 2019-20

- According to the report "Opens Doors 2020", Indian students contributed USD 7.6 billion to the US economy in the academic year 2019-20, even though there was a 4.4 per cent drop in the total number of Indian students.
- China remained the largest source of international students in the US, with the number of Chinese students in the country increasing for the 16th consecutive year. There were over 372,000 Chinese students in the U.S. during 2019-20 year.
- According to the report, released by the US Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and the Institute of International Education (IIE), for the fifth consecutive year the United States hosted more than 1 million international students (1,075,496) in an academic year.

Barclays Projects India's GDP at -6.4% in FY21

- Barclays has revised down its GDP forecast for India in the current fiscal year 2020-21 (FY21) to - 6.4% from its earlier estimate of - 6%.
- However, Barclays has raised its FY22 (2021-22) growth forecast to 8.5 per cent from 7 per cent.

Karnataka Bank launches CASA campaign

- Karnataka Bank launched CASA (current account, savings account) mobilisation campaign which will run from November 17 to March 4, 2021. The bank stated that it intends to mobilise over 4.10 lakh current and savings accounts with an accretion of 650 crores of business. With this campaign, the bank intends to introduce its attractive and superior line of digitally powered savings and current account products to its customers.

- To enable the basic banking services to the unbanked(not use banks or banking institutions) sections of the society.
- To popularize bank's digitally powered CASA products to the next level of customers on the basis of their requirements.

RBI creates Reserve Bank Innovation Hub to boost financial inclusion

- The Reserve Bank of India has created a Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH). The aim of Innovation Hub is to promote innovation across the financial sector by leveraging on technology and creating an environment which would facilitate and foster innovation. RBIH will collaborate with financial sector institutions, technology industry and academic institutions and coordinate efforts for exchange of ideas and development of prototypes related to financial innovations.
- Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH) would be managed by a Governing Council (GC) consisting of 10 members (including a chairperson). Shri Senapathy (Kris) Gopalakrishnan, co-founder and former co-Chairman, Infosys, has been appointed as the first Chairperson of the RBIH.

RBI puts Lakshmi Vilas Bank under moratorium

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has placed cash-strapped Lakshmi Vilas Bank (LVB) under a moratorium for a period of one month and restricted withdrawals at Rs 25,000 for depositors, owing to a serious deterioration in the lender's financial position. The central bank also superseded the board of directors of LVB for a period of 30 days owing to a serious deterioration in the financial position of the bank. The move was announced through an order by the Ministry of Finance.
- Reserve Bank has come to the conclusion that in the absence of a credible revival plan, with a view to protecting depositors' interest and in the interest of financial and banking stability, there is no alternative but to apply to the Central Government for imposing a moratorium under section 45 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

Lakshmi Vilas Bank to be merged with DBS:

- The RBI has also drafted a scheme of amalgamation for LVB with DBS Bank India Ltd.

and aims to complete the merger process before the moratorium period ends.

- DBS Bank India Ltd (DBIL) is a wholly-owned subsidiary of DBS Bank Ltd, Singapore ("DBS"), which in turn is a subsidiary of Asia's leading financial services group, DBS Group Holdings Limited.
- The bank invited suggestions and objections, if any, from members, depositors and other creditors of transferor bank (LVB) and transferee bank (DBIL), on the draft scheme.
- DBIL will bring in additional capital of ₹2,500 crore upfront, to support credit growth of the merged entity.

SBM Bank India set to launch a neo banking platform

- SBM Bank India, the wholly-owned subsidiary of State Bank of Mauritius has partnered with Fintech PayNearby to launch a neo banking platform.
- Both firms signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to build an "open banking" network towards delivering basic banking solutions as well as advanced financial services, to their customers.
- SBM Bank India was the first foreign bank in India to obtain a banking licence from the Reserve Bank of India to operate as a Wholly Owned Subsidiary in January 2019.

IFSCA approves draft banking regulations at IFSC

- International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) has conducted a meeting in New Delhi.
- The IFSC Authority approved the International Financial Services Centres Authority (Banking) Regulations, 2020 in the meeting.
- The draft banking regulations approved at the meeting opens the way for making rules for the various aspects of banking operations that would be permissible at the IFSC.
- As banking plays an important role at IFSC, banking regulations will help it in reaching its desired potential.

Moody's projects India GDP for 2020 at -8.9%; 2021 forecast at 8.6%

- Rating Agency Moody has projected the GDP of India at -8.9% for the calendar year 2020. Earlier this was projected at -9.6%.
- Apart from this, India's GDP growth for Calendar year 2021 is projected at 8.6% by Moody's from 8.1% earlier.

Paytm launches "Payout Links" for small businesses

- Paytm has launched "Payout Links" for businesses, enabling them to instantly process payouts to customers, employees and vendors, without collecting their bank details.
- It is aimed at helping small businesses in sectors like gaming, retail, export, manufacturing and e-commerce.

HDFC Bank Launches SmartHub Merchant Solutions 3.0 for SMEs

- The private sector lender HDFC Bank has launched SmartHub Merchant Solutions 3.0, India's first comprehensive banking and payment solution for merchants.
- The new solution will allow merchants and self-employed professionals to instantly open a current account and start accepting payments in-store, online, and on-the-go.
- SmartHub 3.0 will be available in app based, web based and a range of PoS devices.

RBI to evaluate impact of 'RBI Kehta Hai' campaign

- The Reserve Bank of India will evaluate the impact of multi-media public awareness campaign 'RBI Kehta Hai', which was launched in 14 languages to educate the public about safe banking and financial practices.
- 'RBI Kehta Hai' was the first even 360-degree campaign initiated by the central bank using all mass media, including media such as television, radio, newspapers, hoardings, web banners, gifs, social media and SMS.

SEBI increases Overseas Investment limits for Mutual Funds

- Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has enhanced the investment limits for Mutual Fund companies for overseas investments. Mutual

Funds can make overseas investments subject to a maximum of US \$ 600 million per Mutual Fund, within the overall industry limit of US \$ 7 billion. Earlier it was USD 300 million.

- Mutual Funds can make investments in overseas Exchange Traded Fund (ETF) subject to a maximum of US \$ 200 million per Mutual Fund, within the overall industry limit of US \$ 1 billion. Earlier it was Rs 50 million.

WhatsApp's payments service gets NPCI nod

- The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has finally allowed Facebook-owned messaging platform "WhatsApp" to roll out its payments service in the country in a "graded" manner.
- The announcement by NPCI came after the organisation made a crucial change to its regulations concerning the use of the Unified Payments Interface (UPI).
- The change puts a limit on single third parties such as WhatsApp or its rivals Google Pay and Walmart's PhonePe where they can only handle 30 per cent of overall UPI transaction volumes.

ICICI Bank launched 'Mine' a comprehensive banking programme

- Private lender ICICI Bank has launched a comprehensive banking programme for its millennial customers, (in the age bracket of 18 years to 35 years), called 'ICICI Bank Mine'. The 'ICICI Bank Mine' is India's first and unique product launched by the bank to offer a mobile-first, highly personalised and experiential led banking experience to the millennial customers.
- Governor of RBI Shaktikanta Das Chairs 40th SAARC Central Bank Governors Meet.
- The 40th Meeting of the SAARCFINANCE Governors' Group was held virtually, under the Chairmanship of Shri Shaktikanta Das, Governor, RBI. The meeting was attended by the Governors from SAARC central banks. During the meeting, Mr Das also inaugurated the SAARCFINANCE Sync, a closed user group secure communication network.

ADB approves USD 132.8 mn loan to improve power distribution in Meghalaya

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved USD 132.8 million loan to Meghalaya,

to improve and upgrade the power distribution network in the state. The fund will help in improving the distribution system & financial sustainability of the Meghalaya Power Distribution Corporation Limited (MePDCL).

- The MePDCL has a huge outstanding against the power purchased from central power generating stations and to the Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (PGCIL). The loan will support in clearing the power outstanding dues.
- The project will construct 23 substations; renovate and modernize 45 substations, including the provision of control room equipment and protection systems; install and upgrade 2,214 kilometres of distribution lines and associated facilities covering three out of the six circles in the state.
- It will replace antiquated electromechanical meters with smart meters, which will benefit about 180,000 households.
- The project will help develop a distribution sector road map and a financial road map for the Meghalaya Power Distribution Corporation Limited (MePDCL). These road maps will strengthen the capacity of MePDCL to operate and manage the distribution networks.

RBI imposes monetary penalty on DCB Bank for rule violations

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) imposed monetary penalty on DCB Bank and Jio Payments Bank for various rule violations. The central bank has imposed a penalty of Rs 22 lakh on DCB Bank for non-compliance with certain provisions on marketing/distribution of mutual fund/insurance etc. The penalty has been imposed in exercise of powers vested in RBI under the provisions of Section 47A(1)(c) read with Section 46(4)(i) of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.
- In the case of Jio Payments Bank, the RBI imposed a penalty of Rs 1 crore for non-compliance with RBI directions on timely submission of application in the case of reappointment of Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer under Section 35B of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 (the Act).

ICICI Lombard, FreePaycard to offer health insurance solutions

- ICICI Lombard in partnership with Freepaycard, an online pre-paid card trading platform, has

launched Group Safeguard Insurance. This strategic partnership will make the bite-sized health insurance solutions, designed specifically for Free pay card members, available at its multi-category partner retail outlets. Freepaycard members can add these health solutions on the go while shopping for other essential goods or services.

- The plan will be offered to the members of Freepaycard, allowing them to receive an assured amount in case of any injury or hospitalization for treatment. The insurance offering is a customized hospitalization product that comes in three variants – Hospital Daily Cash Benefit, Death Benefit, and Special Vector-borne Disease-related Hospitalization Benefit.

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