



Civil Service India

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Action Plan for Vulture Conservation, 2020-25

Editor's Note

Essay of the Month

Art and Culture

Defence

Economy

Environment

National News

International News

India and other Countries

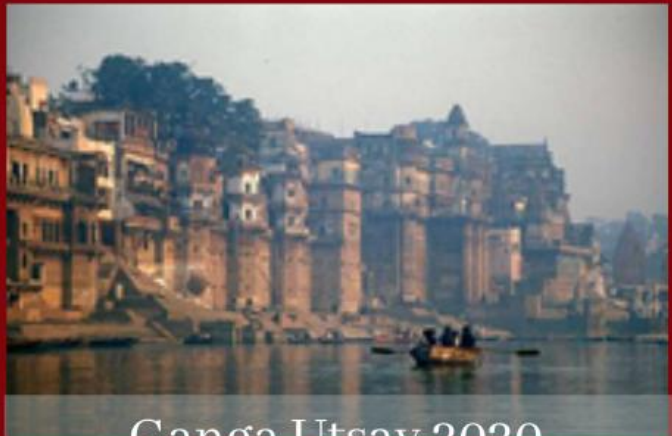
India Polity

India Policy

People and Places

Science and Technology

Sports News



Ganga Utsav 2020



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Editor's Note

Dear Students

These are tough times, so we have to be more persistent in our efforts to make time for study despite the frequent disturbances coming into our study time and resources. Some people have to deal with presence and disturbance of family who are all locked up at home due to Corona, whereas others have to deal with closure of classrooms and tuitions and yet others are unable to visit friends and study together. The problems are many but the solution is only one – Focus. We need to focus on our task ahead and keep moving in that direction. Finding resources and study material has become tough for some so do not spend too much energy in collecting all kinds of material. Focus on the main material and study that well. It is a good idea to fix only limited base material to study from at any time. For doubts in specific things one can use the internet or friends or professors, whichever or whoever is available. Also remember most people are facing similar problems or maybe even more than you, so don't lose heart. Civildserviceindia.com wishes you all the best!

Essay of the Month

Depression and work from home- explore the relationship!

"We are stuck with technology when what we really want is just stuff that works."

— Douglas Adams

Depression has got 7.8 billion meanings according to 7.8 billion bodies breathing on

the land. It is like a thunderstorm accompanied by rain that comes without a warning and shatters the peace and tranquility of your soul. Worry, hopelessness, stress, anxiousness are the negative stigmas weave the clouds for the depressed rainfall. And the soul drenched by this rainfall is the one who dies mentally though physically alive. Scientifically it's not a disease but a powerful magnet that attracts numerous fatal disorders towards itself. Depression makes you the slave of your own body.

The monster of coronavirus has hurled the social animals in the pits of walls. It left all of us vulnerable. The mere option of bridging the gaps between us was technologism. Working from our cozy corners was an instinctive desire during hard times. But our comfort zones has thrown us into pernicious flames. Work from home was indeed important for everyone nevertheless mental and physical health still remains on top of the list. People have recklessly exposed themselves to the screens completely scorning the physiological pinkness. Work from home is a double edged sword. It made our lives time-rich but it came with a heavy cost.

Human brains are not habitual to be flooded with so much of affluency towards screens. Spending huge sum of hours doing work from computers bears the seeds of depression and anxiety that eventually grow as the noxious and toxic fruit which ultimately result as something terrible as death. Certain neurotransmitters, including dopamine, serotonin, and norepinephrine, play an important role in mood. And all the neurotransmitters are alarmingly affected by the incessant use of screen. Studies from Leeds University supports a link between depression and technology. The recent

statistics of WHO (World Health Organization) suggest that around 121 million people suffer from mental illness and depression and the figure increases every melting day. The University of Gothenburg makes out that heavy technical use can increase sleeping disorders. Masses chair themselves on the face of mobiles forgetting about their psychological health.

Even the technology that promises to unite us, divides us. Each of us is now electronically connected to the globe, and yet we feel utterly alone and depressed. When people go to their work places they not only to their jobs rather the interact with their friends, they do some sort of physical work, they celebrate and cherish every moment because they socialize. In fact the working hours are tied but when it comes on virtual work all this seems absurd. People work limitlessly on virtual platform.

"If you really want to escape the things that harass you, what you're needing is not to be in a different place but to be a different person."

This does not filters that work from home is mundane rather it is significant but one should know the boundaries. Amid lockdown, in the race of earning money people forgot that how cruel they are being towards their body. Not only this but working from home culture has also made a path of irregular eating habits, zero workout, no socialism, strict posture, dissected bio clock and the list continues. Reports have suggested that work from home has thrown people into the dark hours of depression and insomnia. Online world has dragged the community into the hell of death.

But in all you're the master of your fate and captain of your soul. Depression cannot ruin your life until you allow it to. Thread of your life kite is in your hands. And the air of Covid cannot grab it from you! Work from home is necessary but one must keep it in mind that no wealth can give the happiness equivalent to happy health. Meditation, exercise, yoga, interacting with family, celebration of life, following your passion are the stones that pave the road out of the dark depressed forest. Life is one continuous experiment, keep testing, failing and hypothesizing.

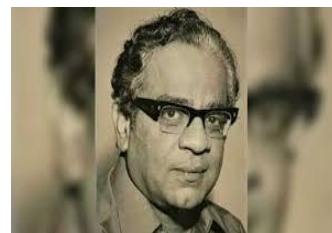
LOVE YOURSELF, LOVE YOUR LIFE AND BE ALIVE!

Avishi Agrawal Class 10th

(Winner in Essay Contest)

Arts and Culture

Purushottam Laxman Deshpande:



Purushottam Laxman Deshpande (1919 – 2000), was a Marathi writer and humorist. He was popularly known by his initials ("Pu. La.") or as P. L. Deshpande.

He was not only an accomplished film and stage actor, script writer, author but also a composer, musician (he played the harmonium), singer and orator. He was often referred to as "Maharashtra's beloved personality".

He was a recipient of Padma Bhushan (1990), Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (1967) and Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowship (1979).

Recently, he has been marked by Google Doodle on his 101st birth anniversary.

Sarnath:



Sarnath is a famous place in Varanasi and it is the destination for cultures like Hindu, Buddha and Jain. It is a small village which is located 10 kilometres north-east of the holy city of Varanasi near the confluence of the Ganges and the Varuna rivers in Uttar Pradesh, India.

Formerly known as Isipatana, it is famous as the site where Gautama Buddha first taught the Dharma, or where Buddha preached his first sermon. It is also the place where the original Sangha was formed.

This city is mentioned by the Buddha as one of the four places of pilgrimage to which his devout followers should visit.

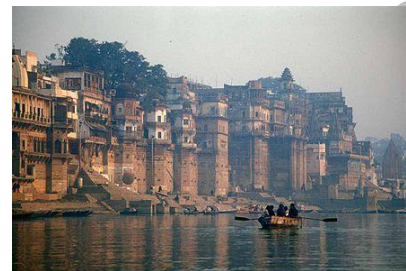
It was also the site of the Buddha's Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta, which was his first teaching after attaining enlightenment, in which he taught the four noble truths and the teachings associated with it.

Note: The birthplace of Shreyansanath, the Eleventh Tirthankara of Jainism lies in

Singhpur, a village approximately 1km away from the site.

In News: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate various development projects in Varanasi including Sarnath Light and Sound show.

Ganga Utsav 2020:



It was a three-day-long Ganga Utsav-2020 which was organized from 2nd November to 4th November 2020. It was organized jointly by the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) jointly with the Ministry of Jal Shakti. This annual event was organized virtually due to the ongoing pandemic.

The 2020 edition marks the 12th anniversary of Ganga being accorded the status of National River.

Ganga Utsav is a cultural and educational festival to celebrate the glory of holy river Ganga. On 4th November 2008, Ganga was declared "National River". Since 2016, every year the NMCG has been celebrating Ganga Utsav on November 4.

The event is organized every year with an aim to spread awareness about river Ganga and the need to keep the river clean and rejuvenated.

Ganges: The Ganges or the Ganga is a trans-boundary river of Asia which flows through India and Bangladesh. The Ganges is the national and the longest river of India. The

river originates in Gangotri Glacier as River Bhagirathi. Later it joins the Alaknanda at Devprayag.

Ganga is considered a central part of Indian tradition, life and culture. She is a lifeline to millions who live along its course. It is a sacred river and worshipped as the goddess Ganga in Hinduism. The major tributaries of Ganga River are Yamuna, Kali, Son, Gandak, Ghagra, and RamGanga. The river drains in 11 states namely Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan, Haryana, Bihar, and West Bengal. The Ganges joins River Brahmaputra and flows into the Bay of Bengal as River Padma in Bangladesh. **The mouth of River Ganga forms the world's largest delta, known as Sunderbans, and was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1997.**

Birsa Munda:



Birsa Munda (1875 – 1900) was a tribal freedom fighter who belonged to the Munda tribe. He is also known as “Dharti Abba”, meaning “The Earth Father”. He was the backbone of the Millenarian Movement that arose in the Jharkhand and Bihar belt in the late 19th century, during the British Raj.

The revolt mainly concentrated in the Munda belt of Khunti, Tamar, Sarwada and Bandgaon. His slogan threatening the

British Raj—Abua raj seter jana, maharani raj tundu jana (“Let the kingdom of the queen be ended and our kingdom be established”)—is remembered even today.

Munda banned forced labour and won legal protection of land rights. He led a movement called “Ulgulan” meaning “resistance by Adivasis” against the Britishers for capturing their lands and forests. The Ulgulan movement is also called the Great Tumult.

His struggle was a huge success as it led to the passing of Chotanagpur Tenancy Act in 1908. The act limited the powers of passing on of lands from the tribal groups to the non-tribal. He died in British custody at a young age of 25 years. His portrait hangs in the Indian Parliament Museum. He is the only tribal leader to have been so honoured.

Every year, the birth anniversary of Birsa Munda is observed on November 15. The state of Jharkhand was created on his birth anniversary in 2000. In order to commemorate his sacrifices and contributions towards the National movement, therefore, Jharkhand celebrates its Statehood Day this day.

Recently, Jharkhand celebrated its 17th Statehood day on 15th of November 2020. Jharkhand was founded by the Bihar Reorganisation Act on 15 November 2000 as the 28th State of India.

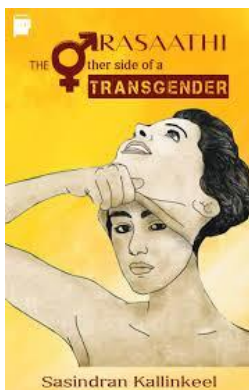
Books and Authors:

Majhi Bhint:



The Governor of Maharashtra Shri Bhagat Singh Koshiyari recently 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.

Rasaathi:



It is the name of a novel penned by Ex-SPG officer Sasindran Kallinkeel. The main character of Rasaathi "The Other Side of a Transgender" novel, 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 recognize their pathetic and horrible life. The novel has been published by BookMitra.

Sasindran Kallinkeel: He was with the Central Reserve Police (CRP) for 23 years and had a seven-year stint with the Special Protection Group (Prime Minister's Security) as a senior security officer when Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Manmohan Singh were in office.

Diwali:



Diwali is a festival of lights and one of the major festivals celebrated mainly by Hindus, Jains and Sikhs. The festival usually lasts five days. It is celebrated during the Hindu Lunisolar month Kartika which falls between mid-October and mid-November. Diwali symbolizes the spiritual "victory of light over darkness, good over evil, and knowledge over ignorance"

The festival is widely associated with Lakshmi, goddess of prosperity, with many other regional traditions connecting the holiday to Sita and Rama, Vishnu, Krishna, Yama, Yami, Durga, Kali, Hanuman, Ganesha, Kubera, Dhanvantari, or Vishvakarman. Furthermore, it is, in some regions, a celebration of the day Lord Rama returned to his kingdom Ayodhya with his wife Sita and his brother Lakshmana after defeating Ravana in Lanka and serving 14 years of exile.

The five-day long festival originated in the Indian subcontinent and is mentioned in

early Sanskrit texts. Diwali is usually celebrated twenty days after the Dashera (Dasara, Dasain) festival.

The first day of the festival is celebrated as Dhanteras. The second day is Naraka Chaturdashi. The third day is the day of Lakshmi Puja and the darkest night of the traditional month. In some parts of India, the day after Lakshmi Puja is marked with the Govardhan Puja and Balipratipada (Padwa). Some Hindu communities mark the last day as Bhai Dooj or the regional equivalent, which is dedicated to the bond between sister and brother, while other Hindu and Sikh craftsmen communities mark this day as Vishwakarma Puja and observe it by performing maintenance in their work spaces and offering prayers.

The festival also marks the beginning of a new financial year. It also marks the beginning of winter and the start of a new sowing season.

Some other faiths in India as well as other countries also celebrate their respective festivals alongside Diwali.

The Jains observe their own Diwali which marks the final liberation of Mahavira,

The Sikhs celebrate Bandi Chhor Divas to mark the release of Guru Hargobind from a Mughal Empire prison. The foundation of the Golden Temple was laid on Diwali day.

The Newar Buddhists, unlike other Buddhists, celebrate Diwali by worshipping Lakshmi.

In Nepal, Diwali is known as Tihar or Swanti.

The Hindus of Eastern India and Bangladesh generally celebrate Diwali, by worshipping Goddess Kali.

In Thailand, Diwali is celebrated by lighting lamps which are made up of banana leaves. The festival is known as Lam Kriyongh.

The main day of the festival of Diwali (the day of Lakshmi puja) is an official holiday in Fiji, Guyana, India, Malaysia (except Sarawak), Mauritius, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

Statue of Peace:



It is a statue named 'Statue of Peace' unveiled by Prime Minister of India Sri Narendra Modi recently in the honour of the Jain acharya in the honour of the Jain acharya.

The 151 inch tall statue made from Ashtadhatu i.e. 8 metals, with Copper being the major constituent, is installed at Vijay Vallabh Sadhana Kendra, Jetpura, in Pali, Rajasthan to mark the 151st Birth Anniversary celebrations of Jainacharya Shree Vijay Vallabh Surishwer Ji Maharaj.

Note: Shree Vijay Vallabh Surishwer Ji Maharaj (1870-1954) led an austere life as a Jain Saint working selflessly and dedicatedly to spread the message of Lord Mahavira.

He also worked relentlessly for the welfare of masses, the spread of education, eradication of social evils, wrote inspiring literature (poetry, essays, devotional hymns and Stavans) and gave active support to the freedom movement and the cause of Swadeshi.

Chhath Puja:



Chhath is an ancient Hindu Vedic festival historically native to the Indian subcontinent, more specifically, the Indian states of Bihar, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh and the Madhesh region of Nepal. It is celebrated on Kartik Shukla Shashthi by Biharis and Nepalese. This festival is celebrated after 6 days of Diwali.

The festival does not involve idolatry and is dedicated to worship the Chhathi Maiya (Shashthi Mata) and sun God Surya along with his wives Usha and Pratyusha the Vedic Goddess of Dawn and Dusk respectively. This folk festival is observed in order to thank them for bestowing the bounties of life on earth and to request the granting of certain wishes.

It is believed that the main sources of Sun's powers are his wife Usha and Pratyusha. In Chhath, there is combined worship of both the powers along with the Sun.

In the morning, worship of the first ray (Usha) of the Sun and the last ray (Pratyusha) of the Sun in the evening are offered to both of them. They include holy bathing, fasting and abstaining from drinking water, standing in water for long periods of time, and offering prasada and arghya to the setting and rising sun. Some devotees also perform a prostration march as they head for the river banks.

The rigorous rituals are observed over a period of four days. They are:

1. Nahail Khail: This is the first day of Chhath Puja. This means that after bathing, the house is cleaned and food after keeping it in front of the God is eaten to protect the mind from the vengeful tendency.
2. Kharna: This is the second day of Chhath Puja. Kharna means the fast of the whole day. On this day, the devotees are not allowed to drink even a single drop of water. In the evening, they can eat gur ki kheer (jaggery kheer), fruits and chapati (Bread) full of ghee.
3. Sandhya Arghya: This is the third day of Chhath puja. On this day an arghya is offered to the sun god during the Kartik Shukla Shashthi. In the evening, a bamboo basket is decorated with fruits, thekua and rice laddus, after which devotees offer an arghya to the sun with their families. At the time of Arghya, water and milk is offered to Sun God and the Chhathi Maiya is worshiped from a soop filled with prasada. After the worship of Sun God, Shashthi Devi songs are sung in the night and the vrat katha is heard.
4. Usha Arghya: This is the fourth and the last day of the puja. On this day, in the morning, an arghya is offered to the Sun God. On this day, before sunrise, the devotees have to go to the riverbank to offer an arghya to the rising sun. After this, the protection of the child from Chhathi maiya and the happiness of the entire family is sought for peace. After worship, devotees drink sharbat and raw milk, and eat a little prasada in order to break one's fast which is called Paran or Parana.

Aditya Vikram Birla Kalashikhar Puraskar:



The Aditya Vikram Birla Kalashikhar and Kalakiran Puraskar awards, were instituted in 1996 by the Sangeet Kala Kendra (SKK). It was founded in 1973 by Aditya Vikram Birla (former Chairman of Aditya Birla Group), to honor excellence in theatre and performing arts.

Recently, veteran actor Naseeruddin Shah was 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 Kalakiran Puraskars.

The central theme for 2020 awards is “Theatre.”

Shaheedi Divas:



The Day is observed as the Martyrdom Day of Guru Tegh Bahadur every year on the 24th of November. It was on 24th November in 1675, Guru Tegh Bahadur sacrificed his life to protect religion, human values, ideals and principles.

He was the ninth Guru of Sikhs and he is called “Hind di Chaadar” which means 'Shield of India' with love and respect. He is regarded as the most selfless martyr of the country.

Recently, President Ram Nath Kovind paid tribute to Guru Teg Bahadur on his Martyrdom Day.

In a message, Mr Kovind said, Guru Tegh Bahadur made supreme sacrifice to protect the faith, belief and rights of the people. He said that his sacrifice inspires all of us to unite for the true service of humanity and his teachings and his work will continue to spread the spirit of love and patriotism among all of us.

History: Guru Tegh Bahadur was born in Amritsar in 1621. He was also the youngest son of Guru Hargobind.

He was beheaded publicly in 1675 by Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb in Delhi's Chandni Chowk. Aurangzeb wanted to convert India into an Islamic country and forced Hindus to convert to Islam, or else be ready for execution. To save their lives, a delegation of 500 Kashmiri Pundits went to meet the Sikh Guru at Anandpur Sahib and sought his help.

Guru Tegh Bahadur asked the Kashmiri Pundits to tell Aurangzeb that if he can convert him into Islam, everybody will follow the suit.

When Aurangzeb got to know about the challenge, he arrested Guru Tegh Bahadur. When Guru Tegh Bahadur refused to accept Islam, he and his followers were tortured brutally for five days. The Mughal ruler even burnt Guru Tegh Bahadur's followers alive in front of him, however, Guruji refused to bow down to Aurangzeb. When Aurangzeb

could not bring Guruji to submission, he beheaded him in broad daylight at the Chandni Chowk.

Gurudwara Sis Ganj Sahib and Gurudwara Rakab Ganj Sahib mark the places of cremation and execution of his body.

Sir Chhotu Ram:



Sir Chhotu Ram (1881 – 1945) was a prominent politician in British India's Punjab Province. His birthname was Ram Richpal and was popularly known as Deen Bandhu (in Urdu as Rahbare Azam, which translates as messiah of the poor).

He belonged to the Jat community and championed the interest of oppressed communities of the Indian subcontinent. For this feat, he was knighted in 1937.

On the political front, he was a co-founder of the National Unionist Party which ruled the United Punjab Province in pre-independent India and kept Congress and Muslim League at bay.

Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid tribute to prominent leader Sir Chhotu Ram on his birth anniversary i.e. the 24 November 1881.

Lachit Borphukan:



Lachit Borphukan (1622 – 1672) was a commander and Borphukan (Phu-Kon-Lung) in the Ahom kingdom, located in present-day Assam. He is known for his leadership in the 1671 Battle of Saraighat that thwarted a drawn-out attempt by Mughal forces under the command of Ramsingh I to take over Ahom kingdom.

On November 24th, to commemorate the heroism of Lachit Borphukan and the victory of the Assamese army at the Battle of Saraighat, every year Lachit Divas (Lachit Day) is celebrated.

The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has paid tribute to Lachit Borphukan on Lachit Diwas is celebrated state-wide in Assam.

The best passing out cadet of National Defence Academy is conferred the Lachit Borphukan gold medal every year from 1999.

Lok Virasat:



It is a festival of films on folk art and painting organized by the Films Division (FD).

As part of 'art-outreach' initiative, FD has been presenting select package of films on

Indian art and heritage as curated online festivals during the last few months.

An exclusive bouquet of documentary films on folk art and paintings - Lok Virsat - is being showcased, between November 27-29, 2020 on FD website and You Tube channel.

The films being streamed include:

- The Kingdom of God: It is a film on the great Indian heritage of art and culture with focus on various folk art traditions.
- Naman – Khele: A film on the ancient folk art performed in Ratnagiri, Maharashtra.
- Bhavai – Fading Memories: A film on Bhavai which is a folk art of Gujarat.
- Sahi Jata – The Fusion Cult: A film on the unique fusion of music and art in the form of folk art on the back-drop of the ancient Orissa town of Puri.
- Therukoothu – Dancing For Life: A film depicting the age old Tamil folk art.

Defence

Enhanced PINAKA Rocket:



The enhanced version of Pinaka multi-barrel rocket system (MRLS) was

successfully flight tested by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). The test-flight was carried out from Integrated Test Range (ITR) in Chandipur, off the coast of Odisha.

This enhanced version of the Pinaka rocket would replace the existing Pinaka Mk-I rockets. The new variant can hit a target 45 to 60 km away while Mk-I had a range of 40 km.

The enhanced Pinaka along with guidance Pinaka will cover the range between 60 to 90 kilometres and will be deployed by the Indian Army.

It has been indigenously developed by DRDO. The design and development has been carried out by Pune based DRDO laboratories, namely Armament Research and Development Establishment, ARDE and High Energy Materials Research Laboratory, HEMRL.

Malabar Naval Exercise:



It is a four-day-long phase first of the Malabar naval exercise. The Navies of India, the US, Japan and Australia took part in the exercise which began on the 3rd of November 2020 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 was the 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) participated along with Indian Navy units.

In first phase of the exercise, navies witnessed complex and advanced naval drills like anti-submarine and anti-air warfare operations, cross deck flying, seamanship evolutions and weapon firings.

Phase-II is scheduled to be held from November 17 to 20 in the Arabian sea.

This is the first time that the member nations of the Quad or Quadrilateral Coalition is participating in the exercise together after 2007 (Quad member nations are India, the US, Japan and Australia).

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 2015.

Indian Navy:



The Indian Navy is the naval branch of the Indian Armed Forces. The President of India is the Supreme Commander of the Indian Navy. The Chief of Naval Staff, a four-star admiral, commands the navy. It was founded in 5 September 1612. The current Chief of Navy Staff (CNS) is Karambir singh.

Recently, the fifth Scorpene submarine "Vagir" was launched by the Indian Navy at Mazagoan Dock of South Mumbai. The submarine is capable of taking missions such as anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface warfare, mine laying, intelligence gathering and area surveillance.

Vagir: Vagir an Indian Naval Ship (INS) which is the sixth among the six Kalvari-class submarines that is being constructed by the public sector shipbuilder Mazagon Dock Ltd (MDL) in Mumbai. The six submarines were built under Project-75 of Indian Navy. These submarines were designed by French Navy and an energy company DCNS. The six submarines were built under Project-75 of Indian Navy. The submarine has been named after a Sand Fish which is a deep sea predator in the Indian Ocean.

Project 75: The main aim of Project 75 is to build six Scorpene Class attack submarines.

The first Vagir which was from Russia was commissioned in 1973.

The other vessels in the class are INS Kalvari, INS Khanderi, INS Karanj, INS Vela and INS Vagsheer.

Out of these Kalvari and Khanderi have been commissioned in 2017 and 2019, Vela and Karanj and undergoing sea trials, Vagir has now been launched and the sixth Scorpene submarine 'Vagsheer' is expected to be launched in the coming years.

Scorpene Class Submarine: Scorpene Class Submarine is a diesel-electric attack submarine that was jointly developed by French Direction des Constructions Navales (DCNS) and Spanish Navantia.

The most important feature of these submarines is that they have an additional air-independent propulsion.

Air-Independent Propulsion: Air-Independent Propulsion is a marine propulsion technology that allows non-nuclear submarine to operate without accessing surface oxygen (or atmospheric oxygen).

Submarines in Indian Navy:

The Nuclear-powered submarines that are currently active in service In Indian Navy are - Arihant-class (nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines) and Chakra Class (nuclear-powered attack submarine).

The Diesel Electric submarines that are currently active in service are - Shishumar class (diesel-electric attack submarines), Kalvari class (diesel-electric attack submarines) and Sindhughosh class (Kilo-class diesel-electric submarines).

Anti Satellite (A-SAT) Missile:



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh unveiled a model of the anti-satellite missile system at the headquarters of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in New Delhi. The missile system is seen as a symbol of national technological advancement.

On March 27, 2019, in a historic achievement, DRDO had on successfully conducted India's first Anti-Satellite (A-SAT) missile test "Mission Shakti" from Dr

APJ Abdul Kalam Island in Odisha. The A-SAT missile successfully engaged with the target, an Indian orbiting satellite, in the Lower Earth Orbit (LEO) in a "Hit to Kill" mode.

This highly complex mission was conducted at extremely high speed with remarkable precision.

With Mission Shakti, India became the fourth nation in the world with the capability to defend its assets in outer space after Russia, USA and China to have ASAT power.

Microwave Weapons:



Microwave Weapons are those weapons that are supposed to be a type of direct energy weapons, which aim highly focused energy in the form of sonic, laser, or microwaves, at a target. These types of Weapons use beams of high-frequency electromagnetic radiation to heat the water in a human target's skin, causing pain and discomfort.

Recently, the Indian Army rejected a "baseless and fake" report which claimed that the Chinese army had used "microwave weapons" to drive Indian soldiers away from their positions in eastern Ladakh. The report was published in the British daily newspaper.

India and China have been locked in a tense standoff at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh for the last six months. Twenty Indian soldiers and an unknown number of

Chinese were killed in a fierce clash between the two armies in Galwan Valley on 15th June 2020.

A number of countries are thought to have developed these weapons to target both humans and electronic systems.

China was the first country to put on display of its “microwave weapon”, called Poly WB-1, at an air show in 2014. The United States has also developed a prototype microwave-style weapon, which it calls the “Active Denial System”.

Microve Ovens: In a microwave oven, an electron tube called a magnetron produces electromagnetic waves (microwaves) that bounce around the metal interior of the appliance, and are absorbed by the food. The microwaves agitate the water molecules in the food, and their vibration produces heat that cooks the food. Foods with a high water content cook faster in a microwave often than drier foods.

QRSAM:



The full form of QRSAM is Quick Reaction Surface to Air Missile. India recently test-fired the second flight test QRSAM system successfully. It was successfully conducted by Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) from the Integrated Test Range, Chandipur, off the coast of Odisha.

The system achieved a major milestone by a direct hit on to the high performance Jet

Unmanned Aerial Target called Banshee at medium range and medium altitude.

The first in the series test of QRSAM took place on 13th of this month. Indian forces have carried out at least seven tests earlier of the missile system. It is called canister-based system.

About QRSAM system: The QRSAM system has been developed by the DRDO in association with Bharat Electronics Limited and Bharat Dynamics Limited for the Indian Army.

QRSAM consists of an Active Array Battery Surveillance Radar, a launcher and an active Array Battery Multifunction Radar. The radars have 360-degree coverage with 'track on move' and 'search and move' capabilities.

The system is capable of detecting and tracking targets on the move and engaging target with short halts. It is designed to give air defence coverage against strike columns of the Indian Army.

Malabar Exercise:



The second phase of Exercise Malabar 2020 has recently been organised in the Northern Arabian Sea from 17th to 20th November 2020.

The first Phase of Exercise Malabar 2020 was conducted in the Bay of Bengal from 3rd to 6th November 2020. Exercise Malabar 2020 is the 24th edition of MALABAR.

The second phase witnessed joint operations, centered around the

Vikramaditya Carrier Battle Group of the Indian Navy and Nimitz Carrier Strike Group of the US Navy.

It included cross-deck flying operations and advanced air defence exercises, advanced surface and anti-submarine warfare exercises, seamanship evolutions and weapon firings to further enhance interoperability and synergy between the four friendly navies.

SITMEX-20:



It is the 2nd edition of India, Singapore and Thailand Trilateral Maritime Exercise conducted from 21st to 22nd November 2020 in Andaman Sea.

The Indian Navy deployed indigenous Anti-Submarine Warfare corvette INS Kamorta and missile corvette INS Karmuk for the exercise and Singapore deployed a 'Formidable' Class frigate 'Intrepid' and 'Endurance' Class Landing Ship Tank 'Endeavour' and the Royal Thai Navy deployed a 'Chao Phraya' Class frigate 'Kraburi' for the exercise.

The 2020 edition of the exercise was hosted by Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN).

SITMEX: The SITMEX series of exercises are conducted to enhance mutual inter-operability and imbibing best practices between IN, Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN) and Royal Thai Navy (RTN). The main objective of the exercise is also to 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 September 2019 off Port Blair.

SIMBEX:



The SIMBEX series of exercises between Indian Navy and Republic of Singapore Navy are being conducted annually since 1994. These exercises are aimed at enhancing mutual inter-operability and imbibing best practices from each other.

Indian Navy is scheduled to host The 27th edition of India - Singapore Bilateral Maritime Exercise SIMBEX-20 is scheduled to be hosted by the Indian Navy from November 23 in Andaman Sea. It will continue till 25th of this month.

The 2020 edition of SIMBEX will witness participation by Indian Navy ships including destroyer Rana with integral Chetak helicopter and indigenously built corvettes Kamorta and Karmuk.

Varunastra:



Varunastra is a ship-launched, heavyweight, electrically-propelled anti-submarine

torpedo. It is capable of targeting quiet submarines, both in deep and shallow waters in an intense countermeasures environment. It is powered by an electric propulsion system with multiple 250 Kilowatts Silver Oxide Zinc (AgOZn) batteries.

The first Production unit of Heavy Weight Torpedo (HWT), Varunastra was recently flagged off by the Defence Research and Development (DRDO) Chairman G Satheesh Reddy.

In a major boost to Atma Nirbhar Bharat, the Varunastra has been designed and developed by Naval Science & Technological Laboratory (NSTL) of DRDO while Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL), Vishakhapatnam has manufactured the torpedo for the Indian Navy.

This anti-submarine torpedo weighing more than one ton can carry a warhead of up to 250 kg. This indigenous torpedo will equip Indian warships and Indus class submarines. The torpedo can be launched both from Ship and Submarine.

It was inducted by Indian Navy in 2016 and is named after a legendary weapon created by the Hindu God of the Oceans-- Varunastra.

BDL: It refers to the Bharat Dynamics Limited. BDL is an enterprise of Government of India under the Ministry of Defence. It is the Lead Integrator for the Akash Weapon System of Indian army. It was founded in 1970 as a manufacturing base for guided missiles and allied defence equipment. It is headquartered in Hyderabad, Telangana, India. It is associated with DRDO for various missile programmes and is the production agency for Quick Reaction Surface to Air Missile

(QRSAM), for which, trials were conducted successfully. It is also the production agency for Astra Air- to- Air Missile System which is indigenously developed by the DRDO for the Indian Air Force (IAF). The current Chairman and Managing Director of BDL is Siddharth Mishra.

Lt Gen Harpal Singh:



He has appointed new Engineer-in-Chief of Indian Army. He is presently the Director-General of Border Roads Organization and would take over his new appointment on 1 December.

Lt Gen Harpal Singh is an alumnus of National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla. He 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. He 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 Organization (BRO).

BRO: It refers to the Border Roads Organization. In order to ensure coordination and expeditious execution of projects, the Government of India (GoI) set up the Border Roads Development Board (BRDB) with the Prime Minister as

Chairman of the Board and Defence Minister as Deputy Chairman. The BRO was formed on 7 May 1960 to secure India's borders and develop infrastructure in remote areas of the north and north-east states of the country. It is responsible for the construction and maintenance of roads along the borders with China and Pakistan. It develops and maintains road networks in India's border areas and friendly neighboring countries. BRO has been entirely brought under the Ministry of Defence.

Economics

NPCI:



It refers to the National Payment Corporation of India. NPCI is an umbrella organization for all retail payments in India. It was founded in 2008. It has been incorporated as a Not for Profit Company under the provisions of Section 25 of Companies Act 1956 (now Section 8 of Companies Act 2013). It is an initiative of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Indian Banks Association (IBA) under the provisions of the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007 for creating a robust Payment & Settlement Infrastructure in India. It is headquartered in Mumbai,

Maharashtra. The current MD & CEO is Dilip Asbe.

Recently, NCPI which manages Unified Payment Interface (UPI), has approved the Facebook backed messaging service WhatsApp to go live on UPI in the multi-bank model. This is to be achieved through new feature of WhatsApp called "WhatsApp Pay".

WhatsApp, in order to achieve this, has partnered with five banks namely ICICI Bank, Axis Bank, Indian Bank, HDFC Bank, and State Bank of India. Apart from these five banks, Jio Payment Bank has also been included.

The messaging app is just a platform that will help transfer the money to other people. The payment feature is being powered by UPI. Now, anyone can send money on WhatsApp to any other user using the UPI supported application.

IREDA:



It refers to the Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited. IREDA was set up in 1987 and is the leading financial institution dedicated to clean energy expansion in India. It is a non-banking financial institution.

Recently, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by IREDA with the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), Government of India (GoI). The

MoU was signed for for setting key targets for the year 2020-21.

The MoU was signed by Indu Shekhar Chaturvedi, Secretary, MNRE and Pradip Kumar Das, CMD, IREDA

Under this MoU, the GoI has set a new revenue target of Rs 2,406 crore from the renewable energy industry.

IREDA, until now, has financed more than 2700 renewable energy projects in India by offering a loan of Rs 57,000 crores. It has also supported green power capacity addition of 17,259 MW in India.

MNRE: It is an acronym for the Ministry of Power & Ministry of New and Renewable Energy. MNRE is the nodal Ministry of the Government of India in New Delhi, for all matters relating to new and renewable energy. The ministry was established as the Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources in 1992. It started functioning independently with effect from 2nd July, 1992. Earlier it was known as the Ministry of Energy sources. Electricity is a concurrent subject at Entry 38 in List III of the seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India. It is mainly responsible for research and development, intellectual property protection, and international cooperation, promotion, and coordination in renewable energy sources such as wind power, small hydro, biogas, and solar power. The current Minister of MNRE R. K. Singh, a Minister of State (Independent Charge).

PLI Scheme:



It refers to the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme. The Union Cabinet chaired By Prime Minister Narendra Modi, recently, gave its approval to introduce the PLI Scheme. The approval comes with an aim to enhance India's Manufacturing Capabilities and enhance Exports under Atmanirbhar Bharat. The PLI scheme will be implemented by the concerned Union Ministries/Departments.

This scheme was approved in the following 10 key sectors for Enhancing India's Manufacturing Capabilities and Enhancing Exports.

- Sectors (and Implementing Ministry/Department):
- Pharmaceuticals drugs: Department of Pharmaceuticals
- Telecom & Networking Products: Department of Telecom
- Advance Chemistry Cell (ACC) Battery: NITI Aayog and Department of Heavy Industries.
- Electronic/Technology Products: Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
- Automobiles & Auto Components: Department of Heavy Industries.
- Textile Products (MMF segment and technical textiles): Ministry of Textiles
- Food Products: Ministry of Food Processing Industries.

- High Efficiency Solar PV Modules: Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.
- White Goods (ACs & LED): Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade.
- Specialty Steel: Ministry of Steel.

Note: The above will be in addition to the already notified PLI schemes in the following sectors:

Notified PLI schemes are already available in the following sectors:

- Mobile Manufacturing and Specified Electronic Components: MEITY.
- Critical Key Starting materials/Drug Intermediaries and Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients: Department of Pharmaceuticals.
- Manufacturing of Medical Devices: Department of Pharmaceuticals

IFSCA:



It refers to the International Financial Services Centres Authority. IFSCA recently approved the International Financial Services Centres Authority (Banking) Regulations, 2020. It was approved in a meeting conducted on 11th November 2020 in New Delhi.

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.

The salient aspects of the Banking Regulations include:

- Laying down the requirements for setting up IFSC Banking Units (IBUs)
- Permitting persons resident outside India (having net worth not less than USD 1 Million) to open foreign currency accounts in any freely convertible currency at IFSC Banking Units (IBUs)
- Permitting persons resident in India (having net worth not less than USD 1 Million) to open foreign currency accounts in any freely convertible currency at IBUs to undertake any transaction under the Liberalized Remittance Scheme (LRS) of the Reserve Bank of India.
- Laying down the permissible activities of IBUs including credit enhancement, credit insurance, and sale, purchase of portfolios, engage in factoring and forfaiting of export receivables and undertake equipment leasing, including aircraft leasing
- Permitting the Authority to determine business that a Banking Unit may be permitted to conduct in INR with person's resident in India and person's resident outside India, subject to settlement of the financial transaction in relation to such business in freely convertible foreign currency.

The above mentioned regulations will be notified by the Government of India in due course.

About IFSCA: The full form of IFSCA is International Financial Services Centres Authority. IFSCA is a body that was launched by the Government of India (GoI) to modulate all financial services in International Financial Services Centres (IFSCs). It has been founded on 27th April 2020 under the International financial services Center Authority Act, 2019. It is headquartered at GIFT City in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

The authority modulates financial products like deposits, financial services, securities and financial institutions approved by regulators like RBI and SEBI.

IBBI:



It refers to the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India. The IBBI has recently amended its regulations to fasten liquidation process. It has made changes to certain regulations pertaining to liquidation process, information utilities and resolution process for corporates.

As per the amendment, the new regulations allows a corporate debtor's asset that is "not readily realisable" to be transferred to a third party.

The meaning of 'Not readily realisable asset' means that any asset included in the liquidation estate which could not be sold through available options. It can include contingent or disputed assets, and assets underlying proceedings for preferential,

undervalued, extortionate credit and fraudulent transactions.

The IBBI has said that in order to ensure quick liquidation of companies which are unable to find bidders under IBC, the liquidator can "assign or transfer a not readily realisable asset" to any person. The said transfer or assignment of the asset must be done in consultation with the stakeholders committee.

For financial creditors seeking to initiate insolvency proceedings against a corporate debtor, the IBBI has specified two other 'record or evidence of default'.

'Record or evidence of default' are certified copy of entries in the relevant account in the bankers' book' and 'order of a court or tribunal that has adjudicated upon the non-payment of a debt'.

About IBBI: IBBI is the regulator for overseeing insolvency proceedings and entities like Insolvency Professional Agencies (IPA), Insolvency Professionals (IP) and Information Utilities (IU) in India. It was established on 1 October 2016. It was given statutory powers through the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, which was passed by Lok Sabha on 5 May 2016. It covers Individuals, Companies, Limited Liability Partnerships and Partnership firms. The new code aims to speed up the resolution process for stressed assets in the country. It attempts to simplify the process of insolvency and bankruptcy proceedings. It also handles the cases using two tribunals like NCLT (National company law tribunal) and Debt recovery tribunal. It consists of 10 members, including representatives from the Ministries of Finance, Law and corporate affairs, and the Reserve Bank of

India. The current Chairperson of the IBBI is Dr. M. S. Sahoo.

RBI:



It refers to the Reserve Bank of India. The RBI is India's central bank, which controls the issue and supply of the Indian rupee. It carries out India's monetary policy and exercises supervision and control over banks and non-banking finance companies in India. RBI was set up in 1935 under the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934. It is headquartered in Mumbai. RBI plays an important part in the Development Strategy of the Government of India. The current Governor of RBI is Shaktikanta Das.

Recently, the RBI imposed a moratorium on Chennai-based Lakshmi Vilas Bank (LVB) for a one month. RBI has put a restriction of Rs 25,000 on withdrawals from the bank.

RBI has put LVB under moratorium because it had undergone a steady decline in the last 3 years. It has not only been experiencing continuous withdrawal of deposits and very low levels of liquidity but it also failed to raise adequate capital to address its issues.

Lakshmi Vilas Bank has also drafted a RBI scheme for the merger of the bank. Under the ban merger scheme, the Bank is to be amalgamated with the DBS Bank Limited (Singapore). The central bank seeks to complete this merger process before the moratorium period ends.

The proposed scheme of amalgamation is under the special powers of the Government

of India and RBI under Section 45 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

RBIH:



It refers to the Reserve Bank Innovation Hub. The RBIH has recently been created by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) with the objective 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.

This innovative hub would be managed by a Governing Council (GC) consisting of 10 members (including a chairperson). Kris Gopalakrishnan has been appointed as the first Chairperson of the RBIH.

Kris Gopalakrishnan: Senapathy Gopalakrishnan, popularly known as Kris Gopalakrishnan, is Chairman of Axilor Ventures, a company supporting and funding startups, was former executive vice chairman (former co-chairman) of Infosys, a global consulting and IT services company based in India. He is also one of its seven founders.

DIPAM:



It is the abbreviation for Department of Investment and Public Asset Management. DIPAM was earlier, the Department of Disinvestment which was set up as a separate Department on 10th December, 1999 and was later renamed as Ministry of Disinvestment from 6th September, 2001. The Department of Disinvestment became one of the Departments under the Ministry of Finance from 27th May 2004. Then again on 14th April 2016, the Department of Disinvestment was renamed as Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM). DIPAM mainly handles the Indian government's disinvestment programme.

Recently, DIPAM signed an agreement with World Bank (WB) for advising on asset monetization.

As per the agreement, World Bank advisory project, approved by the Finance Minister is to provide advisory services to DIPAM for asset monetization in India. It aims not only at benchmarking its institutional and business models against international best practices but also supporting the development of operational guidelines and capacity building for their implementation.

The department is to facilitate monetization of non-core assets of government such as the Central public sector enterprises (CPSEs) under strategic disinvestment or closure and enemy property of value of INR

100 crores and above. DIPAM has a framework for monetizing non-core assets.

It is expected that this project would facilitate and accelerate the non-core asset monetization process and help unlock the value of these un-used/ marginally used assets which has the potential to substantially augment financial resources for further investments and growth.

World Bank: The World Bank is an international financial institution that provides loans and grants to the governments of poorer countries for the purpose of pursuing capital projects. It comprises two institutions which are the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the International Development Association. It is headquartered in Washington, D.C., United States. It was founded on July 1944 by John Maynard Keynes and Harry Dexter White. The current President of World Bank is David Malpass.

UDIN:



It refers to Unique Document Identification Number. UDIN is a unique number given to documents attested by Chartered Accountants in Practice. It is an 18 digits system generated unique number which shall generated separately for each document.

Recently, the Finance Ministry said that CBDT (Central Board of Direct Taxes) will validate Unique Document Identification

Number (UDIN) generated from ICAI portal at the time of upload of Tax Audit Reports.

Earlier, the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI), in its gazette notification dated 2nd August, 2019, had made generation of UDIN from ICAI website mandatory for every kind of certificate/tax audit report and other attests made by their members as required by various regulators.

This was introduced to curb fake certifications by non-CAs misrepresenting themselves as Chartered Accountants.

PMJJBY:



It refers to Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana. The PMJJBY is a low-cost insurance scheme recently launched by India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) in partnership with PNB MetLife India Insurance Company Limited.

The PMJJBY offers protection and financial security to the underprivileged and poor who are living in unbanked and remote areas of the country, in the unforeseen and unfortunate event of the loss of a family member who is primarily the breadwinner.

- Anyone who has a savings account with IPPB.
- Minimum age 18 years and a maximum age 50 years
- The insurance scheme is for anyone who is having a saving account in IPPB.

- It offers maximum coverage of Rs 2 lakhs. The annual premium amount for this scheme is Rs 330.

IPPB: It is the abbreviation for India Post Payments Bank. The IPPB was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2018. It is headquartered in New Delhi. The Tagline of IPPB is Aapka Bank, Aapke Dwar. The current Managing Director & CEO of IPPB is J Venkatramu.

SDGs Investor Map:



- It refers to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Investor Map launched by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) India and Invest India. It has laid out 18 Investment Opportunities Areas (IOAs) in six critical SDG (Sustainable Development Goals) enabling sectors that can help India push its Sustainable Development efforts.

Highlights:

This initiative which is an instrumental stride in India's development trajectory has been developed six SDG enabling sectors such as:

1. Financial sector
2. Education sector
3. Healthcare sector
4. Agriculture sector
5. Allied activities sector,
6. Renewable energy and alternative and sustainable environment sector

Among the identified 18 investment opportunities areas (IOAs), 10 out of them are identified Investment Opportunity Areas (IOAs) and have strong venture capital activity and private equity. The remaining 8 IOAs are emerging opportunities, which have received attention from early-stage investors.

Investor Map comes at a critical time for India, as the SDG financing gap in India has only widened further with the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic. This data-backed research and insights will provide a better understanding as to how the SDG financing gap can be reduced in India.

The map which is crucial to 'Building Back Better' will help private and public sector stake-holders direct capital towards IOAs, and White Spaces (Areas of Potential) that can contribute to the sustainable development needs of the country by making the economy and societies more resilient and sustainable.

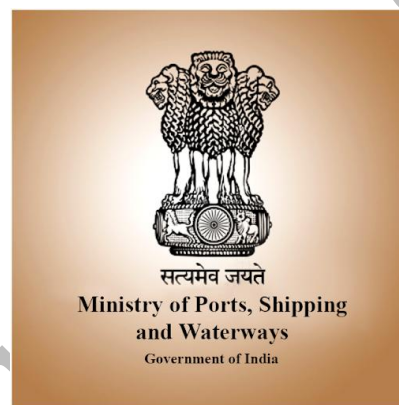
SDGs: It refers to the sustainable development goals. SDGs also known as the Global Goals, were adopted by all United Nations (UN) Member States in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030. It was launched in order to address the urgent political, environment and economic challenges faced by the world.

UNDP: It is the acronym for United Nations Development Programme. UNDP was founded on 22 November 1965. It is headquartered in New York, USA. It promotes technical and investment cooperation among nations and advocates for change and connects countries to knowledge, experience and resources to

help people build a better life for themselves. The current head of UNDP is Achim Steiner.

Invest India: It is a non-profit venture under the Department of Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry. It was founded in 2006 and is headquartered in New Delhi. The current MD & CEO is Deepak Bagla.

Merchant Shipping Bill, 2020:



The Government of India (GoI) has recently issued a draft of the Merchant Shipping Bill, 2020 for public consultation.

It has been issued by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways with an aim to repeal and replace the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 and the Coasting Vessels Act, 1838.

The main objective of drafting the Merchant Shipping Bill, 2020 is promoting the growth of the Indian shipping industry by incorporating the best practices adopted by other advanced countries like the United States, United Kingdom, Japan, Singapore and Australia.

Adequate provisions are incorporated to ensure the safety and security of vessels, safety of life at sea, prevent marine pollution, provide for maritime liabilities and compensations, and ensure comprehensive adoption of India's

obligations under International Conventions, promote ease of doing business.

Environment

NGP:



It refers to the Namami Gange Project. The NGP is an Integrated Conservation Mission, approved as 'Flagship Programme' by the Union Government in June 2014 with budget outlay of Rs. 20,000 Crore. Its primary twin objectives is to accomplish the effective abatement of pollution, conservation and rejuvenation of National River Ganga.

The programme is being implemented by National Mission on Clean Ganga (NMGC) along with its State Programme Management Groups (SPMGs). It is being operated under the Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Ministry of Jal Shakti.

The main pillars of the programme are - Sewage Treatment Infrastructure & Industrial Effluent Monitoring, River-Front Development & River-Surface Cleaning, Bio-Diversity & Afforestation and Public Awareness.

Recently, Chacha Chaudhary, the iconic Indian superhero, whose brain works faster than a computer, has been selected as the

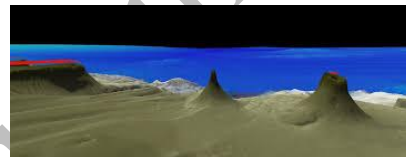
brand ambassador for the centrally-sponsored NamamiGangeProgramme.

This new 'Talking Comics' will be conceptualized and published by Diomand Toons which launches the comic books of Chacha Chaudhary.

Chacha Chaudhary's character will spread 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.

Great Barrier Reef:



The Great Barrier Reef is the world's largest coral reef system. The reef is located in the Coral Sea, off the coast of Queensland, Australia and can be seen from outer space. It is the world's biggest single structure made by living organisms. The structure is composed of and built by billions of tiny organisms, known as coral polyps. It supports a wide diversity of life. It was selected as a World Heritage Site in 1981. It was also labeled as one of the seven natural wonders of the world by CNN. It was named as a state icon of Queensland by the Queensland National Trust.

Recently, a massive detached reef has been discovered by the Australian Scientists from the Schmidt Ocean Institute. It is the first to be discovered in 12 decades. The reef is taller than the Empire State Building (1,224 ft (373.1 m)) of the United States of America and Eiffel Tower in Paris.

It was discovered while the team was conducting underwater mapping of the Great Barrier Reef Seafloor. They were on an exploration in the Falkor vessel around Australia.

The team used an underwater robot named SuBastian to explore the reef and the footage of the exploration was live streamed.

About the Reef: The "blade like" reef is nearly 500 metres tall and 1.5 kilometres wide. It lies 40 metres below the ocean surface and about 6kilometres from the edge of Great Barrier Reef. The newly discovered reef adds to the seven other tall detached reefs in the world making the total to eight detached reefs.

Detached reefs: A "detached" reef refers to a reef bedded to the ocean floor and not part of the main body of the Great Barrier Reef.

SuBastian: It is an underwater robot that is being deployed by the team in the newly discovered reef. The robot has a remotely controlled arm to collect samples for identification.

Panna National Reserve:



Panna National Park is located in Panna and Chhatarpur districts of Madhya Pradesh in India. Panna is spread over an area of 542.67 km square. In 1993, Panna National Park was declared as the 22nd Tiger reserve of India and 5th in Madhya Pradesh.

Recently, UNESCO has included Panna Biosphere region as one of its Biosphere Reserve. The Panna National Reserve was included under UNESCO's Man and Biosphere programme. The Park was included as biosphere reserve in the country by the Union Ministry of Environment and Forest on 25 August 2011.

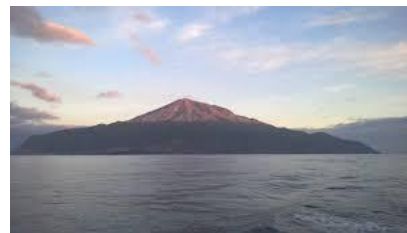
Biosphere Reserve: Biosphere reserves are areas of terrestrial and coastal or marine ecosystems or its amalgamation. The criterion for designation of Biosphere Reserve includes focus on the following three things:

1. Conservation of cultural diversity and biodiversity.
2. Economic development that is environmentally and socio-culturally sustainable.
3. Development through research, education, monitoring and training.

The biosphere reserve network was launched in 1971 by UNESCO, two years after the initiation of MAB- Man and the biosphere program.

The government of India has established 18 biospheres in the country (categories generally relating to IUCN Category V Protected areas).

Tristan da Cunha:



It is home to the world's most remote human settlement. It is inhabited by less than 300 humans is a small chain of islands

over 6,000 miles from London in the South Atlantic and the water around the islands are considered to be the richest in the world.

Tristan da Cunha which is a remote group of volcanic islands in the South Atlantic Ocean is a British Overseas Territory with its own constitution. It has recently been declared the largest fully protected marine reserves in the Atlantic Ocean at 687,000 square kilometres. This will close over 90 percent of their waters to harmful activities such as bottom-trawling fishing, sand extraction and deep-sea mining.

According to the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), which has been working with the local community and government of Tristan da Cunha, this mountainous archipelago is home to tens of millions of seabirds and several unique land birds that are comparable to the Galapagos island finches.

The island group is also home to the World Heritage Site of Gough and Inaccessible Islands, which is one of the most important seabird islands in the world. The waters around the island are the richest in the world.

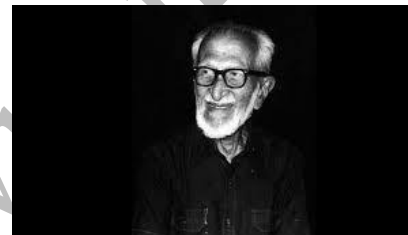
Significance of protection: After joining the UK's Blue Belt Programme, it will become the largest no-take zone in the Atlantic and the fourth largest on the planet. This means fishing, mining and any such activities will not be allowed. This will close over 90 percent of their waters to harmful activities such as bottom-trawling fishing, sand extraction and deep-sea mining.

Blue Belt Programme: The almost 700,000 square kilometres of the Marine Protection Zone (MPZ) is almost three times the size of the UK. It was launched in 2017. It includes British Antarctic Territories and British Indian

Ocean Territories as well. However, in accordance to Antarctic treaty, the claim over the region has been suspended. The Blue Belt Programme provides over 27 million pounds over a period of 5 years for marine conservation around the UK and will safeguard the future of Yellow-nosed albatrosses, sevengill sharks and rockhopper penguins.

Antarctic Treaty: The human activities in Antarctic are regulated by Antarctic Treaty that was signed in 1960. Around 54 countries signed the treaty. The treaty sets Antarctica as a scientific preserve and bans military activity in the continent.

Salim Ali:



Born in Mumbai on 12th November in 1896 in a Sulaimani Bohra family, Sálím Moizuddin Abdul Ali was a renowned ornithologist and naturalist. He is often referred to as the 'Birdman of India'.

Recently, the birth anniversary of this renowned ornithologist was observed on 12 November 2020.

He was the first Indian to conduct systematic bird surveys across India. He wrote several books that popularized ornithology in India. His research work is considered highly influential in the development of ornithology.

He later collaborated with the famous ornithologist S Dillon Ripley to write the extensive 10-volume Handbook of the Birds

of India and Pakistan, which took 10 years of research to complete.

He was a well-known environmental crusader who often stood for protecting the wildlife. He played a pivotal role in establishment of Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary (Keoladeo National Park) and prevented the destruction of what is now the Silent Valley National Park.

He was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1958 and the Padma Vibhushan in 1976. He received the Gold Medal of the British Ornithologists' Union in 1967. He was the first non-British citizen to receive the honour. He also received the John C Phillips memorial medal of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources. In 1973, the USSR Academy of Medical Sciences awarded him the Pavlovsky Centenary Memorial Medal.

The government of India (GoI) established the Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History at Coimbatore (SACON) in 1990.

Amur Falcons:



The Amur falcon is a small raptor of the falcon family. It gets its name from the tenth longest river of the world called the Amur River. The river forms border between China and Russia. It breeds in south-eastern Siberia and Northern China before migrating in large flocks across India and over the Arabian Sea to winter in Southern

Africa. These Siberian birds reach the North East for about two months at the onset of winter. After winter, they leave for South Africa. They traverse over 29,000 km migratory route between Siberia and South Africa.

Recently, the Government of Manipur issued order that hunting, sale and rearing of Amur Falcons are banned. People violating the order are liable to be punished under Manipur Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

Officials in Manipur have fixed satellite tags on some of the birds in order to monitor the migratory route of the Amur falcons.

A few lakh Amur falcons visit Manipur every year. They used to be one of the most hunted migratory birds visiting Manipur. Every year, they arrive in Northeastern states Manipur and Nagaland for roosting. Doyang Lake in Nagaland is also a stop over to the birds. Thus, Nagaland is known as the "Falcon Capital of the world".

Action Plan for Vulture Conservation, 2020-25:



The Action plan National Action Plan for Vulture Conservation, 2020-25 was recently launched by the Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) Prakash Javedkar.

The Action Plan was approved by NBWL (National Board for Wildlife) on 5th October 2020 for five States. Under this arrangement, there is an idea to set up

Vulture Conservation Breeding Centers in Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

Key highlights of the plan:

- The new plan has laid out strategies and actions to stem the decline in vulture population, especially of the three Gyps species. They are Oriental white-backed vulture (*Gyps bengalensis*), Slender-billed vulture (*Gyps tenuirostris*) and Long-billed vulture (*Gyps indicus*). These three vulture species were listed by IUCN, in 2000 as 'Critically Endangered', which is the highest category of endangerment.
- This would be done through both ex-situ and in-situ conservation.
- The plan suggests that new veterinary Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAID) should be tested on vultures before they are commercially released. NSAIDs often poisons cattle whose carcasses the birds prey on.
- The new plan automatically removes veterinary use of a drug if it is found to be toxic to vultures. This is to be done with the help of Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI).
- Under the plan, conservation breeding of red-Headed vultures and Egyptian vultures and the establishment of at least one vulture-safe zone in each state for the conservation of the remnant populations in that state.
- Four rescue centres have been proposed for Pinjore in north India, Bhopal in central India, Guwahati in upper east India Hyderabad in south India.

- A coordinated Nation-wide vulture counting is to be conducted by the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), Forest Department, Research Institute, NPO, etc. These countings are to be conducted at regular intervals. Currently, there are no dedicated rescue centres for treating vultures.
- A database on emerging threats to vulture conservation, including collision and electrocution, unintentional poisoning, etc.

The MoEFCC had released the Action Plan for Vulture Conservation 2006 and it seeks to extend the project to 2025 to prevent the decline as well as increase the numbers of vultures in India.

• **Vulture Multi-Species Action Plan:** The Vulture Multi-Species Action Plan (Vulture MsAP) was adopted at the Convention for the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS) held in 2017 which was held in Manila, Phillipines. The first strategy of the plan was launched at the Conservation of Migratory Species COP 13 held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat on 22nd February 2020.

The major objectives of the plan are as follows:

- To reduce mortality caused due to unintentional toxic substances
- To reduce mortality due to NSAID.
- To halt the trade of vulture parts
- To stop poisoning by poacher.

A National vulture Task Force (NVTF) is to be created in every member country. This NVTF shall help the respective governments to address the threats to vultures in their respective countries.

The Vulture conservation programme is a part of the UNEP and every member country is expected to create a National vulture Task Force. Each of the member countries have to create the report of success of the project in 2029.

Need for conservation of Vultures: Vultures are known as nature's cleanup crew, do the dirty work of cleaning up after death, helping to keep ecosystems healthy as they act as natural carcass recyclers. The scavenging lifestyle that gives them a bad reputation is, in fact, that makes them so important for the environment, nature and society. They play a crucial role in the environments in which they live.

NBWL : It refers to the National Board for Wildlife. NBWL is a "Statutory Organization" constituted under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972. It was constituted in 2003. The board is advisory in nature and advises the Central Government on framing policies and measures for conservation of wildlife in the country. It is a very important body because it serves as apex body to review all wildlife-related matters and approve projects in and around national parks and sanctuaries. No alternation of boundaries in national parks and wildlife sanctuaries can be done without approval of the NBWL.

The NBWL is chaired by the Prime Minister and is responsible for promotion of conservation and development of wildlife and forests. The standing committee of NBWL is chaired by the Minister of Environment Forest and Climate Change.

It comprises of 47 members including the administrator. Among these, 19 individuals are ex-officio individuals. Other members include three Members of Parliament (two

from Lok Sabha and one from Rajya Sabha), 10 eminent ecologists, conservationists, environmentalists and five NGOs.

EESL:



It is the abbreviation for Energy Efficiency Services Limited. EESL is a joint venture of PSUs under the Ministry of Power and Department of New & Renewable Energy (DNRE). It was founded in 2009 and is headquartered in New Delhi, India. The current Chairman and Managing Director (MD) are Rajeev Sharma and Rajat Kumar Sud.

Recently, EESL signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with DNRE, Government of Goa to implement India's first Convergence Project in the State.

The MoU was signed with an aim to provide clean affordable and reliable power at affordable rates.

Under the MoU, EESL and DNRE will carry-out the feasibility studies and subsequent implementation of decentralized solar energy projects.

EESL shall implement the solar energy projects. It will install 100 MW of decentralized ground mounted Solar Power projects on government lands to be used for agricultural pumping. This will replace approximately 6,300 agricultural pumps with BEE (Bureau of Energy Efficiency) star rated energy efficient pumps and distribute

approximately 16 Lakh LED bulbs for rural domestic households.

The projects will increase the usage of renewable energy sources, especially for rural power consumption and agriculture in the State.

Ramsar Convention:



India, recently added two more wetlands of international importance. They are Lonar lake in Maharashtra and Sur Sarovar also known as Keetham Lake in Agra of Uttar Pradesh under the Ramsar Convention.

Ramsar Convention was signed on 2 February 1971. It is one of the oldest inter-governmental accord signed by member countries to preserve the ecological character of their Wetlands of International Importance. It is also known as the Convention on Wetlands. It is named after the city of Ramsar in Iran, where the convention was signed in 1971. The places chosen for conservation under it are given the tag 'Ramsar site'.

The Ramsar Convention works closely with six other organisations known as international organization partners (IOPs). These are:

1. BirdLife International
2. International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
3. International Water Management Institute (IWMI)
4. Wetlands International
5. WWF International

6. Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT)

The main objective of the Ramsar list is to develop and maintain an international network of wetlands which are important for the conservation of global biological diversity and for sustaining human life through the maintenance of their ecosystem components, processes and benefits.

Note: The other Ramsar sites of India are Kabartal in Bihar's Begusarai district and the Asan Conservation Reserve in Dehradun, the first wetland from Uttarakhand.

Wetlands: A wetland is a distinct ecosystem that is flooded by water, either permanently or seasonally, where oxygen-free processes prevail. It is an area where water covers the soil, or is present either at or near the surface of the soil all year or for varying periods of time during the year, including during the growing season. Water saturation (hydrology) largely determines how the soil develops and the types of plant and animal communities living in and on the soil. Wetlands may support both aquatic and terrestrial species. The prolonged presence of water creates conditions that favor the growth of specially adapted plants (hydrophytes) and promote the development of characteristic wetland (hydric) soils.

Five major wetland types are generally recognized:

1. Marine (coastal wetlands including coastal lagoons, rocky shores, and coral reefs);
2. Estuarine (including deltas, tidal marshes, and mangrove swamps);
3. Lacustrine (wetlands associated with lakes);

4. Riverine (wetlands along rivers and streams); and
5. Palustrine (meaning “marshy” - marshes, swamps and bogs).

DOM:



It refers to Deep Ocean Mission. According to the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MMoES), India's ambitious DOM is all set to be launched in 3-4 months.

The mission envisages the exploration of minerals, energy and maritime diversity of the underground water world which is a vast part that still remains unexplored. The mission is also set to enhance India's presence in the Indian Ocean.

The mission at the expected cost of Rs 4,000 crore, will give a boost to efforts to explore India's vast Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf.

It will lead to the designing, development and demonstration of human submersibles. It will also help in exploring the possibility of deep-sea mining and also developing necessary technologies.

The ministry's secretary, M Rajeevan, said required approvals are being obtained for the "futuristic and game-changing" mission, and it is likely to be launched in the next 3-4 months.

The stake holders in this mission will be MOS along with other government departments like the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO), Department of Biotechnology, Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) Some of the technologies involved will be developed by organizations such as the ISRO and DRDO.

Note: In September 2016, India signed a 15-year contract with the International Seabed Authority (ISA) for exploration of Poly-Metallic Sulphides (PMS) in the Indian Ocean. The 15-year contract formalised India's exclusive rights for exploration of PMS in the allotted area in the Indian Ocean.

ISA: It is an acronym for International Seabed Authority. ISA is an autonomous international organization body headquartered in Kingston, Jamaica. It was established on 16 November 1994 to regulate mining and related activities in the international seabed beyond national jurisdiction, an area that includes most of the world's oceans. It was established under the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the 1994 Agreement relating to the Implementation of Part XI of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1994 Agreement).

India-Finland:



India and Finland recently signed an MoU to develop cooperation in the field of environmental protection and biodiversity conservation.

The MoU was signed virtually by Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar from the Indian side and his Finnish counterpart Krista Mikkonen.

The MoU is a platform to further advance Indian and Finnish partnership and support, exchange best practices in areas like prevention of air and water pollution, waste management, promotion of circular economy and sustainable management of natural resources including forests, Climate change, etc.

Under the MoU, both the countries will work together towards the fulfillment of commitments made under the Paris Agreement.

The MoU seeks to strengthen scientific, technological, and management capabilities. It also aims to develop bilateral cooperation in the field of environmental protection and biodiversity conservation on the basis of equality, reciprocity, and mutual benefit with due respect to the promotion of sustainable development.

PTR:

It refers to the Pilibhit Tiger Reserve. PTR and the Uttar Pradesh Forest department have bagged the first-ever international award, TX2 (Tigers times two), for doubling the number of tigers in 4 years against a target of 10 years. PTR was the first to receive the award among 13 tiger range countries.

The 13 tiger range countries are Russia, India, Bangladesh, China, Bhutan, Malaysia, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Indonesia, Thailand, Myanmar and Nepal

The partners of the award had targeted doubling of population in ten years, but the Pilibhit Tiger Reserve achieved this in 4 years only. The partners are Global Tiger Forum, United Nations Development Programme, Conservation Tiger Standards and Lion's Share.

The award was virtually presented to the principal chief conservator of forest (wildlife) of the state, Sunil Pandey, by UNDP's (United Nations Development Program) head of ecosystems and biodiversity, Mindori Paxton.

About PTR: PTR is situated in Uttar Pradesh's Pilibhit and Shahjahanpur District. It was established in June 2014 as the 46th Tiger Reserve of India under: Project Tiger." It forms the part of the Terai Arc Landscape. It is situated in the upper Gangetic Plain Biogeographic Province. Rivers like Sharda, Mala, Chuka, and Khannot originates from the tiger reserve. The Tiger reserve is home to sal forests, tall grasslands and swamp. These are maintained by periodic floods from rivers.

The tiger population has increased from 25 in 2014 to 64 in 2018.

Climate Change knowledge portal:



Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change Prakash Javadekar recently launched the India Climate Change Knowledge Portal.

The portal will have all the major steps the Government is taking at both national and international levels to address the climate change issues.

It will act as a single-point information resource that provides information on the different climate initiatives of the Government. It will enable users to access updated status on these initiatives.

The eight major components of the portal are climate profile of India, NDC goals of India, National Policy Framework, adaptation action, bilateral and multilateral cooperation, report and Publication, mitigation actions, International climate negotiations.

During the launching event, Javadekar said that India has practically achieved its pre-2020 climate action targets.

National

Prasar Bharati:



It is the public broadcaster of India. Recently, in landmark step the broadcasting agency entered into a MoU with Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-Informatics, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.

Under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), Fifty one DTH education TV channels will be available as DD co-branded channels to all DD FreeDish viewers.

This main aim of this move is to bring quality educational programmes to every household, including those in rural and remote areas.

The services will be available free of cost for all the viewers 24x7. It is in line with Government's commitment towards skill development and providing quality education to the last person in the country.

Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020:

The President of India Ram Nath Kovind



recently promulgated the Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020 to further amend Arbitration and Conciliation Act 1996.

The Ordinance aims to ensure that all the stakeholders get an opportunity to seek unconditional stay of enforcement of arbitral awards where the underlying arbitration agreement or contract or making of the arbitral award are induced by fraud or corruption.

The ordinance seeks to ensure that stakeholder parties can seek an unconditional stay on enforcement of arbitral awards in cases where the "arbitration agreement or contract is induced by fraud or corruption."

It also does away with the 8th Schedule of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 which contained the necessary qualifications for accreditation of arbitrators.

Furthermore, through the Ordinance, a provision has been added to Section 36 whereby if the Court is satisfied that a prima facie case is made out that the arbitration agreement or contract which is the basis of the award was induced or effected by fraud or corruption, it will stay the award unconditionally pending disposal of the challenge made to the award under Section 34.

Arbitration: Arbitration, a form of alternative dispute resolution, is a way to resolve disputes outside the courts. The dispute will be decided by one or more persons, which renders the 'arbitration award'. An arbitration award is legally binding on both sides and enforceable in the courts.

Arbitration award: Arbitration award refers to the decision of an arbitrator. This award can be in the form of money that one party has to pay to the other party or it can be a non-financial award, such as adding an

employment incentive or stopping a certain business.

All India Presiding Officers Conference:



Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently addressed the concluding session of the 80th All India Presiding Officers Conference.

The two day conference which began at Kevadia in Gujarat on the 25th November 2020 was inaugurated by the President Ram Nath Kovind. The conference was attended by Vice President and Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Gujarat Governor Acharya Devvrat, the state's Chief Minister Vijay Rupani among others. The chairperson of the conference is Speaker Om Birla.

He addressed the conference via video conferencing at Kevadia in Gujarat. PM Modi paid tributes to many foreign citizens and policemen lost their lives in the 26/11 terror attack by terrorists from Pakistan in 2008.

The theme for this year's conference is Harmonious Coordination between Legislature, Executive and Judiciary - Key to a Vibrant Democracy.

The All India Presiding Officers Conference began in 1921 and this conference in Gujarat marks its centenary year.

GIS ODOP digital map of India:



The GIS One District One Product (ODOP) digital map of India was recently launched by the Ministry of Food Processing.

The GIS ODOP digital map of India provides details of ODOP products of all the states and facilitates the stakeholders.

The digital map also has indicators for tribal, SC, ST, and aspirational districts. It will enable stakeholders to make concerted efforts for its value chain development.

FDPs:



It refers to the online Faculty Development Programmes. The Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' recently inaugurated 46 online AICTE Training and Learning (ATAL) Academy Faculty Development Programmes (FDPs).

The programmes aim to train teachers of higher education institutions associated with the All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) in emerging areas in technology.

ATAL Academy is conducting FDPs in online mode, including the process of registration till certificate disbursement mechanism. In the year 2020-21, new thrust areas in the field of Engineering, Management, Life Skills, and Design & Media have been incorporated. The FDPs

will be conducted in 22 Indian states according to the new National Education Policy (2020).

The main objective of ATAL Academy is to provide quality technical education in the country and to promote research and entrepreneurship through training in various emerging fields. IITs, IIITs, NITs CU and research labs are organizing these ATAL FDPs. This year the online FDP programme will cost 10 crore rupees.

The FDPs has been recognized by the London-based organization, Book of World Records, as a world record, under which 1,000 online FDPs in over 100 emerging areas will benefit one lakh faculty members across premier institutions like IITs, NITs, and IIITs.

HRMS:



It is an abbreviation for Human Resource Management System. The Indian Railways (IR) recently launched a completely digitized online Human Resource Management System (HRMS).

HRMS is a high thrust project for Indian Railways to leverage improved productivity and employee satisfaction.

This move by IR aims to improve efficiency and productivity of the Railway system. The system is expected to create a big impact on the functioning of all the employees and will make them more tech savvy.

HRMS is a step towards realizing the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy.

Under HRMS, Vinod Kumar Yadav, Chairman and CEO of Railway Board launched:

1. Employee Self Service (ESS) which enables the railway employees to interact with various modules of HRMS including communication regarding change of data.
2. Provident Fund (PF) Advance module which enables Railway employees to check their PF balance and apply for PF advance online.
3. Settlement module which digitizes the entire settlement process of retiring employees.

The modules seek to benefit over 27 lakh families of both serving and retired Railway employees.

Several other modules of HRMS are already operational in the Indian Railways.

AAI:



It refers to the Airports Authority of India. AAI is a statutory body created through the Airports Authority of India Act, 1994. It was founded on 1 April 1995. It works under the Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of India (GoI) and is responsible for creating, upgrading, maintaining and managing civil aviation infrastructure in India. The current Chairman of AAI is Arvind Singh.

Recently, AAI observed the Aviation Safety Awareness Week 2020 from 23rd to 27th November 2020.

The week-long celebration was observed at all airports and ANS locations managed by AAI across India.

The Airport Directors organized awareness programme in schools and colleges on role of local residents in aviation safety to make people of surrounding community aware about their role in ensuring safety of aircraft operation in local airport.

The main aim of the Ministry of Civil Aviation is to achieve long term objective of Zero fatality by the year 2030 as envisaged by ICAO in its Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP-2020-22) through better managed safety systems of stakeholders.

ICAO: It refers to the International Civil Aviation Organization. ICAO is International Civil Aviation organization. It was formed in 1947 as a specialized agency of the United Nations. It is responsible for developing international air transport. It also defines the protocols for air accident investigation

The headquarters of ICAO is located in Quebec Province in Canada.

NCAP 2016: It refers to the National Civil Aviation Policy 2016. NCAP 2016 is government policy approved by Union Cabinet on 15 June, 2016. The proposed new civil aviation policy was first presented in November 2014. After months of debates and inter-ministerial consultations, the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) cleared the civil aviation policy for Cabinet approval.

This is for the first time; an integrated Civil Aviation Policy has been brought out by the

Ministry of Civil Aviation after independence.

The NCAP 2016 covers the broad policy areas, such as Regional connectivity, Safety, Air Transport Operations, 5/20 Requirement for International Operations, Bilateral traffic rights, Fiscal Support, Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul, Air-cargo, Aeronautical 'Make in India'.

NCAP 2016 aims to make flying affordable to every Indian citizen. The regional connectivity scheme UDAN (Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik) is a key component of the National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP). UDAN is being implemented to enhance air travel in the unconnected and underserved regions of the country.

Awards:

NWAs:



It refers to the National Water Awards. The second edition of the NWAs for 2019 was presented by the Vice President of India, M Venkaiah Naidu.

Among the states category, Tamil Nadu bagged the Best State Award, followed by Maharashtra and Rajasthan.

About NWAs: The award ceremony was organized by the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation from

11 & 12 November 2020 through the virtual platform.

The NWA awards are given to motivate the individuals and organizations to adopt the best usage practices in the field of water resources conservation and management and create awareness among the people about the importance of water.

Lilavati Awards-2020:



Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal "Nishank" virtually launched Lilavati Award-2020: AICTE's Innovative education program to empower women

The Lilavati Award is an initiative of the technical education regulator, All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE). It aims to recognise efforts by AICTE-approved institutions to treat women with 'equality and fairness'.

The theme of the award is "Women empowerment". The main objective of the award is to create awareness about issues like sanitation, hygiene, health, nutrition, employment, literacy, technology, credit, marketing, innovation, skill development, natural resources and rights among women.

The award covers multidisciplinary areas such as women's health, self defense, sanitation, literacy, entrepreneurship and legal awareness.

The program is expected to ensure the participation of women and enable them to

hold higher positions in educational institution.

AICTE: It refers to the All India Council for Technical Education. AICTE is the statutory body and a national-level council for technical education, under Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development. It was established in November 1945 as an advisory body but later on in 1987 given statutory status by an Act of Parliament. It is responsible for proper planning and coordinated development of the technical education and management education system in India. The current Chairman of AICTE is Anil Sahasrabudhe.

Important National Days:

Public Service Broadcasting Day:



The day is celebrated on November 12 every year to commemorate the first and only visit of Mahatma Gandhi, to the studio of All India Radio, Delhi in 1947.

He addressed the displaced people, who had temporarily settled at Kurukshetra in Haryana after partition.

Children's Day:



Children's Day is celebrated on 14th of November across the Nation every year. The day is celebrated to mark the birth anniversary of India's first Prime Minister Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru.

Children's Day also popularly known as 'Baal Diwas' in India aims at increasing the awareness of the rights, care and education of children. On this day, many educational and motivational programs are organized across the country, by and for children.

National Ayurveda Day 2020:



The day is being observed every year from 2016, on the day of Dhanwantri Jayanti or Dhanteras. This day is observed on Dhanteras as the Hindu God Dhanvantari is considered as the propagator of Ayurveda.

Lord Dhanvantari: Lord Dhanvantari is an avatar of Lord Vishnu. Lord Dhanvantari is also known as Hindu god of medicine. Hindus worship him for sound health.

This year the 5th Ayurveda Day was observed on 13 November 2020.

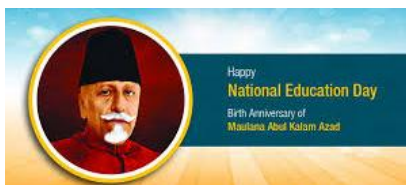
The theme of the 5th National Ayurveda Day is — Ayurveda for COVID-19 pandemic. The main objective of the day is to focus on the strengths of Ayurveda and its unique treatment principles.

On the Occasion of National Ayurveda Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the two future-ready Ayurveda institutions

in Gujarat and Rajasthan, the Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda (ITRA) at Jamnagar in Gujarat and the National Institute of Ayurveda (NIA) at Jaipur in Rajasthan.

These institutions are expected to play global leadership roles in the growth and development of Ayurveda in the 21st century.

National Education Day:



The National Education Day or Rashtriya Shiksha Diwas is celebrated on 11 November every year across the India. The day is celebrated to commemorate the birth anniversary of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the first education minister of independent India, who served from 15 August 1947 until 2 February 1958.

According to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, schools are the laboratories that produce future citizens of the country. He is the person behind IITs and various other institutes in India.

The Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD) announced 11 September 2008 to be celebrated as National Education Day to commemorate the birthday of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad for his contribution in the field of education in India.

Since 2008, every year in India, National Education Day is celebrated without declaring it a holiday.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad: He was the first education minister of independent India from 1947 to 1958. He was the first education minister of independent India from 1947 to 1958. He was awarded Bharat Ratna posthumously, India's highest civilian honour in 1992. His contributions in the field of education, nation-building, and institution-building are exemplary.

National Organ Donation Day:



This day is celebrated as Indian Organ Donation Day (IODD) on the 27th of November since last 10 years.

The 11th Indian Organ Donation Day was organized and celebrated by the Union Health Ministry in New Delhi.

Tamil Nadu has been adjudged the best in organ donation in the country for the sixth consecutive year.

NOTTO: It refers to the National Organ & Tissue Transplant Organization. NOTTO is mandated under the Transplantation of Human Organs (Amendment) Act 2011 to carry out activities for promotion of organ donation from deceased persons.

International

Mississippi:



It is a state in the Deep South region of the United States. It is bordered to the north by Tennessee, to the east by Alabama, to the south by the Gulf of Mexico, to the southwest by Louisiana, and to the northwest by Arkansas. Mississippi's western boundary is largely defined by the Mississippi River. The capital of Mississippi is Jackson.

Recently, the voters in Mississippi approved a new flag, "The New Magnolia", featuring a magnolia flower. The new flag is designed by Rocky Vaughan and features a white magnolia on a blue banner with red and gold bars on each end. The flower is encircled in 20 five-point stars and the words "In God We Trust". An additional star on the flag represents the indigenous Native Americans.

Mississippi is nicknamed the "Magnolia State", a reference to the magnolia trees that grow there.

Myanmar:



Myanmar officially the Republic of the Union of Myanma was formerly known as Burma,. It is a Southeast Asian nation of more than 100 ethnic groups. It is bordered by Bangladesh and India to its northwest, China to its northeast, Laos and Thailand to

its east and southeast, and the Andaman Sea and the Bay of Bengal to its south and southwest. Myanmar has been a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) since 1997. The capital of Myanmar is Naypyitaw. The currency used here Burmese kyat.

Recently, the ruling party of Myanmar led by Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi claimed a resounding victory.

National League for Democracy (NLD) party won close to 400 seats while the opposition Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) has secured only 21 seats.

United States (US):



The United States of America (USA), commonly known as the United States (U.S. or US) or America, is a country consisting of 50 states, a federal district, five major self-governing territories, and various possessions. The 50 states covers a vast swath of North America, with Alaska in the northwest and Hawaii extending the nation's presence into the Pacific Ocean. The currency used in USA is United States dollar - USD also abbreviated US\$. The capital of US is Washington, D.C.

Recently, Joseph Robinette Biden Jr (Joe Biden) won the US presidential election. Biden defeated Donald Trump to become the 46th U.S. president.

He has 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.

California Senator Kamala Harris, who was Biden's running mate, became the first Black and Indian-American woman to serve as vice president.

Joseph Robinette Biden Jr: Biden Jr. was born November 20, 1942, was 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.

Kamala Harris: Indian Origin Kamala Harris was born on October 20, 1964, in Oakland, California. She has served as the junior United States senator from California since 2017. Her mother is Shyamala Gopalan who is a biologist and whose work on the progesterone receptor gene stimulated work in breast cancer research. She arrived in the U.S. from Tamil Nadu in India in 1958. Her father, Donald J. Harris, is a Stanford University professor emeritus of economics, who arrived in the U.S. from British Jamaica in 1961 for graduate study at UC Berkeley, receiving a PhD in economics in 1966.

Tanzania:



Tanzania officially the United Republic of Tanzania is a country in East Africa within the African Great Lakes region. It borders

Uganda to the north; Kenya to the northeast; Comoro Islands and the Indian Ocean to the east; Mozambique and Malawi to the south; Zambia to the southwest; and Rwanda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the west. Mount Kilimanjaro, Africa's highest mountain, is in northeastern Tanzania. The Capital of Tanzania is Dodoma. The currency used here is Tanzanian Shilling. The current President of Tanzania is John Pombe Magufuli.

Recently, the President of Tanzania, John Pombe Magufuli has been sworn for a second five-year term after winning 84% of the total votes in elections held on October 28. CHADEMA party candidate Tundu Lissu took the second position.

He took the oath of the office on 05 November 2020. He was elected as the fifth President of Tanzania and is in office since 2015.

IPU:



It refers to the Inter-Parliamentary Union. IPU was founded in 1889 as the first multilateral political organization in the world, encouraging cooperation and dialogue between all nations. The IPU headquartered in Geneva, is the global organization of national parliaments. It consists of representatives from the National Parliaments of 179 countries. It promotes democracy and helps parliaments

become stronger, younger, gender-balanced and more diverse.

Recently, Portugal MP Duarte Pacheco elected as President of Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). The new IPU president Duarte Pacheco was elected with 56 per cent of the vote in a single round of voting.

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 4 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.

Duarte Pacheco: He has been a member of Portugal's Parliament since 1991. He has held different functions in Parliament, including as a Member of the Budget and Finance Committee and the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Portuguese Communities.

Portugal: Portugal, officially the Portuguese Republic, is a country located on the Iberian Peninsula, in southwestern Europe. It is the westernmost sovereign state of mainland Europe, being bordered to the west and south by the Atlantic Ocean and to the north and east by Spain. The Capital of Portugal is Lisbon and the currency used here is Euro (EUR).

Ivory Coast:



Ivory Coast, also known as Côte d'Ivoire, officially the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, is a country located on the south coast of West Africa. The political capital of Ivory Coast is Yamoussoukro in the centre of the country, while its economic capital and largest city is the port city of Abidjan. It borders Guinea to the northwest, Liberia to the west, Mali to the northwest, Burkina Faso to the northeast, Ghana to the east, and the Gulf of Guinea (Atlantic Ocean) to the south. The currency used here is West African CFA franc.

Recently, the incumbent President of Ivory Coast, Alassane Ouattara, has won a third 5-year term in a landslide victory.

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.

Moldova:



Moldova officially the Republic of Moldova (Romanian: Republica Moldova), is a landlocked country in Eastern Europe. It is bordered by Romania to the west and

Ukraine to the north, east, and south. The Capital of Moldova is Chisinau. The currency used here is Moldovan leu.

Recently, Maia Sandu won Moldova's presidential election after a run-off vote against the incumbent Igor Dodon.

Ms Sandu is a former World Bank economist who favours closer ties with the European Union. Mr Dodon, meanwhile, is openly backed by Russia

Scotland:



Scotland is a country that is part of the United Kingdom. The name Scotland derives from the Latin Scotia, land of the Scots, a Celtic people from Ireland who settled on the west coast of Great Britain about the 5th century CE. The Capital of Scotland is Edinburg. The currency used here is Pound sterling.

Recently, The Scottish parliament passed a landmark legislation unanimously that has made period products such as sanitary pads and tampons free of cost to those people who need them. Scotland has become the first in the world to make sanitary products free.

Earlier, in 2018, Scotland became the first country to provide free sanitary products in schools, colleges and universities.

The main objective of passing the bill was to tackle "period poverty", which is when some people who need period products struggle to afford them.

Period Poverty: Certain circumstances make access to sanitary products difficult for women and trans people including homelessness, coercive, controlling and violent relationships and health conditions such as endometriosis.

Japan & Australia:



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

The agreement comes weeks after foreign ministers of the Quad alliance, which includes the US and India, met in Tokyo

RAA will not only allow Japanese and Australian troops to visit each other's countries and conduct training and joint operations but will also strengthen its security ties and facilitate cooperation between defence forces.

The two sides also agreed on the need for a framework to allow Japanese military to protect Australian forces if needed.

Japan: Japan is an island country located in East Asia. It is made up of 6,852 islands. Tokyo is the capital of Japan. The currency used there is Japanese Yen. The current Prime Minister of Japan is Yoshihide Suga.

Australia: Australia, officially the Commonwealth of Australia is a sovereign country and the smallest continent and one of the largest countries on Earth. It lies between the Pacific and Indian oceans in the Southern Hemisphere. Australia's capital is Canberra. The currency used there is Australian dollar (AUD). The current Prime Minister of Australia is Scott Morrison.

UNGA:



It refers to the United Nations General Assembly. UNGA is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations. It is the main deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations. Comprising all 193 Member States of the UN, it provides a unique forum for multilateral discussion of international issues including peace and security. It was formed in 1945. It is headquartered in New York, New York, United States. The current President of UNGA is Tijjani Muhammad-Bande.

Recently, the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted two resolutions sponsored by India which call for the prohibition of nuclear weapons and reduce the risks of accidental use of nuclear weapons in the world.

The two resolutions were named:

1. Convention on the Prohibition of the use of Nuclear Weapons

2. Reducing Nuclear Danger", under the "Nuclear Weapons" cluster.

These resolutions manifest India's commitment towards the goal of nuclear disarmament.

Convention on the Prohibition of the use of Nuclear Weapons: The resolution was tabled by India since 1982 in the General Assembly, which requests the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva to commence negotiations on an international convention prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances.

The resolution is supported by a majority of UN members. The adoption of resolutions shows India's conviction that such a multilateral, universal and legally binding agreement would generate the necessary political will among States possessing nuclear weapons to engage in negotiations leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Reducing Nuclear Danger: The resolution was tabled since 1998. It draws global attention to the risks of unintentional or accidental use of nuclear weapons and underscores the need for a review of nuclear doctrines. It calls for concrete steps to reduce such risks, including through de-alerting and de-targeting of nuclear weapons.

UNGA First Committee: The UNGA first committee deals with the issue of disarmament and works in close cooperation with the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament, the other two bodies to deal with the nuclear issue.

CD: It refers to the Conference on Disarmament. CD was formed in 1979 as the single multilateral disarmament negotiation forum of the international community. The agreement was reached among Member states during the first special session of UNGA devoted to disarmament (1978). It is the successor to the TNDC (Ten-Nation Committee on Disarmament), Geneva, 1960, the ENDC (Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament, Geneva, 1962-68 and the CCD (Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, Geneva 1969-78).

Summits:

15th East Asia Summit 2020:



The External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar recently represented India at the 15th East Asia Summit (EAS) on behalf of Prime Minister Narendra 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). The virtual Summit witnessed the participation of all the 18 EAS countries.

During the summit, the leaders agreed to strengthen the EAS platform on its 15th anniversary and they also reaffirmed the 2005 Kuala Lumpur Declaration, and 2010 Ha Noi Declaration & 2011 Bali Declaration & 2015 Kuala Lumpur Declaration.

Besides Ha Noi Declaration, the Summit also adopted four other Leaders' Statements on:

1. Marine Sustainability,
2. Epidemics Prevention and Response,
3. Women, Peace and Security,
4. Steady Growth of Regional Economy.

The Leaders underlined the importance of cooperation in ensuring safe, effective and affordable access to COVID-19 vaccines.

They called for greater cooperation in keeping the global supply chains open for an expeditious and sustainable economic recovery.

Regional and international issues such as South China Sea, situation in Korean peninsula and Rakhine state were also discussed.

EAS: It refers to the East Asia summit. EAS was established in 2005. It is a Leaders-led forum that provides a platform for discussion on important strategic issues in the Indo-Pacific region.

It is a regional grouping of 18 participating countries which are Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Lao PDR, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam, Australia, China, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Russia and the United States.

India is a founding member of EAS. The 18 members of the EAS together represent 54% of the world population and account for 58% of the global GDP.

The first EAS Summit was held in December 2005 in Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia.

EAS: It refers to the East Asia Summit. EAS is a regional forum held annually by leaders of, initially, 16 countries in the East Asian, Southeast Asian, South Asian and Oceanian regions, based on the ASEAN Plus Six mechanism. Since its establishment, ASEAN has held the central role and leadership in the forum. EAS meetings are held after the annual ASEAN leaders' meetings, and play an important role in the regional architecture of Asia-Pacific. The first summit was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 14 December 2005.

The members of EAS are India, Brunei, Cambodia, Australia, Indonesia, China, Japan, South Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Philippines, Russia, Thailand, United States, Singapore and Vietnam.

20th SCO Council of Heads of State Summit:



Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi recently led the Indian delegates at the 20th Summit of SCO Council of Heads of State which was held on 10 November 2020. The Meeting chaired by the Russian President Vladimir Putin was held in a Video Conference Format. At the summit, 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, and the Presidents of the four Observers

(Afghanistan, Iran, Belarus, Mongolia) of the SCO also attended the meeting.

This was the third meeting that India participated after becoming a full member in 2017. India had also hosted virtual meetings of the SCO Ministers responsible for External Economy and Foreign Trade and SCO Ministers for Justice in October.

India will host the next regular meeting of SCO Council of Heads of Government on the 30th of November 2020, in virtual format.

SCO: It refers to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. SCO is headquartered in Beijing, China. The SCO is a Eurasian, economic, and security alliance. It was formally established in June 2002 and came into force on 19 September 2003. The member Countries of SCO are China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Pakistan and India.

3rd Annual Bloomberg New Economy Forum:



Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently addressed the 3rd Annual Bloomberg New Economy Forum through video-conferencing. The forum was held from 16th to 19th November 2020.

The forum focused on refueling the economy and charting a course for the

future, as the world economy is grappling with the COVID-19 pandemic.

The other Speakers of the forum included Director-general of the World Health Organisation (WHO) Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair, Microsoft founder Bill Gates, former US President Bill Clinton, and Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN) Antonio Guterres.

Bloomberg New Economy Forum: The Bloomberg New Economy Forum was established in 2018 by Michael Bloomberg.

It was established with an aim 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 forum focuses on global economic management, trade and investment, technology, urbanization, capital markets, climate change and inclusiveness.

The inaugural Forum was first held in Singapore and the Second Annual Forum was hosted in Beijing.

India-Nordic-Baltic Conclave:



The first India-Nordic-Baltic Conclave was held virtually on 5 November 2020. India

was represented by Subrahmanyam Jaishankar Minister of External Affairs (MEA).

The Tri Conclave was jointly hosted by Foreign Affairs Ministry and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). The theme for the conclave was: 'An Innovation-Driven Partnership for Growth in New World'.

At the conclave, dignitaries focused on clean technologies and renewable energies, AI, supply chain logistics and block chain led transformation.

In 2018, the first Summit of India and Nordic was held in Sweden during which Prime Minister Narendra Modi and all the five leaders were present.

NB8: Nordic-Baltic Eight (NB8) is a regional co-operation format that includes Estonia, Denmark, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden. The Baltic States are Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. These three countries are located in the Baltic Sea and are fast growing economies.

Nordic Council: It was established in 1952. The headquarters of the council is located in Copenhagen, Denmark. It provides a link between governments, parliaments of Nordic states. The members of Nordic council are Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Iceland. Finland joined in 1955.

RCEP:



Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership. RCEP is the largest free trade

agreement (FTA) in the world. Fifteen countries have recently signed the world's biggest free trade deal, led by China, on the sidelines of the 37th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Summit.

The signatories involved are Australia, Japan, New Zealand, China, South Korea, and the 10 members of ASEAN, including Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Myanmar, and Vietnam.

The agreement, in total will cover 30% of the world's GDP and population to surpass the Trans-Pacific Partnership in scale.

The signing can be seen as a huge coup for China in extending its influences over the region and marking the dominance in Asian trade.

Though India opted to stay out after walking out of discussions last year, the new trading bloc has made it clear that the door will remain open for India to return to the negotiating table.

The reason for India's withdrawal from RCEP in 2019 was to safeguard the interests of industries like agriculture and dairy and to give an advantage to the country's services sector and also because of the concerns about the cheap Chinese goods that will be entering the country within this pact.

About RCEP: RCEP was introduced in 2011 at the 19th ASEAN meet. It was formally launched during the 2012 ASEAN Summit in Cambodia. It is the biggest trade pact between the ASEAN bloc of 10 members along with Japan, China, South Korea, Australia, and New Zealand.

The objective of the deal is lowering the tariffs, promote investment, and open up

trade in services for helping emerging economies catch up to the world.

The main purpose of RCEP was to make it easier for products and services of each of these countries to be available across this region. Negotiations to chart out this deal had been on since 2013, and India was expected to be a signatory until its decision last November.

12th BRICS Summit:



The 12th BRICS summit was recently addressed by the Prime Minister Of India Narendra Modi virtually. The Summit was held under the Chairmanship of Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The leaders, at the summit discussed intra-BRICS cooperation. The other key issues were discussed in the global context, like the reform of the multilateral system, measures to mitigate the impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, cooperation in Counter-Terrorism, trade, health, energy and people to people exchanges.

The theme of the 12th edition of BRICS Summit was "Global stability, shared security and innovative growth".

India will be taking over the Chairmanship of the BRICS in 2021 and host the 13th BRICS Summit the same year. It would be the third time that India will take over the BRICS Presidency since its inception. Previously India was the Chair in 2012 and 2016.

BRICS: BRICS is the acronym coined to associate five major emerging national economies: Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. Originally the first 4 were grouped as "BRIC", before the induction of South Africa in 2010. The BRICS members are known for their significant influence on regional affairs. All are also the members of G20. Since 2009, the BRICS nations have met annually at formal summits. BRICS headquarter is situated at Shanghai, China. BRICS members are known for their influence in regional affairs.

15th G20 Summit:



Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi recently participated in the 15th G20 Summit which was hosted by Saudi Arabia. The summit was chaired by King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia through video-conferencing, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Along with the Indian PM, the respective Heads of State and Government of 19 member countries, EU, other invited countries and international organizations also participated in the Summit.

The two-day Summit was held under the theme "Realising the Opportunities of the 21st Century for All".

During the Summit, the main focus was on resilient, inclusive and sustainable recovery from covid-19 crisis. The leaders discussed on the preparedness of the countries in response to the pandemic. They also shared their vision on building a resilient future.

The subsequent G20 summits are to be held in Italy in 2021, Indonesia in 2022, India in 2023 and Brazil in 2024.

Italy will take over the Presidency of the 16th G20 on 1st December 2020.

At the end of the Summit, a G20 Leaders' Declaration was issued which called for coordinated global action, solidarity, and multilateral cooperation to overcome the current challenges and realize opportunities of the 21st century for all by empowering people, safeguarding the planet, and shaping new frontiers.

APEC:



It refers to the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation. The 2020 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Economic Leaders' Meeting was recently held under the Chairmanship of Malaysian Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

Several leaders of the cooperation joined the summit. The Summit was attended by the US President Donald Trump as well.

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

At the summit, the APEC 2020 ended with the adoption of the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040 and the 2020 Kuala Lumpur Declaration.

The 1994 Bogor Goals were replaced with post 2020 vision.

Putrajaya Vision 2040: It is a new 20-year growth vision, which will replace the existing Bogor Goals, which was agreed by leaders in 1994 for free and open trade and investment in APEC.

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.

About APEC: APEC is an inter-governmental forum for 21 member economies in the Pacific Rim that promotes free trade throughout the Asia-Pacific region. It was founded in November 1989 by Bob Hawke and is headquartered in Singapore. It operates on the basis of non-binding commitments and open dialogue. It is recognized as one of the highest-level multilateral blocs and oldest forums in the Asia-Pacific region. It exerts a significant global influence.

The members of the grouping are Australia, Brunei, Canada, China, Indonesia, South Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, Hongkong, Chile, Japan, Peru, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Russia, Thailand, Singapore, Taiwan and United States of America.

Note: India is not a full-time member of APEC because the members of the grouping had decided not to allow India as the country as India does not border Pacific Ocean. However, India has an observer status.

4TH Global Conference on Criminal Finances and Cryptocurrencies:



The virtual 4th Global Conference on Criminal Finances and Cryptocurrencies was recently attended by more than 2,000 representatives from 132 countries. The representatives from Judiciary, Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs), and international organizations met virtually to shape international cross-sector solutions against the criminal use of cryptocurrencies.

The conference's agenda included:

- Trends and investigations on cryptocurrency related offences
- Exploring criminal flows and operations in the dark markets.
- Ransomware and sextortion case studies
- Money laundering involving virtual assets
- The transfer of drug proceeds using cryptocurrencies.

The Global conference was organized by the Interpol, Europol (European Police Office) and the Basel Institute on Governance.

About: The conference is an initiative of the Working Group on Cryptocurrencies and Money Laundering. It was established in 2016 by the three organisations. They are:

1. Basel Institute on Governance
2. Interpol
3. Europol

The main objective of launching the conference was to strengthen the knowledge, expertise and best practices for investigations into financial crimes and

intelligence on virtual assets and cryptocurrencies.

The conference underlined the need to expand capabilities and regulate virtual asset service providers to prevent money laundering.

Ultimately, the main aim of the conference is to organize an annual global conference for a collective approach against cryptocurrency which will increase the understanding, knowledge and capacity to successfully investigate crimes in which cryptocurrencies are involved.

India and Other Countries:

India-Bhutan:



Prime Ministers of India and Bhutan Narendra Modi, Lotay Tshering respectively jointly launched RuPay card Phase-II in Bhutan via video conferencing.

Earlier, the two Prime Ministers had jointly launched phase-1 of the project during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Bhutan in August last year. The implementation of phase-1 of RuPay card enabled Indian visitors to Bhutan to access ATMs and point of sale terminals in Bhutan.

The phase-2 will now allow Bhutanese cardholders to access RuPay network in India.

Diplomatic relations between India and Bhutan were established in 1968 with the

establishment of a special office of India in Thimphu. Bhutan shares its border with four Indian states: Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, West Bengal and Sikkim with a length of 699 km and serves as a buffer between India and China.

There are a number of institutional and diplomatic mechanisms between India and Bhutan in areas such as security, border management, trade, transit, economic, hydro-power, development cooperation, water resources etc.

In recent past India and Bhutan took a stand against China during Doklam tri-junction stand-off in 2017.

India-Luxembourg:



The Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, and the Prime Minister of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, Xavier Bettel, recently held the first-ever India-Luxembourg Virtual Summit. The summit was held on 19 November 2020.

During the summit, both the Prime Ministers exchanged views on strengthening India-Luxembourg relationship in the post-COVID world.

Both the parties agreed for enhanced cooperation in areas of trade, finance, steel, space, ICT, innovation, manufacturing, automotive, sustainable development, including through renewable energy.

India-Luxembourg also agreed to strengthen cooperation on realizing effective multilateralism and combating global challenges like the Covid-19 pandemic, terrorism and climate change.

Prime Minister Modi not only welcomed Luxembourg's announcement to join the International Solar Alliance (ISA) but also invited it to join the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI).

India and Luxembourg have continued to maintain high-level exchanges in the recent past. The two prime ministers have met previously on three occasions.

Relations: India and Luxembourg have friendly relation of over more than seven decades since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1948. Luxembourg is one of the most important financial centres globally. Several Luxembourg-based investment funds hold substantial banking and asset management market share in portfolio investments in India while several Indian companies have raised capital by issuing Global Depositary Receipts (GDRs) at the Luxembourg Stock Exchange.

India and Afghanistan:



The External Affairs Minister of India, Dr Subrahmanium Jaishankar recently led the Indian delegation at the 2020 Afghanistan Conference which was organized in Geneva from 23-24 November 2020 virtually. The Conference was co-hosted by the United

Nations, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, and the Government of Finland.

The focus of the conference was Self-Reliance, Peace and Prosperity. It aimed at reaffirming the commitment of the international community towards the Afghanistan government to determine shared development objectives for 2021.

At the conference, India emphasizing on its long term commitment for the development of Afghanistan through reconstruction and rehabilitation, announced a new phase of over 100 high-impact community projects worth USD 80 million (Rs 592 crore) in Afghanistan.

The projects include construction of the Shatoot Dam, which would provide safe drinking water to 2 million residents of Kabul city. This dam will be built on the 202-kilometre Phul-e-Khumri transmission line, which was built by India in 2019 to provide electricity to Kabul city. India had earlier built the 202-km Phul-e-Khumri transmission line that provided electricity to Kabul city.

Dr Jaishankar said that as an important stakeholder, India looks forward to walk hand in hand with the people of Afghanistan and world community in working towards a peaceful, prosperous, sovereign, democratic and united Afghanistan.

India and Israel:



The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, recently approved the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Israel for cooperation in the field of health and medicine.

The areas covered under the MoU are as follows:

- Promotion of mutual research.
- Sharing of expertise against public health actions and climate risks.
- Exchange and training of medical doctors and other professionals.
- Assistance in setting up of health care facilities.
- Exchanging information related to medical devices, pharmaceuticals and cosmetics.

The representatives of both India and Israel will be encouraged to participate in seminars, workshops, symposia and conferences.

Earlier, in April 2020, Israel supplied advanced medical equipment to help India fight COVID-19. India in return sent five tonnes of medicines including Hydroxychloroquine. A special team of defence experts, researchers also arrived from Israel to join hands with Indian researchers in developing rapid testing solution of CORONAVIRUS.

Under this agreement, the researchers are now developing a CORONAVIRUS testing kit that will produce results in less than 30 seconds.

India-Kazakhstan:



The seventh round of Foreign Office Consultations (FoC) between India and Kazakhstan was recently held in a virtual format.

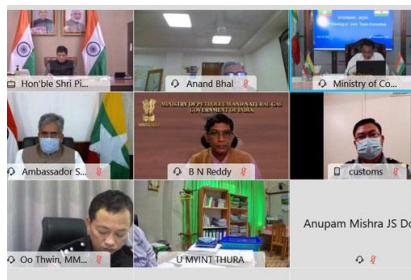
India was represented by Vikas Swarup, Secretary (West) and Kazakhstan were represented by Shakhmat Nuryshv, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Both the nations signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 'Indian Grant Assistance for Implementation of High Impact Community Development Projects in Kazakhstan'.

During the consultations, both sides reviewed the entire scope of bilateral cooperation within the framework of their Strategic Partnership. The consultations covered political, economic and commercial, energy, defence, space, consular and cultural matters.

They agreed to deepen cooperation in the multilateral arena, including during the forthcoming stint of India in the UN Security Council for the period 2021-22. They also assured to combat COVID-19 with cooperation between them.

India and Myanmar:



The 7th Joint Trade Committee Meeting between India and Myanmar was recently held through virtual mode. The Meeting was co-chaired by Union Minister for Ministry of Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and Union Minister for Ministry of Commerce, Myanmar Dr. Than Myint.

At the meeting, various bilateral issues ranging from banking, trade, investment, connectivity, capacity building and upgradation of border infrastructure were reviewed by both the sides.

During the meeting, the strong cultural and commercial ties between India and Myanmar and the priority India attaches to its partnership with Myanmar in accordance with India's 'Neighborhood First' and 'Act East' policies were highlighted.

India reiterated its commitment in enhancing its multifaceted cooperation with Myanmar, in several areas including trade and investment and Oil and Gas.

India-GCC Troika Dialogue:



India and the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) Troika held their annual Political

Dialogue. It was held recently on 3 November 2020 in virtual mode.

The Indian Delegation was led by the Foreign Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar while, the GCC was represented at the Troika-level by Secretary General of GCC, Minister of External Affairs, Bahrain and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, United Arab Emirates. Representatives from Qatar, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia also participated in the dialogue.

During the dialogue:

- The leaders undertook detailed review of India-GCC ties and appreciated the upward trajectory in ties witnessed in the last few years.
- GCC expressed its gratitude for India's inclusion in the UNSC as a non-permanent member from January 2021.
- India ensured that the supply chains from India to the Gulf countries are not disrupted amid the nationwide lockdowns during the COVID-19 and India also requested the members of GCC to ease the return of Indian professionals and workers to the Gulf countries.

GCC: It refers to the Gulf Cooperation Council. GCC is an intergovernmental economic and political union. It comprises of Arab states such as Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar and UAE. The Charter to establish the Gulf Cooperation Council was signed on 25 May 1981. The structure of GCC consists of the Supreme Council, the Ministerial Council and the Secretariat general. The secretariat is headquartered at Riyadh.

The main objectives of the council are to formulate regulations in trade, tourism,

administration and customs. It establishes scientific research centres.

India Polity

ECI:



It refers to Election Commission of India. The ECI is an autonomous constitutional authority responsible for administering Union and State election processes in India. The body administers elections to the Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, State Legislative Assemblies in India, and the offices of the President and Vice President in the country. It was formed on 25 January 1950. It's headquartered in New Delhi. It functions under the jurisdiction of Government of India.

Recently, the ECI decided to organize a three-day International Virtual Election Visitors Programme 2020 (IEVP) in the context of the ongoing Bihar Legislative Assembly Elections. The IEVP programme is meant for Foreign Election Management Bodies and Organizations.

More than 40 countries participated in the programme. The delegates included from Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malawi, Maldives, Moldova, Mongolia, Mauritius, Nepal, Philippines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukraine, Uzbekistan and Zambia. Along with these countries 3 international organizations such as International IDEA,

International Foundation of Electoral Systems (IFES) and Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB) also participated in the programme.

The main objective of conducting this programme is to provide unique overview of SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation) programme.

The ECI not only provided a virtual tour to the polling stations in Bihar to the participating countries but also shared its knowledge and technology being implemented in conducting elections.

Earlier, the ECI had launched this programme during the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, elections for a few State Assemblies in February-March 2017 and Lok Sabha Elections last year. This time ECI chose Bihar as the state has one of the largest electorates in the world. There are above 72 million electorates. Therefore, the ongoing election process, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic will provide an opportunity to share the best practices and experience with the world.

SVEEP: The full form of SVEEP is Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation. SVEEP is a flagship programme of ECI that focuses on voter education and spreads awareness about voter literacy. The main objective of this programme is to build a truly participative democracy in the nation by encouraging all eligible citizens to vote and make an informed decision during the elections.

It is based on the socio-economic, cultural and demographic profile of the state as well as the history of electoral participation.

Sarna Code:



The Jharkhand General Assembly recently passed a resolution to send the Centre a letter to recognise Sarna Code for tribals. The proposal tabled by Chief Minister Hemant Soren was passed unanimously with voice vote. The resolution seeks the inclusion of Sarna as a separate religion in the 2021 Census.

The main aim of this resolution is to address the concerns of the tribal population, which is declining after every census. The religious code will enable to give an exact number of tribal communities, help document their population, preserve tribal languages, culture and history and help them avail their constitutional rights.

In the last eight decades, the tribal population in Jharkhand has come down from 38.03% to 26.02%. They don't have a separate religious entity at present. So far, the surveys have included them as "others" in the religion column.

In 2019, there were demands to denotify Schedule V of the constitution of India areas where the population of the tribal has come down. The Sarna Code if passed in the Assembly then the 2021 census will have a column for a new religion for tribals.

Sarna Religion: The followers of the Sarna religion are worshippers of nature. The Sarna religion followers do not consider themselves as Hindus. For decades, these followers have been fighting for a separate religious identity. The major problem is that the term Sarna is not common to all the

adherers of naturalistic religions worshipping forests, mountains and rivers.

As per the claims by Sarna tribe there was a separate Sarna Code between 1871 and 1951 but was removed in 1961 due to conspiracy. They also claimed that during the 2011 Census, the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) had recommended Centre to add the Sarna code in the Census, but it was not implemented.

Note: Jharkhand has 32 tribal groups of which 8 are from Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (VTG). While many follow Hindu religion, some have converted to Christianity causing a decline in tribal population so this has become one of the planks of demanding a separate code "to save religious identity"— as various tribal organisations put it.

Schedule V of the Indian Constitution: The Schedule V of Constitution of India deals with control and administration of Scheduled Areas (SA) and scheduled Tribes (ST) residing in states other than Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram. In Scheduled areas the Government of India (GoI) plays an important role in safeguarding the economic and cultural interests of ST.

NCST: It refers to the National Commission of Scheduled Tribes. NCST is an Indian constitutional body that was established through Constitution Act, 2003. It was founded on 19 February 2004. The first executive of NCST was Kunwar Singh Tekam. The primary objectives of the NCST are: Protection, welfare and development & advancement of the Scheduled Tribes.

Cow Cabinet:



The Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan recently announced that the State Government is to constitute 'Cow Cabinet,' The decision has been taken to protect, conserve and develop 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 Cabinet would ensure the protection of 'gau mata'.

The first meeting of the cabinet is to be held on November 22, 2020. The meeting is to be held at Gau Sanctuary Salaria Agar Malwa.

The first meeting of the Cabinet will be held at 22nd November 2020 'Gopashtami' at the Cow Sanctuary in Agar-Malwa district named Kamdhenu Gau Abhyaranya.

Kamdhenu Gau Abhyaranya is India's first cow sanctuary which was set up by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led Madhya Pradesh government in September 2017.

Anti-Cow Slaughter Act, 2004: According to the act, the transportation of cattle by anyone in the state was prohibited. Special permission was mandatory for even transporting cattle through the state.

In 2019, the State Government (Congress) of Madhya Pradesh amended the act. According to the amendment, jail term of six months and a fine of Rs 25,000 to Rs 50,000 were imposed for those who were convicted of committing violence in the name of cow.

Religion: Cows in India are respected and worshipped by Hindus, Jains, Sikhs and Bhuddists so slaughtering of cow is a sin.

However, Bombay High Court, in 2016 had pronounced a judgment that consumption of beef is legal under Article 21 of Constitution of India. Article 21 is a Fundamental Right to Life.

Note: Article 48 of the Constitution of India is one of the Directive Principles which directs the state to make efforts for banning the Beef consumption, animal slaughtering, Smuggling, and their trading with neighbouring borders. It further states to organise Agriculture and Animal husbandry on modern and scientific lines.

Nitish Kumar:



Nitish Kumar is the Janata Dal (United) Chief who has been appointed as the next Chief Minister of Bihar while BJP's Sushil Modi will remain the Deputy Chief Minister.

Nitish Kumar was elected unanimously at the meeting in the presence of defence minister Rajnath Singh, who was appointed as an observer by the BJP central leadership. He will take oath as the Chief Minister of Bihar for the seventh time in 15 years.

Chief Minister (CM): The Chief Ministers in India are appointed by the Governor. On the other hand, the Members of Legislative Assembly are elected by the people.

According to Article 164, the Chief Minister is appointed by the Governor. Article 164 of the Constitution says that the Chief Minister shall be appointed by the governor.

After the State Legislative Assembly elections, a coalition group that secures majority in the house elects its leader. This is conveyed to the governor and he appoints him as the CM. When no party has secured majority in the election, the Governor shall ask the leader of the single largest party in the state to form the government.

Labour and Employment Ministry:



श्रम एवं रोजगार मंत्रालय
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LABOUR & EMPLOYMENT

The Ministry of Labour & Employment is one of the oldest and most important Ministries of the Government of India. It is India's federal ministry which is responsible to protect and safeguard the interest of workers in general and the poor, deprived and disadvantaged sections of the society. The Minister of Labour and Employment is Shri Santosh Kumar Gangwar.

Recently, the Union Ministry of Labour and Employment notified the draft rules under the Code on Social Security 2020.

The draft rules contains operating provisions of the Code on Social Security 2020 relating to Employees State Insurance Corporation, Employees Provident Fund, Gratuity, Social Security, Maternity Benefit, and Cess in respect of Building and Other Construction Workers, Gig Workers, Social security for Unorganised Workers and Platform Workers.

Draft Rules:

- It provide for Aadhaar-based registration which includes registration of unorganized workers, gig workers, and platform workers on the portal of Central Government.
- It contains provisions for Aadhaar based registration of Building and Other Construction Workers on the portal of both the Central Government and the State Government or the State Welfare Board. As per the draft rules, if a building worker is migrating from one state to another, he is entitled to obtain benefits in the state where he is currently working, and the Building Workers Welfare Board of that State provides these benefits to such a worker.
- It provides single electronic registration of an establishment and also single electronic cancellation of registration in case of closure activities.
- The rules include gratuity to an employee who was on fixed-term employment.
- Provision has also been made regarding manner and conditions for exiting of an establishment from EPFO and ESIC coverage.
- The procedure for self-assessment and payment of Cess in respect of building and other construction workers has been elaborated in the rules.
- The rate of interest for delayed payment has been reduced from 2% to 1% per month.

Under the rules, the Assessing Officer has the power to direct that neither the material nor the machinery can be removed or

disturbed from the construction site. The power for indefinitely stopping of construction work has been withdrawn in the draft rules. In addition, under the new draft rules, the assessing officer can visit the construction site only with the prior approval of the Secretary of the Building and Other Construction Workers Board.

Supreme Court:



The Supreme Court of India is the highest judicial forum and final court of appeal under the Constitution of India, the highest constitutional court, with the power of constitutional review. It consists of the Chief Justice of India and a maximum of 34 judges. It has extensive powers in the form of original, appellate and advisory jurisdictions. It is regarded as the most powerful public institution in India. It was established on 26 January 1950. It is headquartered in New Delhi. The current CJI of the Supreme Court is Sharad Arvind Bobde.

Recently, a Supreme Court Bench headed by Chief Justice of India S A Bobde during the hearing of a plea filed for release of Kerala journalist Siddique Kappan, observed that it is “trying to discourage” individuals from filing petitions under Article 32 of the Constitution.

Article 32:

Article 32 is one of the fundamental rights listed in the Constitution that each citizen is entitled.

It deals with the ‘Right to Constitutional Remedies’, or affirms the right to move the Supreme Court by appropriate proceedings for the enforcement of the rights conferred in Part III of the Constitution.

Under Article 32, only if a person's fundamental rights is violated then he can approach the Supreme Court directly.

Both the High Courts and the Supreme Court can be approached for violation or enactment of fundamental rights through five kinds of writs:

- Habeas corpus (related to personal liberty in cases of illegal detentions and wrongful arrests)
- Mandamus — directing public officials, governments, courts to perform a statutory duty;
- Quo warrant — to show by what warrant is a person holding public office;
- Prohibition — directing judicial or quasi-judicial authorities to stop proceedings which it has no jurisdiction for; and
- Certiorari — re-examination of an order given by judicial, quasi-judicial or administrative authorities.

When it comes to violation of fundamental rights, an individual can approach the High Court under Article 226 or the Supreme Court directly under Article 32. However, Article 226 is not a fundamental right like Article 32.

High Court:



High Courts are the highest courts in a state. Presently, there are 25 High Courts in India, with some states having a common High Court. They are an important part of the judicial system in India. Each High Court consists of a Chief Justice and such other judges as the President of India may appoint from time to time. Besides, the President has the power to appoint additional judges for a temporary period not exceeding two years; an acting judge when a permanent judge is absent or unable to perform his duties.

Recently, the President of India Ram Nath Kovind appointed 28 Additional Judges as Permanent Judges of Allahabad High Court through clause (1) of Article 217 of the Indian Constitution.

Article 217(1):

Every Judge of a High Court shall be appointed by the President by warrant under his hand and seal after consultation with the Chief Justice of India, the Governor of the State, and, in the case of appointment of a Judge other than the chief Justice, the chief Justice of the High court.

Every Judge of a High Court shall hold office, in the case of an additional or acting Judge, as provided in Article 224, and in any other case, until he attains the age of sixty two years Provided that -

- A Judge may, by writing under his hand addressed to the President, resign his office;

- A Judge may be removed from his office by the President in the manner provided in clause (4) of Article 124 for the removal of a Judge of the Supreme Court;
- The office of a Judge shall be vacated by his being appointed by the President to be a Judge of the Supreme Court or by his being transferred by the President to any other High Court within the territory of India.

Note: The Allahabad High Court is the largest of the 25 High Courts in the country because of its sanctioned strength of 160 judges and the number of cases registered,.

NGT:



It refers to the National Green Tribunal. The NGT was established in 2010. It was established by an act of Parliament of India. The Act is known as the National Green Tribunal Act, 2010. The Principal Bench of the NGT is in New Delhi apart from its regional benches in Chennai, Pune, Kolkata and Bhopal. The Chairperson of the NGT is a retired Judge of the Supreme Court Justice Lokeshwar Singh Panta. The NGT has been created after inspirations from the article 21 (Right to life and personal liberty) of the Constitution of India. NGT Act, 2010 of the Indian Parliament enables the creation of a special tribunal to handle the environmental cases.

Recently, the NGT has recently directed all the states and union territories to designate a nodal agency to protect the water bodies in their regions.

As per the directions of NGT:

- The Nodal Agencies shall hold meetings under the guidance of chief secretaries of the state and that the meetings should not be held later than 31 January, 2021.
- The meeting must be held on time to take stock of the situation and plan further.
- The central monitoring committee is also required to monitor the steps taken for restoration of water bodies by all states at least thrice in a year. The committee has to adopt a mechanism to monitor and address related grievances.

Note: The central monitoring committee was formed to monitor the remediation of 351 polluted river stretches.

Polluted river stretches in India:

During 2018, around 351 polluted river stretches on 323 rivers has been identified by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) of India. According to CPCB, these river stretches are located in the states of Gujarat, Assam and Maharashtra. The river stretches in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar are less polluted than these three states.

The Prohibition of Unlawful Religious Conversion Ordinance, 2020:



The UP Cabinet recently cleared an ordinance to ban religious conversion for marriage. The new law will put the onus on the defendant to prove that conversion was not for marriage.

The Ordinance makes forced religious conversion a non-bailable offence. It recommends 1-5 years imprisonment if an accused fails to prove that the conversion of the woman was not for marriage or by use of force, allurement etc. Such marriages would lead to imprisonment of a maximum of ten years and a penalty of Rupees 50,000.

The jail sentence for the offence would be 3-10 years if the woman is from the SC/ST community or is seen as part of mass conversion.

The ordinance would declare marriage for the sake of conversion null and void.

Furthermore, the proposed law does not include any restriction on interfaith marriage. If someone willingly wants to convert for marriage then, he or she will have to give two months notice in advance to the concerned district magistrate.

The Ordinance was cleared by the UP Cabinet after CM Yogi Adityanath promised to bring an “effective law” against unlawful marriages. It was done in the light of popularization of a politically motivated legally unrecognized term “Love Jihad”. However, the law itself contains no mention of love jihad.

National Press Day:

The National Press Day is observed annually on 16th November in India. It was on this day the Press Council of India (PCI) started functioning as a moral watchdog to ensure that the press maintains high standards and is not fettered by any influence or threats.

PCI: The Press Council of India is a statutory body functioning under the Press Council Act, 1978. It is the self-regulatory watchdog of the press, for the press and by the press. It was first set up on 4th July 1966 by the Parliament on the recommendations of the First Press Commission.

The Council has a chairman who traditionally is a retired Supreme Court judge, and 28 additional members of whom 20 are members of media, nominated by the newspapers, television channels and other media outlets operating in India.

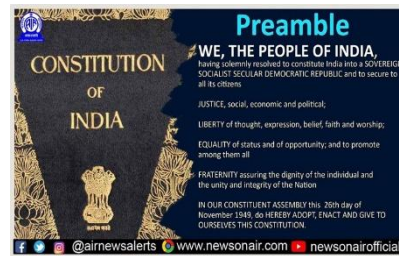
In the 28 member council, 5 are members of the lower house (Lok Sabha) and upper house (Rajya Sabha) of the Indian parliament and three represent culture literary and legal fields as nominees of Sahitya Academy, University Grant Commission and Bar Council of India.

Its main objective is preserving the freedom of the press and of maintaining and improving the standards of press in India.

It is a quasi-judicial authority. It adjudicates the complaints against and by the press for violation of ethics and for violation of the freedom of the press respectively.

The current Chairman of PCI is Hon'ble Mr. Justice Chandramauli Kumar Prasad, Judge, Supreme Court of India (Retd.)

Constitution Day:



The Constitution Day also called the Samvidhaan Divas or National Law Day or National Constitution Day is celebrated on 26 November every year.

The day is observed to mark the anniversary of the adoption of Indian Constitution on November 26, 1949 by the Constituent Assembly of India, which came into effect on 26 January 1950.

- The Government of India (GoI) declared 26 November as Constitution Day in 2015 by a gazette notification to mark the 125th birth anniversary of Dr Ambedkar, which was in 2015. The announcement was made by PM Modi while he laid the stone to the Statue of Equality in Mumbai.

Ambedkar who is also called the father of the Indian Constitution played a key role in the drafting of the constitution.

Previously this day was celebrated as National Law Day.

A number of activities aimed at highlighting and reiterating the values and principles enshrined in the Constitution are organized.

Constitution of India: It is the longest written Constitution in the world. It took 2 years, 11 months and 17 days for the drafting committee of the constituent assembly to frame the constitution. The Indian Constitution describes the fundamental

political code, structure, procedures, powers, and duties of the government institutions. It also explains fundamental rights, directive principles, and the duties of citizens.

Note: The Constitution of India was adopted on November 26, 1949 but the Constitution came into effect on January 26, 1950 and hence India celebrates its Republic Day on 26th January every year. And the Constitutional head of India, the President hoists the national flag on this day.

The year 2020 marked the 70th anniversary of adoption of the Constitution in 1949 by the Constituent Assembly. Number of events was organized where people read the Preamble of the Constitution.

India Policy

UMI:



It refers to the Urban Mobility India. The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India issued the National Urban Transport Policy, 2006 (NUTP). As part of the NUTP enunciations, the Ministry has taken the initiative to organize an annual international Conference-cum-Exhibition on Urban Mobility India popularly known as UMI.

Recently, the 13th Urban Mobility India Conference 2020 organized by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) on 9th November 2020. It was held virtually on the theme "Emerging Trends in Urban Mobility." The UMI Conference 2020 was inaugurated by Minister of State-MoS (Independent Charge-IC) Hardeep Singh Puri.

The primary objective of the conference was to disseminate information to the cities, whose officials attend the conference.

This year's theme focuses 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.

CCIM:



It refers to the Central Council of Indian Medicine. CCIM, the statutory body that regulates the Indian Medical systems of Ayurveda, Siddha, Sowa-Rigpa and Unani Medicine has issued a notification to streamline some of the provisions of the regulations concerning Post Graduate Ayurveda Education by adding clarity and definition to the same.

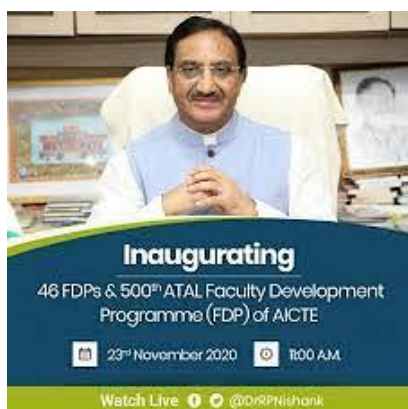
The notification relates to the Shalya and Shalakya streams of Post Graduate Education in Ayurveda. Ministry of AYUSH issued clarifications over Indian Medicine Central Council (Post Graduate Ayurveda Education) Amendment Regulations 2020.

As per the notification, it specifies a total of 58 surgical procedures that PG scholars of these streams need to be practically trained in so as to enable them to independently perform the said activities after completion of their PG Degree.

Shalya and Shalakya are independent Departments in Ayurveda colleges, performing such surgical procedures.

The question of mixing Ayurveda with Conventional (Modern) Medicine does not arise here as CCIM is deeply committed to maintaining the authenticity of Indian systems of medicine.

FDPs:



It refers to the online Faculty Development Programmes. The Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' recently inaugurated 46 online AICTE Training and Learning (ATAL) Academy Faculty Development Programmes (FDPs).

The programmes aim to train teachers of higher education institutions associated with the All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) in emerging areas in technology.

ATAL Academy is conducting FDPs in online mode, including the process of registration till certificate disbursal mechanism. In the year 2020-21, new thrust

areas in the field of Engineering, Management, Life Skills, and Design & Media have been incorporated. The FDPs will be conducted in 22 Indian states according to the new National Education Policy (2020).

The main objective of ATAL Academy is to provide quality technical education in the country and to promote research and entrepreneurship through training in various emerging fields. IITs, IIITs, NITs CU and research labs are organizing these ATAL FDPs. This year the online FDP programme will cost 10 crore rupees.

Campaigns and Schemes:

Fortification of Rice Scheme:



Fifteen State Governments have recently identified districts for implementing Centrally Sponsored Pilot Scheme on Fortification of Rice & its distribution through Public Distribution System.

The Government of India's (GoI) Department of Food and Public Distribution, has been implementing the "Centrally Sponsored Pilot Scheme on Fortification of Rice and its distribution through Public Distribution System".

The scheme is to be implemented for a period of three years between 2019-20 and 2022-23.

The Pilot Scheme has been approved for a period of three years beginning 2019-2020 with a total budget outlay of Rs.174.6 Crore.

This scheme was launched to take the country towards nutritional security. FCI has been asked to come up with a comprehensive plan for procurement and distribution of fortified rice in all the Districts of the country under Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) & Mid-Day Meal (MDM) Scheme from 2021-2022.

The distribution of fortified rice is already being implemented by 5 states namely Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh.

Need for Fortification: According to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4), India has been ranked at 94 among 107 countries in the Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2020. This is because 58.4 percent of children (6-59 months) are anaemic, 53.1 percent of women in the reproductive age group are anaemic and 35.7 percent of children under 5 are underweight. As per the experts, the deficiency of micronutrients is known as hidden hunger and is a serious health risk, these nutrients help in curbing malnutrition. The fortification initiative seeks to combat high malnutrition, promote food processing industry and also improve customer satisfaction.

Fortification of Rice: According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), fortification of rice is done by adding micronutrient powder to the rice. This powder adheres to rice grains. Fortifying rice involves grinding broken rice into powder, mixing it with nutrients, and then shaping it into rice-like kernels using an extrusion process. These fortified kernels

are then mixed with normal rice in a ratio ranging from 1:50 to 1:200.

FSSAI: It is an acronym for Food Safety and Standards Authority of India. FSSAI has been established under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006. The Ministry of Health & Family Welfare is the administrative Ministry for the implementation of FSSAI. Its main objective is to establish a single reference point for all matters relating to food safety and standards.

Local4Diwali:



It is the name of the campaign launched recently by the Union Ministry of Textiles. It has been launched to promote the Indian handicraft which is the cultural heritage of the country and also a source of livelihood for many.

According to the data of the Government of India, the handicrafts sector is a major sector of women empowerment as almost 55% of the workers and artisans are women.

The main objective of this campaign is to urge people to buy and gift Indian handicraft products on this Diwali. The campaign aims to give a boost to Indian handicrafts and artisans which in turn will help the handicraft artisans and workers in increasing their sales and promote their business.

Since the promotion of the idea of "Vocal for Local" by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, every sector is working towards promoting

local businesses and strengthening Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan ('self-reliant India' or 'self-sufficient India').

MoHFW:



It is an abbreviation of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. MoHFW is an Indian government ministry charged with health policy in India. It is also responsible for all government programs relating to family planning in India. The Minister of Health and Family Welfare holds cabinet rank as a member of the Council of Ministers. It was founded in 1976. Its headquarters is in New Delhi. The current Union Minister of Health and Family welfare is Harsh Vardhan and Minister of State is Ashwini Kumar Choubey.

Recently, MoHFW launched a 3-month SAANS (Social Action and Awareness to Neutralise Pneumonia Successfully) Campaign. It was launched on 12 November 2020 to reduce childhood pneumonia deaths.

The main focus of the scheme is to raise awareness regarding childhood pneumonia and early intervention with regard to childhood pneumonia, enabling caregivers across the country to identify critical symptoms at earlier stages and trigger prompt care-seeking with qualified providers.

The target of the initiative is to reduce less than 5 pneumonia deaths, per a 1000 live

births, to less than three deaths by 2025 through the accelerated SAANS.

VGf:



It refers to viability gap funding. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) recently approved the Continuation and Revamping of the Scheme for Financial Support to Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) in Infrastructure Viability Gap Funding (VGf) Scheme till 2024-25 with a total outlay of Rs. 8,100 crore.

The revamped scheme aims to provide financial support to PPP projects in the infrastructure sector spread over a period of five years ending 2024-25.

An amount of Rs 6,000 crore out of the total amount of Rs 8,100 crore has been earmarked for PPP projects in the economic infrastructure segment and remaining Rs 2,100 crore for social infrastructure projects.

Earlier, the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance had introduced "the Scheme for Financial Support to PPPs in Infrastructure" (Viability Gap Funding Scheme) in 2006. The scheme was limited to projects concerning economic infrastructure only.

The revamped Scheme will attract more PPP projects and facilitate private investment in the social sectors (health, education, waste water, solid waste management and water supply, among others). It is mainly related to introduction

of following two sub-schemes for mainstreaming private participation in social infrastructure:

The sub-scheme-1 will cater to Social Sectors such as Water Supply, Waste Water Treatment, Solid Waste Management, Health and Education sectors etc.

The projects eligible under this category should have at least 100% Operational Cost recovery.

The Central Government will provide maximum of 30 per cent of Total Project Cost (TPC) of the project as VGF and State Government, Sponsoring Central Ministry or Statutory Entity may provide additional support up to 30% of TPC.

The Sub scheme-2 will support demonstration or pilot social sectors projects. The projects may be from Education and Health sectors where there is at least 50% Operational Cost recovery.

In such projects, the Central Government and the State Governments together will provide up to 80% of capital expenditure and upto 50% of Operation & Maintenance (O&M) costs for the first five years.

PM-FME Scheme:



It refers to the Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro food processing Enterprises scheme. The PM-FME Scheme is a centrally sponsored scheme.

Recently, the scheme was inaugurated by the Union Minister Narendra Singh Tomar for Food Processing Industries for providing financial, technical, and business support for upgradation of existing micro food processing enterprises. The scheme was launched under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.

With an outlay of Rs. 10,000 crore, it will be implemented over a 5 year period from 2020-21 to 2024-25.

Key highlights of PM-FME Scheme:

- ❖ The Scheme adopts One District One Product (ODOP) approach to reap benefit of scale in terms of procurement of inputs, availing common services and marketing of products. The States would identify food product for a district keeping in view the existing clusters and availability of raw material.
- ❖ The scheme aims to enhance the competitiveness of existing individual micro-enterprises in the unorganized segment of the food processing industry and promote formalization of the sector.
- ❖ The scheme seeks to provide support to FPOs, SHGs, and producers co-operatives along their entire value chain.

The objectives of the scheme are:

- ❖ Support for capital investment for upgradation and formalization with registration for Goods and Services Tax (GST), Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) hygiene standards and Udyog Aadhar.
- ❖ Capacity building through skill training, imparting technical

knowledge on food safety, standards & hygiene and quality improvement.

- ❖ Hand holding support for preparation of detailed project report (DPR), availing bank loan and upgradation.
- ❖ Support to Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), Self Help Groups (SHGs), producers cooperatives for capital investment, common infrastructure and support branding and marketing.
- ❖ The scheme envisions to directly assist the 2,00,000 micro food processing units for providing financial, technical, and business support for upgradation of existing micro food processing enterprises. The scheme also lays special focus on SCs/STs woman and aspirational districts and FPOs, SHGs and producer cooperatives.

Project Kirana:



It is a programme launched jointly in India by Mastercard and United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Both the entities have collaborated under Women's Global Development and Prosperity Initiative (W-GDP) to launch the programme to help women entrepreneurs grow and thrive.

Project Kirana is a 2 year programme. It will be rolled out in select cities of Uttar Pradesh, including Lucknow, Varanasi and

Kanpur. The project will work to increase revenue, digital payments and expand financial inclusion. The programme will be implemented by DAI Digital Frontiers and ACCESS Development Services.

The main objectives of the project are as follows:

- To build digital and financial literacy of the women in the state.
- To improve business management skills of women.
- To address cultural and other barriers to women becoming successful Kirana entrepreneurs.
- To work towards increasing revenue streams, expanding financial inclusion and digital payments adoption of Kirana shops that are owned or operated by women.

USAID: It is an acronym for United States Agency for International Development. USAID is an independent agency of the United States federal government. It is primarily responsible for administering civilian foreign aid and development assistance. It was founded on 3rd November 1961. It is headquartered in Washington, D.C., United States. The current Administrator of USAID is Mark Green.

GoI:



It refers to the Government of India. The GoI recently, approved 7 proposals of Food Processing Projects worth over 234 crore

rupees under the Scheme for Creation of Infrastructure for Agro-Processing Cluster.

The scheme was approved virtually at the Inter-Ministerial Approval Committee meeting chaired by Minister of Food Processing Industries Narendra Singh Tomar.

The scheme for Creation of Infrastructure for Agro-Processing Cluster was approved in 2017 under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMJSY) to incentivize the setting up of agro processing clusters in the country.

The main aim of this scheme is the development of modern infrastructure to encourage entrepreneurs to set up food processing units based on cluster approach.

JJM:



It refers to Jal Jeevan Mission. JJM is a central government initiative under the Ministry of Jal Shakti. This mission aims to ensure access of piped water for every household in India. The Union Cabinet on 13 August 2019 had approved JJM to provide Functional Household Tap Connection (FHTC) to every rural household by 2024. JJM has been launched in partnership with States, to enable every household in villages to have a FHTC within the premises by 2024.

Recently, a multi-disciplinary Technical Committee set up under the Jal Jeevan Mission has recommended 5 technologies to provide field level solutions to the states. These technologies are:

1. Presto Online Chlorinator: It disinfects water and removes bacterial contamination using a non-electricity dependent online chlorinator.
2. Grundfos AQPure: It is a solar energy-based ultra-filtration water treatment plant.
3. Johkasou Technology: It uses advanced anaerobic-aerobic configuration for inbuilt water treatment
4. Janajal Water on Wheel: It is an Internet on Things-based, GPS-enabled technology for doorstep delivery of safe water.
5. FBTec: It is a decentralized sewage treatment system.

The FDPs has been recognized by the London-based organization, Book of World Records, as a world record, under which 1,000 online FDPs in over 100 emerging areas will benefit one lakh faculty members across premier institutions like IITs, NITs, and IIITs.

Persons in News

Dr Susanta Kar:



He is a Senior Scientist, Molecular Parasitology and Immunology, CSIR-CDRI, Lucknow. He has been chosen by the Society of Biological Chemists, (India) for this year's Prof.A N Bhaduri Memorial Lecture Award for his contributions towards defining the survival tactics of *Leishmania donovani*.

About *Leishmania Donovanii*: It is a protozoan parasite that infects macrophages and is a causative agent of visceral leishmaniasis (Kala Azar), a lethal infectious disease affecting millions worldwide.

The research team of Susanta Kar studied the interaction of *Leishmania* with immune cells like macrophages, dendritic cells and T cells and the fate of these interactions on modulation of various intracellular signaling cascades that ultimately affect immune response and infection progression.

SBC(I): Society of Biological Chemists (India) or SBC(I) was founded in 1930. Its headquarters is at the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru. This prestigious society was registered under the Societies Act in the then Princely State of Mysore.

A N Bhaduri Memorial Lecture Award: The Prestigious award is conferred in every 2 years. The recipient of the award should be below 50 years of age. The Award is given for Biological Chemistry and Allied sciences, preferably related to parasitic infections.

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Yashvardhan K Sinha:



He is a former diplomat, who has served as high commissioner of India to the United Kingdom and Sri Lanka. He was appointed as the Information commissioner in 2019. He was recently appointed as the new Chief Information Commissioner (CIC) of India. He was administered the oath by the President Ram Nath Kovind.

The post of CIC was lying vacant since the retirement of Bimal Julka on August 26, 2020.

Apart from Sinha, three new Information Commissioners were also administered the oath of office, by the newly appointed CIC. They are:

1. Shri Heeralal Samariya who is a former IAS officer, who served as Secretary in Ministry of Labour & Employment
2. Ms. Saroj Punhani who is an IA&AS officer, who was holding the post of Deputy Comptroller & Auditor General (HR & Training)
3. Shri Uday Mahurkar who is a veteran journalist, was functioning as Senior Deputy Editor with a leading media house.

CIC: It refers to the Chief Information Commissioner.

Eligibility of CIC under Section 12(6) of the Right to Information Act, 2005 says that the CIC and the Information Commissioners shall not be a Member of Parliament and Section 12(5) of the Act states that he should

a person of eminence in public life, experience in law, science and technology.

The CIC will hold office for three years. Earlier it was five years.

The roles and functions of the CIC are defined by the right to Information Act, 2005. The act also defines the tenure, terms of service and salaries of the commissioner.

Central Information Commission: It was constituted in 2005. It acts upon complaints from individuals those who are not able to submit information to a Central Public Information Officer or a State Public Information Officer.

Rajiv Jalota:



He is a 1988 batch Maharashtra cadre IAS officer. He is currently serving as 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.

He has recently been appointed as chairperson of Mumbai Port Trust (MbPT) by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet on the proposal of the Shipping Ministry.

The post of Mumbai Port Trust chairman was vacant after former chairman Sanjay Bhatia retired on 31st July and was

appointed as Lokayukta of Maharashtra (Established in 1971).

Sheikh Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa:



He is the longest-serving Prime Minister of Bahrain. Infact, he was the longest-serving Prime Minister of any government in the world. He passed away on 11 November 2020 at the age of 84.

Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa (1935 – 2020) was a Bahraini royal and politician who had served as the Prime Minister of Bahrain from 19 January 1970 until his death on 11 November of 2020. He took over the office a year before Bahrain's independence on 15 August 1971. The Al Khalifa family has ruled Bahrain since 1783.

The Bahrain PM had won United Nations' top Honor for strengthening the global goal of sustainable development. He was also the winner of World Peace Culture Award in 2017.

Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa has named crown prince Salman al-Khalifa as the new Prime Minister of the country.

Bahrain: Bahrain, officially the Kingdom of Bahrain, is a sovereign state in the Persian Gulf. The island nation is situated between the Qatari peninsula and the north eastern coast of Saudi Arabia, The island nation comprises a small archipelago made up of 51 natural islands and an additional 33 artificial islands, centered around Bahrain Island which makes up around 83 percent of the country's landmass. The Capital of Bahrain

is Manama. The currency used here is Bahraini dinar.

Bahrain is a staunch ally of neighbouring Saudi Arabia and the United States. It is also the home base of the US Navy's Fifth Fleet.

Kash Patel:



Kashyap Pramod Patel, popularly known as Kash Patel is an Indian American who has recently been named as the Chief of Staff to the Acting US Defence Secretary Chris Miller.

The new appointment came a day after Donald Trump fired Defence Secretary Mark Esper and designated Chris Miller, as the Acting Secretary.

Patel had previously served as senior counsel for counter-terrorism at the House Permanent Select Committee. In June 2019, he was appointed as senior director of Counter-terrorism Directorate of the National Security Council (NSC) in the White House.

He is currently on the National Security Council staff. He will be replacing Jen Stewart, who resigned earlier in the day.

Vidisha Maitra:



She is an Indian diplomat who has recently been elected to the UN's Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ).

In a significant victory for India at the United Nations, 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.

She was recommended by the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly, which deals with administrative and budgetary issues, to the Assembly for a three-year term beginning January 1, 2021.

India has been a member of the committee since its inception in 1946. The victory comes as India gets ready to sit in the UN Security Council as a non-permanent member for a two-year term beginning January 2021.

ACABQ: It is an acronym for Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. The ACABQ is an expert Committee of 16 Members elected by the General Assembly for a period of 3 years, on the basis of a broad geographical representation, personal qualifications and experience. The members serve in a personal capacity and not as representatives of Member States.

The Committee holds three sessions a year with total meeting time between nine and ten months per year.

The Advisory Committee is serviced by a secretariat headed by an Executive Secretary, assisted by a Deputy. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee are elected by the Members of the Advisory Committee.

The Committee performs several functions. They are:

- To examine and report on the budget submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly.
- To advise the General Assembly concerning any administrative and budgetary matters referred to it.
- To consider and report to the General Assembly on the auditors' reports on the accounts of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies.
- To examine, on behalf of the General Assembly, the administrative budgets of the specialized agencies and proposals for financial arrangements with such agencies.

Sadat Rahman:



He is a 17 year old teenager from Bangladesh who has been awarded the prestigious International Children's Peace Prize 2020. The award was presented by Nobel Peace Prize laureate Malala Yousafzai, 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.

International Children's Peace Prize: The International Children's Peace Prize is awarded annually since 2005 to a child who has made a special effort to promote children's rights and better the situation of vulnerable children. This prize is given by the International children's rights organization KidsRights based in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

Barack Obama:



Barack Hussein Obama II, a member of the Democratic Party, is an American politician and attorney. He was the first African-American president of the United States from 2009 to 2017. He previously served as a U.S. senator from Illinois from 2005 to 2008 and an Illinois state senator from 1997 to 2004. Obama was born on 4 August 1961 in Honolulu, Hawaii.

The former President Barack Obama's first presidential memoir "A Promised Land" sold nearly 890,000 copies in the U.S. and Canada in its first 24 hours, putting it on track to be the best selling presidential memoir in modern history. The book was published by Penguin Random House imprint Crown. The book was written by Obama during his tenure as the President of United States (2009-17).

A Promised Land is the first of two volumes of the book. This volume tells about his early political life, his presidential campaign in 2008, and ends with the death of Osama bin Laden in 2011. The memoirs include Obama's impressions of several American and world leaders, including Manmohan Singh, Sonia Gandhi, and Vladimir Putin.

Manuel Merino:



Manuel Arturo Merino de Lama is a Peruvian politician who was fifth president of Peru between 10 and 15 November 2020. He also serves as a Member of Congress representing the Tumbes constituency for the 2020–2021 term. He previously served in Congress in the 2001–2006 term and 2011–2016 term.

Recently, he was forced to resign just five days after taking office. He replaced President Martín Vizcarra, who was removed in an impeachment procedure over bribery allegations, which he denies.

He resigned after a violent crackdown on demonstrations against him.

Peru: Peru officially the Republic is a country in western South America. It lies wholly in the Southern Hemisphere. It is bordered in the north by Ecuador and Colombia, in the east by Brazil, in the southeast by Bolivia, in the south by Chile, and in the south and west by the Pacific Ocean. It is a mega diverse country. It is a home to a section of Amazon rainforest and

Machu Picchu, an ancient Incan city high in the Andes Mountains. The capital of Peru is Lema and the currency used there is Sol.

Mridula Sinha:



Mridula Sinha (1942 – 2020) was the former Governor of Goa and veteran BJP leader who passed away on 18th November 2020.

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. Her works Like Jyon Mehendi Ko Rang, a novel adapted into a T.V. Serial and short Story I "Dattak Pita" and autobiography on Vijayaraje scindia Rajpath se lok path par are made into feature films as Dattak and Ek thi Rani Aisi Bhi respectively.

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. She was also the former chairperson of Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB), Ministry of Human Resource Development.

She will be remembered for starting cultural events called 'Chaand ke Saath' in the lawns of Governor House. She had even opened a cattle shed inside the Raj Bhawan.

Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank':



Ramesh Pokhriyal born 15 July 1959 is known by his nom de plume Nishank. He is an Indian politician who was appointed on 31 May 2019 to serve as Minister of Human Resource Development in the Second Modi ministry. As of July 2020, following the ministry's name change, his title was changed to Minister of Education.

He initially served society as a teacher and later as a journalist. His political journey started in 1987 as the central spokesperson of the Uttar Pradesh (now Uttarakhand) Sangharsh Samiti. In 1991, he was elected as an MLA from the Karnprayag Assembly. In 1996, for the first time, he became a Cabinet Minister in Uttar Pradesh. He is recognized in the country and abroad as a writer, litterateur, poet, sensitive thinker on the Himalayas and the Ganges.

Recently, Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' has been chosen for Vatayan International Awards. He for will be conferred with the Vatayan Lifetime Achievement Award at a virtual ceremony on 21st November, 2020. He award is being conferred to the union education minister of poetry and other literary works.

Vatayan International Awards: The prestigious awards are given by the Vatayan-UK organization in London in honour of poets, writers and artists for their exemplary work in their respective fields.

Earlier, many eminent personalities like Javed Akhter, Praseen Joshi, have been

awarded the Vatayan Awards for their literary contribution.

Shri Pokhriyal's publication including the German version 'nureinWunsch' of Pokhriyal's story collection 'Just a Desire', has been published at the Afro Asian Institute Hamburg while his 'Sparsh Ganga' initiative has been included in Mauritius school curriculum. He has penned more than 75 books on wide ranging issues, which have also been translated into many national and foreign languages.

He has earlier been conferred with several awards in the field of literature and administration including the Sahitya Gaurav Samman by Former President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, Sahitya Bharati Award by the former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Bharat Gaurav Samman, Outstanding Achievement Award by Global Organization of Person of Indian Origin by Mauritius awarded in Ukraine in the area of environmental protection, Good Governance Award by Dubai Government, "Himal Gaurav Samman" by Nepal.

Girish Chandra Murmu:



He is the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India who has been elected External Auditor of Inter Parliamentary Union, Geneva, for a three-year term.

He will take charge of this position from the Supreme Audit Institution of Switzerland.

Mala Adiga:



She is an Indian-American who has been appointed by Joe Biden as the policy director of his wife Jill Biden, who will be the first lady.

Adiga has served as a senior advisor to Jill and a senior policy advisor on the Biden-Kamala Harris campaign. He, previously was the director for Higher Education and Military Families at the Biden Foundation.

She even served as the deputy assistant secretary of state for Academic Programs at the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs during former President Barack Obama's administration.

Other appointments:

Louisa Terrell, who currently oversees legislative affairs for the Biden-Harris transition team, will serve as the director of the White House Office of Legislative Affairs in Biden administration.

Cathy Russell, Vice-Chair of the Biden-Harris campaign, has been named as the director of the White House Office of Presidential Personnel.

Places in news

Formation Day:



The Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi, President Ram Nath Kovind and Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu greeted people of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Punjab, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Anadman and Nicobar, Lakshadweep and Puducherry on their formation day.

All the above mentioned states observe their foundation day or Statehood day respectively.

Andhra Pradesh Governor Biswa Bhusan Harichandan paid rich tributes to Sri Potti Sriramulu and paid homage to freedom fighters on the occasion of Andhra Pradesh Formation Day at a programme held in Raj Bhavan. Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy unfurled the national flag at his official residence at Tadepalli, Guntur District, He paid floral tributes at the statue of freedom fighter, Potti Sriramulu and Telugu Thalli.

WEF:



It refers to the World Economic Forum. The WEF is headquartered in Cologny, Geneva Canton, Switzerland. It is an international NGO, founded in January 1971.

The WEF's mission is stated as "committed to improving the state of the world by engaging business, political, academic, and other leaders of society to shape global, regional, and industry agendas". The founder and Executive Chairman of WEF is Klaus Schwab.

Recently, World Economic Forum (WEF) selected 4 Indian Cities along with 32 other cities from 22 countries and six continents for pioneering a policy road map for smart cities. These smart cities are being developed under the G20 Global Smart Cities Alliance. There are totally 36 cities were selected all over the world.

The 4 Indian cities selected are Bengaluru, Indore, Faridabad, and Hyderabad. The other cities selected under the programme are London, Toronto, Moscow, Brasilia, Melbourne, Dubai etc.

These are among the 36 cities across the world that has pledged to adopt new technologies to help the government in managing the COVID-19 pandemic despite constrained resources.

The G20 Global Smart Cities Alliance will give these chosen cities Procedures, laws and regulations to use new technology responsibly.

The pioneer cities launched their activities at a global event broadcast on the 17th of November 2020 by the Smart City Expo World Congress which is the world's premier smart cities event.

The 36 pioneer cities that have been recruited will collaborate with the global experts to enhance their city policies in areas ranging from cybersecurity and privacy protection to better services for the differently-abled people.

These cities will adopt five policies: they are as follows:

1. Better Broadband Coverage
2. Privacy Protection
3. Accountability for Cyber Security
4. Better Accessibility to Digital City Services for Physically Disabled
5. Increased Openness of City Data

With these inputs a road map to becoming a smart city will be framed, which will then be used by other cities in the world in following phases of the initiative.

G20 Global Smart City Alliance: The G20 Global Smart City Alliance was formed in June 2019 during the Osaka G20 Summit held in Osaka, Japan. The main objective of the alliance is to accelerate best practices, foster greater openness and mitigate potential risks and public trust. India joined the alliance as a founding partner.

Kerala:



It is a state on the southwestern Malabar Coast of India. It was formed on 1 November 1956, following the passage of the States Reorganization Act, by combining Malayalam-speaking regions of the erstwhile states of Travancore-Cochin and Madras. It is bordered by Karnataka to the north and northeast, Tamil Nadu to the east and south, and the Lakshadweep Sea to the west. Its capital is Thiruvananthapuram.

The current Governor and Chief Minister of Kerala are Arif Mohammad Khan and Pinarayi Vijayan respectively.

Recently, Kerala's Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurated India's first of its kind solar energy-driven miniature train. It was inaugurated at the Veli Tourist Village.

The train, developed with an outlay of Rs 10 crore was a part of a string of projects totally worth Rs 60 crore taken up to elevate the facilities at the panoramic destination to international standards. The train will be an attraction for children especially.

The Chief Minister also dedicated an "Urban Park" and a swimming pool at the eco-friendly tourist village, located on the outskirts of the state capital where the Veli Lake meets the Arabian Sea.

Features of the Train: The miniature rail has all the features of a fully-equipped rail system. It includes a tunnel, station and a ticket office. It covers a distance of 2.5 km with three bogies that can accommodate around 45 people at a time.

The eco-friendly solar-powered 2.5 km miniature railway will enable visitors to enjoy the beauty of nature.

The surplus energy generated by the system will be routed to the Kerala State Electricity Board Limited (KSEBL) grid.

Formation Day: The Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi, President Ram Nath Kovind and Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu greeted people of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Punjab, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andaman and Nicobar, Lakshadweep and Puducherry on their formation day.

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Arunachal Pradesh:



Arunachal Pradesh is the northeastern most state of India. It borders the states of Assam and Nagaland to the south. It shares international borders with Bhutan in the west, Myanmar in the east, and a disputed border with China in the north at the McMahon Line. It is the largest of the Seven Sister States of Northeast India. It became a full-fledged State on 20th February, 1987. Its Capital is Itanagar. The current Governor and Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh are B. D. Mishra governor and Prema Khandu respectively.

Recently, the first solar-based Integrated Multi-Village Water Supply Project (IMVWSP) of India was launched by Union Jal Shakti Minister, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat has launched in Arunachal Pradesh.

The solar-based lift water supply project which is 'first of its kind' in the country has been commissioned at a cost of Rs 28.50 crore. The project is as per Prime Minister Modi's vision for the utilization of multiple resources.

The project is said to provide drinking water to 17,480 people in 39 villages of Lower Dibang Valley district in Arunachal Pradesh.

The IMVWSP 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 High-density polyethylene (HDPE) conduit for mains, sub-mains and distribution networking system. The project also includes amusement park including swimming pool, amphitheatre, fountains, and sit-outs.

Chief Minister Pema Khandu also launched the "Arunachal Jal Sankalp" programme in this event. This is a state-government programme to supplement Jal Jeevan Mission.

Jal Shakti Ministry: Ministry of Jal Shakti is a ministry under Government of India. It was founded in May 2019 under the second Modi ministry. This was formed by merging of two ministries which are Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation and Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation. The ministry was formed with an aim not only to clean the river Ganges but also encompass any international or national disputes between inter-state water bodies and the rivers which are shared by India along with other neighboring countries. A special

project named "Namami Gange" has also been launched to achieve this aim. Gajendra Singh Shekhawat is the Minister of Jal Shakti while the Minister of State (Jal Shakti) is Rattan Lal Kataria.

Uttarakhand:



It is a state in northern India crossed by the Himalayas. Uttarakhand became the 27th state of the Republic of India on 9 November 2000. It was carved from the Himalayan districts of Uttar Pradesh. Its winter Capital is Dehradun and summer capital is Gairsain. The Chief Minister and the Governor of Uttarakhand are Trivendra Singh Rawat and Baby Rani Maurya respectively.

Dobra-Chanti Jhula (suspension) bridge: Recently, the Chief Minister of Uttarakhand Trivendra Singh Rawa inaugurated the longest single-lane motorable suspension bridge of India. The Dobra-Chanti Jhula (suspension) bridge was inaugurated in Tehri-Garhwal district of Uttarakhand on the occasion of the state's 21st foundation. Uttarakhand was formed on 9th November, 2000.

The bridge is 725-metre long and has been built in 14 years over the Tehri lake with a cost of Rs. 2.95 crore. The bridge built in 14 years will cut travel time between Tehri and Pratapnagar from 5 to 1.5 hours.

Uttarakhand Chief Minister also launched the Mukhya Mantri Saur Swarojgar yojana. The initiative was launched on 8 October

2020 at the Veer Chandra Singh Gharwali Auditorium in Dehradun, Uttarakhand.

DMC-Uttarakhand:



It refers to the Dehradun Municipal Corporation. DMC of Uttarakhand recently launched an initiative named "Plastic Lao MASK LE JAO" to fight against the menace of plastic waste and contain the spread of Covid-19. Under this initiative, it has distributed five thousand face masks in exchange for plastic waste.

Municipal commissioner of Dehradun, Vinay Shankar Pandey by being the first to bring plastic waste from his house and get a face mask created awareness in the public against plastic waste and also the importance of masks.

Madhya Pradesh:



Madhya Pradesh (MP) is the second largest Indian state by area. It borders the states of Uttar Pradesh to the northeast, Chhattisgarh to the southeast, Maharashtra to the south, Gujarat to the west, and Rajasthan to the northwest. Its capital is Bhopal. The current Chief Minister and Governor of Madhya Pradesh is Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Lal Ji Tandon respectively.

Recently, the Chief Minister of MP Shivraj Singh Chouhan launched a roadmap to "Aatma Nirbhar Madhya Pradesh 2023" through a virtual event. Under the roadmap, a special focus will be on health and education in the state.

Under this roadmap, a network of hospitals will be established in the state focusing on the health sector. Economy and employment will also be major focus areas and small and cottage industries too will be motivated.

The roadmap of Aatma Nirbhar Madhya Pradesh has been prepared on the basis of the inputs received by the experts in the 4 seminars that were conducted earlier on physical infrastructure, good governance, health and education to prepare the roadmap of the state.

Along with launching the roadmap to Aatma Nirbhar Madhya Pradesh, the chief minister also transferred the interest-free loan of 10 thousand rupees each into the accounts of rural street vendors under the Mukhya Mantri rural Street Vendor Loan Scheme.

The Mukhya Mantri Rural Street Vendor Scheme has been launched by the state government, on the line of Pradhanmantri street vendor scheme with an objective to provide a loan up to Rupees 10,000 to street vendors in rural areas.

Under this scheme, the State Govt scheme will bear 14 per cent interest subsidy per loan beneficiary (for loans upto Rupees 10,000).

Karnataka:



It is a state in the south western region of India. It was formed on 1 November 1956, with the passage of the States Reorganisation Act. Originally known as the State of Mysore, it was renamed Karnataka in 1973. Its capital city is Bangalore. The current Chief Minister and Governor of Karnataka are B. S. Yediyurappa and Vajubhai Rudabhai Vala respectively.

Recently, the BS Yediyurappa led cabinet gave approval to the formation of Vijayanagar district on November 18, 2020. Vijayanagara will be the 31st district of the State and will be headquartered at Hospete. The Karnataka cabinet approved to carve out Vijayanagar district from the mine-rich Bellari district of Karnataka.

Yadgir was the last district created in Karnataka when it was carved out of Kalaburagi in 2009.

Vijaynagar: Vijayanagara is a place named after the Vijayanagara Empire that ruled the state for many years. It was the capital city of the historic Vijayanagara Empire. It was located on the banks of the Tungabhadra River. It spread over a large area and included the modern era Group of Monuments at Hampi site in Ballari district and others in and around that district in Karnataka, India.

A part of Vijayanagara ruins known as Hampi have been designated as a UNESCO world heritage site.

Assam:

Assam is a state in northeastern India known for its wildlife, archeological sites and tea plantations. It is situated south of the eastern Himalayas along the Brahmaputra and Barak River valleys. Assam is known for Assam tea and Assam silk. The state was the first site for oil drilling in Asia. Its capital is Dispur. The current Governor and the Chief Minister of Assam are Professor Jagdish Mukhi and Sarbananda Sonowal respectively.

Award (Assam):



Recently, Northeastern state Assam has been conferred 4 awards in fisheries sector from the National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB) for the success in the fishery sector.

- The state has got the best state award under the category of best hilly and North Eastern state.
- Assam Apex Cooperative Fish Marketing and Processing Federation Limited (FISHFED) has been selected under the category of best hilly and North eastern government organization.
- Nagaon district has been selected under best hilly and North Eastern district category.
- Amal Medhi, a farmer from Nalbari district of Assam won first place under the category of hilly and North Eastern fish farmer category.
- Other fisheries awards:

- The following were the other awards received are
- Odisha bagged the best state in marine state category
- Uttar Pradesh won the best state award in Inland State category

All the awards carry Rs 10 lakh prize money, a shawl, a certificate and a memento.

This initiative is to recognize various states, districts and farmers with significant contribution in the field. As India is the second largest producer of fish in the world and thus the sector has a high contribution to the Indian Economy. While reviving the economy from the effect of the Pandemic, it is important to emphasize on fisheries in order to boost declining economic growth.

Note: There are 23 minor and five major fishing harbours in India. The major harbours are Mangalore, Vishakhapatnam, Chennai, Kochi, and Kolkata.

Indo-Israeli Centre of Excellence (CoE)(ASSAM):



Recently, the Chief Minister of Assam, Sarbananda Sonowal laid the foundation stone of Indo-Israeli Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Vegetables Protected Cultivation at Khetri on the outskirts of Guwahati.

The Indo-Israeli Centre of Excellence for Vegetables Protected Cultivation will be built under the Agricultural Project of India

and is estimated to be set up at an investment of Rs 10.33 Crore.

The CoE aims to provide exposure to the latest Israeli technologies to the farmers of Assam which will help them in maximizing their production and income. Furthermore the facility will boost agricultural and horticultural production in Assam leading to greater economic rewards to state's farmers.

Maharashtra:



Maharashtra is a state in the western peninsular region of India occupying a substantial portion of the Deccan Plateau. It was formed on 1 May 1960 by merging the western and south-western parts of the Bombay State, Berar and Vidarbha, and the north-western parts of the Hyderabad State and splitting Saurashtra (in present-day Gujarat) by the States Reorganisation Act. Its capital is Mumbai. The Chief Minister and the Governor of Maharashtra are Uddhav Thackeray and Bhagat Singh Koshiyari respectively.

The first solar power-enabled Textile Mill in Asia is set to be set up in Parbhani district, Maharashtra.

With the overall cost Rs. 100 crore of setting up the project, the Jai Bhawani women's cooperative textile mill which is spread across 30 acres of land will be first in Asia that will operate entirely on solar power.

Once functional, the mill will not only process cotton to cloth but would also provide jobs to many women in the district. The mill will undertake a lot of activities including ginning, pressing, weaving and spinning of cotton.

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.

Meghalaya:



It is a state in northeastern India. Meghalaya was formed by carving out two districts from the state of Assam: the United Khasi Hills and Jaintia Hills, and the Garo Hills on 21 January 1972. Its capital is Shillong. The current Governor and Chief Minister of Meghalaya are Satya Pal Malik and Conrad Sangma respectively.

Recently, the cherry blossom festival was cancelled due to COVID-19. It is the only Cherry festival being conducted in India.

Every year the India International cherry blossom festival is hosted by Meghalaya in the starting of November. It is organized by the Government of Meghalaya. The festival is held in Shillong to celebrate the unique autumn flowering of the Himalayan cherry blossoms and mark the beginning of India's version of autumn. The festival hosts live music, stalls showcasing the cuisine, beauty pageants, etc.

Note: Meghalaya is not only the home to a large variety of fruits, vegetables, spices, and medicinal plants but is also famous for its large variety of orchids — nearly 325 of them. Of these, the largest variety is found in the Mawsmat, Mawmluh and Sohrarim forests in the Khasi hills.

Cherry blossom festival is a national festival of Michigan. It is celebrated in Japan as well.

Himachal Pradesh:



Himachal Pradesh is a northern Indian state in the Himalayas. It is situated in the Western Himalayas; it is one of the eleven mountain states of India. Himachal Pradesh shares borders with the union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh to the north, and the states of Punjab to the west, Haryana to the southwest, and Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh to the south. The state also has a border with the autonomous region of Tibet to the east. Its summer capital is Shimla and winter capital is Dharamshala. The current Governor and Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh are Bandaru Dattatreya and Jai Ram Thakur respectively.

Recently, the Himachal Pradesh Government launched "Snow Safety Campaign" to make people aware of the COVID-19 Pandemic as well as to collect information about diseases like TB, sugar, blood pressure and leprosy, across the state.

Under this campaign, a door to door campaign has also been started. Health,

Ayurveda, Women and Child Development, Panchayati Raj department, district administration and almost 8000 teams of NGOs will work in this campaign. This will ensure door-to-door data collection of people's health parameters.

Katchal Island:



It is one of the Nicobar Islands, India. Katchal Island was previously known as Tihanyu. Katchal is inhabited by Nicobari Tribes and Migrated Tamilians (For Rubber plantation workers under Sastri-Srimao Bandaranayaka Pact of 1964).

Recently, Katchal Island was in news because a fuel tanker was dangerously drifting towards the pristine Katchal Island in Nicobar due to power failure. The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) averted mishap off the Nicobar Islands towed the fuel tanker back to safe waters.

Ladakh:



Ladakh is a region administered by India as a union territory, and constituting a part of the larger region of Kashmir, which has been the subject of dispute between India, Pakistan, and China since 1947. Until 2019, Ladakh was a region of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. In August 2019, the

Parliament of India passed an act by which Ladakh became a union territory on 31 October 2019. The capital of Ladakh is Leh, Kargil. The current Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh is Radha Krishna Mathur.

Recently, 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 worth Rs 122 crore was inaugurated by Air Marshal V R Chaudhari, Commander-in-chief, Western Air Command.

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.

It is the largest solar project at a high altitude in the entire Leh in the Union Territory of Ladakh. It has been established at IAF Station Leh. The project was conceptualized under Make In India. It is 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.

Uttar Pradesh: Uttar Pradesh is a state in northern India. It was created on 1 April 1937 as the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh during British rule, and was renamed Uttar Pradesh in 1950. Its Capital city is Lucknow. The Chief Minister and the Governor of Uttar Pradesh are Yogi Adityanath and Anandiben Patel respectively.

Har Ghar Nal Yojana (UP):



It is a rural drinking water supply project that was recently launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. An initiative by the Modi government was launched was the residents of Sonbhadra and Mirzapur district in Uttar Pradesh. The project aims to provide tap water connections to around 2,995 villages which will benefit 42 lakh people.

These regions were chosen for this project because, despite having many rivers like Ganga, Ghaghara, Yamuna and Sarayu, water scarcity prevails in the region. In addition, the river water and the underground water in the region is also getting polluted rapidly. Therefore, it is important to provide clean drinking water to the region.

About: The scheme was launched with an objective to provide tap water to every Household. Under the Har Ghar Nal Yojana, water of lakes and river will be purified and supplied to the families in Sonbhadra. Under this scheme, all households are eligible to claim the benefits of the Har Ghar Nal Yojana.

Maryada Purushottam Sri Ram Airport (UP):



It is the new name of Ayodhya airport. The Uttar Pradesh (UP) Cabinet recently cleared the proposal to rename the Ayodhya airport. The proposal for the same will be sent to the Ministry of Civil Aviation after it is passed by the state Assembly.

The announcement was made by UP Chief Minister Adityanath 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.

Science and Technology

ISRO:



It is an abbreviation for the Indian Space Research Organization. ISRO is the space agency of the Government of India (GoI) and was formed on 15 August 1969. It superseded the erstwhile "Indian National Committee for Space Research" (INCOSPAR) which was established in 1962 by the efforts of Independent India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, and his close aide and scientist Vikram Sarabhai. In 1972, the

Government of India had set up a Space Commission and the Department of Space (DOS), bringing ISRO under the DOS. ISRO then embarked on its mission to provide the Nation space based services and to develop the technologies to achieve the same independently. Its vision is to “harness space technology for natural development while pursuing space science research & planetary exploration”. ISRO built India’s first Satellite Aryabhata. It is headquartered in Bangalore, India. The current Chairman of ISRO is K sivan.

Recently, ISRO successfully 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.

The launch was carried out from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.

EOS-01: It is an earth observation satellite launched by ISRO using PSLV-C49 rocket along with nine customer satellites. The satellite is intended to provide agriculture, forestry and disaster management support.

The nine customer satellites are from 1 from Lithuania, 4 from Luxembourg and 4 from USA. The customer satellites were being launched under a commercial agreement with NewSpace India Limited (NSIL), department of space.

NASA:



It is an acronym for National Aeronautics and Space Administration. NASA is an independent agency of the United States Federal Government responsible for the civilian space program, as well as aeronautics and aerospace research. NASA was established in 1958, succeeding the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA). It is headquartered in Washington, D.C., United States. The Administrator of NASA is Jim Bridenstine and the Deputy Administrator of NASA is James Morhard.

Recently, NASA reported that on the 28th of April 2020, it observed a mix of X-ray and radio signals. This was detected by the CHIME telescope. This has never been observed earlier in the galaxy. Significantly, the flare-up it observed included the first fast radio burst (FRB) in Milky Way. Though the Fast Radio Bursts were discovered in 2007 during a pulsar survey data but it is for the first time that such phenomenon has occurred in the Milky Way Galaxy. However, the origin of Radio Bursts has not yet been located.

The detection of the phenomenon called FRB was published in the journal Nature on November 4.

Origin: The source of the FRB detected in April in the Milky Way Galaxy was from a very powerful magnetic neutron star, referred to as a magnetar, called SGR 1935+2154 or SGR 1935. It is located in the

constellation Vulpecula and is estimated to be between 14,000-41,000 light-years away.

The X-ray bursts lasted for less than a second and the radio burst, on the other hand, lasted for a thousandth of a second and was thousands of times brighter than any other radio emissions from magnetars ever seen in the Milky Way.

This was the brightest of the any other radio transmissions from magnetars. The FRB-associated burst was exceptional maybe because it likely occurred at or close to the magnetar's magnetic pole.

This flare-up, which lasted for hours, was picked up by NASA's Fermi Gamma-ray Space telescope and NASA's Neutron star Interior Composition Explorer (NICER), which is an X-ray telescope mounted on the International Space Station.

Fast Radio Bursts: Fast Radio Bursts (FRBs) are bright bursts of radio waves produced by astronomical objects with changing magnetic fields. The duration of these bursts lasts only for a millisecond-scale. Due to this short duration of occurrence, it is highly difficult to detect Fast Radio Bursts and determine their position in the sky.

CHIME Telescope: The full form of CHIME is Canadian Hydrogen Intensity Mapping Experiment. CHIME is a radio telescope located at Dominion Radio Astrophysical Observatory (DRAO) in Kaleden, British Columbia, Canada. It is used for receiving radio waves.

Magnetar: A magnetar is a type of neutron star believed to have an extremely powerful magnetic field. According to NASA, a magnetar is a neutron star, "the crushed, city-size remains of a star many times more massive than our Sun."

The magnetic field of such a star is very powerful, which can be over 10 trillion times stronger than a refrigerator magnet and up to a thousand times stronger than a typical neutron star's. A magnetar's magnetic field gives rise to very strong and characteristic bursts of X-rays and gamma rays. The active life of a magnetar is short.

China:



China, officially the People's Republic of China, is a country in East Asia. It is governed by the Communist Party of China. It is a recognized nuclear weapons state and has the world's largest standing army, the People's Liberation Army, and the second-largest defense budget. The capital of China is Beijing. The currency used here is Yuan (CNY) and Renminbi (RMB). The yuan is the unit of account of the country's economic and financial system while Renminbi is the official currency of China where it acts as a medium of exchange. The current President of china is Xi Jinping.

Recently, China sent the world's first 6G experiment satellite into space. The 6G satellite was among three Chinese satellites successfully launched into orbit, along with 10 commercial remote sensing satellites developed by Argentinian company Satellogic. This was the 351st rocket of China's Long March series.

As per the reports, the technology is expected to be over 100 times faster than 5G. The 6G communications test satellite was launched into the orbit along with 12 other

satellites. The satellite also carries technology which will be used for crop disaster monitoring and forest fire prevention.

Param Siddhi:



Param Siddhi is the high performance computing-artificial intelligence (HPC-AI) supercomputer established under National Supercomputing Mission (NSM) at C-DAC.

Recently, this Indian supercomputer achieved global ranking of 63 in TOP 500 most powerful non-distributed computer systems in the world released on 16th November 2020.

The supercomputer with Rpeak of 5.267 Petaflops and 4.6 Petaflops Rmax (Sustained) was conceived by C-DAC and developed jointly with support of Department of Science and Technology (DST), Information Technology (MeitY) and Ministry of Electronics under NSM.

SpaceX Crew-1 Mission:



SpaceX has recently launched 4 Astronauts (3 Americans, 1 Japanese) to the International Space Station on the first full-fledged taxi flight for NASA (National

Aeronautics and Space Administration) by a private company. They were launched by Falcon Rocket from the Kennedy Space Center.

The capsule in which they were launched has been named as “Resilience”. The crew was led by Commander Mike Hopkins, Shannon Walker, Victor Glover (First Black Astronaut on a long-term space station) mission and Japan’s Soichi Noguchi (First person in 40 years to launch on three types of spacecraft).

SpaceX: Space Exploration Technologies Corp., trading as SpaceX, is an American aerospace manufacturer and space transportation services company. It was founded on 6 May 2002 by Elon Musk with the goal of reducing space transportation costs to enable the colonization of Mars. This privately held company is headquartered in Hawthorne, California, United States. The current SpaceX president & COO is Gwynne Shotwell.

Pincer Catalytic System:



Researchers at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati, have recently formulated efficient “pincer” catalytic systems that transform biomass wastes into valuable chemicals.

According to the researchers, tiny amounts of these “pincer catalysts” repeatedly convert large amounts of industrial waste such as glycerol into lactic acid and hydrogen. Such catalysts also efficiently

convert bioethanol, a low-energy density fuel, into high-energy density butanol.

The conversion of valuable intermediates such as ethanol and glycerol, produced during the processing of biomass, into industrially useful chemicals has elicited much interest worldwide.

The findings of the time have also been featured in the Royal Society of Chemistry journals--Chemical Communications and Catalysis Science and Technology

Copernicus Sentinel-6 Michael Freilich satellite:



NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) recently launched Copernicus Sentinel-6 Michael Freilich satellite on 21 November 2020 from SpaceX reusable Falcon 9 rocket. It was launched to monitor oceans for 30 years. The mission of this launch is to Measure the height of the ocean as it is one of the key components in understanding the climate change.

The satellite launch was a part of the Mission Jason Continuity of Service. The spacecraft consists of two components. The other component of the spacecraft is to be launched in 2025.

The satellite was jointly developed by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), European Space Agency (ESA) and European Organization for the Exploration of Meteorological satellite (EUMETSAT) and French National Centre for Space Studies (CNES).

The main objective of the satellite is:

- To make sea level observations and will provide measurements on global sea level rise.
- To measure the sea surface height, the satellite will send pulses to the Earth's surface and will measure the returning signals.
- To measure water vapour in the earth's atmosphere.
- It will also collect data supporting oceanography.

Note: The satellite has been named after Michael Freilich, an Earth scientist who retired from NASA in 2019. He was a pioneer in advancing ocean observations from space. He passed away in August 2020 due to Cancer.

NOAA: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is an American scientific agency within the US Department of Commerce that focuses on the conditions of the oceans, major waterways, and the atmosphere.

National Science Film Festival:



The tenth edition of prestigious National science film festival was recently held from 24th to 27th November 2020 in a virtual mode amidst the ongoing pandemic. The festival was inaugurated by Deputy Chief Minister of Tripura Jishnu DevVerma.

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.

A total of 372 films in different languages were received for participation, of which 115 films were shortlisted by the ten-member jury to be screened during the festival.

These films are in Hindi, English, Urdu, Marathi, Punjabi, Malayalam, Kashmiri, Bengali, and Tamil languages.

These films were based on various themes like Science and technology, environment, agriculture, renewable energy, water management, health and drugs and technological innovations.

The science film festival offers a unique platform to showcase the science films made by professionals, amateur and student filmmakers under various themes, to promote science films in India.

IRNSS:



It refers to the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System. IRNSS has recently been recognized as a part of the World Wide Radio Navigation System (WWRNS) for operation in the Indian Ocean Region by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO). With this recognition India's reputation has increased in the Indian Ocean Region.

India has become the fourth country in the world to have its independent regional

navigation satellite system recognized by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO).

The other three countries that have its navigation systems recognised by the IMO are the US, Russia and China.

Note: The GPS (Global Positioning System) is owned by the United States of America. GLONASS (Global Navigation Satellite System) is owned by Russia (GLONASS satellite was completed in 1995) and BeiDou is china's navigational system.

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. This will enable merchant vessels to use IRNSS for obtaining position information similar to GPS and GLONASS.

The Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) of IMO approved IRNSS as a World Wide Radio Navigation System (WWRNS) during its 102nd session held virtually on the 4th to 11th November 2020. The process of getting the said recognition took two years.

This is a significant achievement of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW), Directorate General of Shipping (DGS) and Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) towards Atmannirbhar Bharat.

About IRNSS: The Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS), with an operational name of NavIC, is an autonomous regional satellite navigation system that provides accurate real-time positioning and timing services. IRNSS was developed by ISRO (Indian Space Research Organization). The project was approved by

Gol in May 2006. It was designed to provide accurate position information services to assist in the navigation of ships in Indian Ocean waters.

NavIC is certified by 3GPP (3rd Generation Partnership Project), responsible for coordinating mobile telephony standards globally. It covers India and 1500 km of region covering India. It consists of 8 constellations in its orbit and a supporting ground segment.

WWRNS: It is World-Wide Radio Navigation System

IMO: It refers to the International Maritime Organisation. IMO is the UN specialized agency with responsibility for the safety and security of shipping and the prevention of marine pollution by ships. It is headquartered in London, United Kingdom. Its main function is to develop and maintain a comprehensive regulatory framework for shipping and its remit today includes safety, environmental concerns, legal matters, technical co-operation, maritime security and the efficiency of shipping. Its current Secretary General is Kitak Lim.

RE-Invest 2020:



It is the 3rd Global Renewable Energy Investment Meeting and Expo that was inaugurated by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi through video conferencing. The first two editions of RE-Invest were held in 2015 and 2018.

The summit was organized by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.

The theme for RE-Invest 2020 is 'Innovations for Sustainable Energy Transition'.

The main features of this conference were on renewable and future energy choices, and an exhibition of manufacturers, developers, investors and innovators.

This programme aimed at providing 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.

Sports

F1 Emilia Romagna Grand Prix 2020:



Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes-Great Britain) has won the Emilia Romagna Grand Prix 2020. Formula One motor race took place on 1 November 2020 at the Autodromo Internazionale Enzo e Dino Ferrari in Imola, Italy.

This was his 9th win of the season and 93rd F1 win of his career. Mercedes won the seventh consecutive constructors' title for 2020 breaking the record for the most consecutive World Constructors' Championships.

Valtteri Bottas finished second while Daniel Ricciardo finished third.

F1 Turkish Grand Prix 2020:



Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes-Great Britain) has won the Turkish Grand Prix 2020 at Istanbul Park, Turkey.

Sergio Perez (Racing Point-BWT- Mexico) secured the second position and Sebastian Vettel of Ferrari finished third.

This was Hamilton 10th victory of the season and 94th F1 win of his career. With this win, he claimed the seventh Formula One championships title of his career which is equal to the record of Michael Schumacher.

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 lockdown.

Amit Panghal won the gold in the 52 kg-weight category, Sanjeet won in the 91 kg final bout while Ashish Kumar won the gold medal in the 75 kg weight category.

Kavinder Singh Bisht won silver in the 57 kg weight category while Shiva Thapa (63 kg), Sumit Sangwan (81 kg) and Satish Kumar (Over 91 kg) secured the bronze medals for India.

Linz Open:



It is a Tennis tournament played in hardcourts which is usually held in Linz, Austria, since 2009. It is designated as Women Tennis Association International Tournament. Linz Open is sponsored by Generali Gruppe.

Recently, the 22-year-old Aryna Sabalenka Won the Linze Open. She returned to the WTA's top 10 on at the expense of Serena Williams after the Belarusian captured her eighth career title in Linz.

Sabalenka finished the season in style with a straight-sets victory over her doubles partner Elise Mertens in Sunday's final in Austria.

Serena Williams has dropped to 11th rank. She has not played since French Open due to her Achilles injury.

Women Tennis Association (WTA) has ranked Aryna at number 9 in singles and number 2 in doubles. Aryna Sabalenka won her first Grand Slam at the US Open 2019. In all Aryna has won 12 WTA titles.

However, Australian tennis player Ashleigh Barty still remains at the top even though she skipped US and French Open in 2020.

Novak Djokovic:



The Serbian tennis star Novak Djokovic became only the second player in tennis history after Pete Sampras to lift the ATP Tour No. 1 trophy for the sixth time.

He was given the ATP Tour No. 1 trophy on 15 November 2020, for finishing 2020 as the year-end No. 1 (world number one).

Earlier he had finished as world No. 1, having earlier done it in 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015 and 2018.

Before this, only Pete Sampras managed to finish six years on top of the rankings which he did between 1993 and 1998.

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. The 2020 ITTF Women's World Cup was the 24th edition of 2020 ITTF Women's world Cup was held in Weihai, China. The ITTF Sanctioned event

took place on the 8th to 10th of November 2020.

Chen's victory at the bio-secure Weihai Nanhai Olympic Center made her the first winner of the ITTF's #RESTART series and also took her tally of senior singles titles to 19.

ITTF: It is the acronym for the International Table Tennis Federation. ITTF is the governing body for all national table tennis associations. It was founded in 1932 by Ivor Montagu and William Henry Lawes. It is headquartered in Lausanne, Switzerland. The role of the ITTF includes overseeing rules and regulations and seeking technological improvement for the sport of table tennis. The current President of ITTF is Thomas Weikert.

Paris Master 2020:



Russian, Daniil Medvedev has won Paris Master 2020 title in tennis. He beat Alexander Zverev 5-7, 6-4, 6-1 in Paris. He has become the fourth Russian to capture the Rolex Paris Masters title.

This is the maiden Paris Masters title of Medvedev.

The World No. 5 joins countrymen Marat Safin, Nikolay Davydenko and Karen Khachanov on the Paris honour roll.

Paris Masters: It is an annual tennis tournament for male professional players held in Paris, France.

Sports Ministry:



The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports is a branch of the Government of India (GoI). It administers Department of youth affairs and Department of Sports in India. The Ministry was set up as the Department of Sports at the time of organization of 1982 Asian Games New Delhi. Its name was changed to the Department of Youth Affairs & Sports during celebration of the International Youth Year, 1985. It became a separate Ministry on 27 May 2000. Subsequently, in 2008, the Ministry was bifurcated into Department of Youth Affairs and Department of Sports under two separate Secretaries. The current Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports is Kiren Rijiju (MOS independent charge).

Recently, In a first-ever move, the Ministry of Youth Affairs And Sports has introduced an incentivisation structure to extend monetary support to 500 private academies, through the Khelo India Scheme over the next four years starting FY 2020-21.

In this model, private academies shall be graded into different categories based on achievement of players trained by the academy, level of coaches available at the academy, quality of Field of Play and allied infrastructure, availability of sports science facilities and staff.

The 14 priority disciplines identified for excellence in 2028 Olympics will be eligible for receiving support in the first phase.

This move, as per the Minister of Sports Kiren Rijiju, aims to encourage all academies, especially the private academies to continue improving the level of infrastructure, resources and sports science support so that athletes can get best in class training.

Under the scheme, Sports Authority of India (SAI) and National Sports Federation (NSFs) will be working together. SAI will also hold discussions with NSFs and implement categorization and gradation of the academies.

The number of academies to be funded and the quantum of funding under each discipline will be determined by an objective evaluation of the need for investment and each NSF's capabilities. There will be a special focus on developing sports science facilities at all the academies to improve the overall quality of training.

IPL:



It refers to the Indian Premier League. IPL was founded by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) in 2008. The league is a professional Twenty20 cricket league in India which is contested during March or April and May of every year by 8 teams representing 8 different cities in India. It was introduced by Lalit Modi, who was also the first Chairman and Commissioner of the Indian Premier League (IPL), and ran the tournament for three years until 2010.

Recently, Mumbai Indians defeated Delhi Capitals in the final of Dream11 Indian Premier League (IPL) 2020 to lift their fifth IPL trophy. The team has so far won the title in 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019 and 2020. The tournament was played between 19 September and 10 November 2020 in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The Mumbai Indians team is owned by Reliance Industries.

The list of the award winners are as follows:

- Kings XI Punjab skipper KL Rahul bagged the Orange Cap for being the leading run-scorer of the IPL 2020. He racked up 670 runs from 14 games at an astronomical average of 55.83.
- Delhi Capitals' Kagiso Rabada won the Purple Cap after finishing at the top of the table with a total of 30 wickets at the end of IPL 2020.
- 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.

Rodchenkov Act:



It is an Anti-Doping Act that was passed by the US (United States) Senate. This act will become a law once the President of US signs it. This act will become a law once the President of US (United States) signs it.

The Act allows USA to initiate legal proceedings against those involved in running doping rings, including coaches, officials, managers or suppliers even if they are not residents of the United States or if the act of doping took place outside the United States.

The main objective of the Rodchenkov Act is to bring to book facilitators who otherwise got away when athletes who tested positive for performance-enhancing substances were banned under the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) code.

The Act seeks to criminalise 'major international dope fraud conspiracies', which is mentioned in Section 4 of the Act. The Act "will provide the tools needed to protect clean athletes and hold accountable international doping conspiracies that defraud sport, sponsors and that harm athletes.

The bill is named after Grigory Rodchenkov. He was a former director of Russia's anti-doping lab. He had moved to the USA and turned whistle-blower after the 2014 Sochi Winter Games. Rodchenkov's testimony and an independent report by Professor Richard McLaren, which concluded that at least

1,000 Russian athletes benefitted from doping, resulted in the nation being banned from the 2018 Winter Olympics in South Korea.

ATP Finals 2020:



Russian professional tennis player Daniil Medvedev won the ATP (Association of Tennis Professionals) tournament which was held in London. He defeated the Spanish tennis player Rafael Nadal.

Medvedev at rank number 4 under ATP ranking, has won 9 ATP singles titles, including 3 Masters 1000 titles and one year end finals title.

In the doubles final, Dutch-Croatian duo Wesley Koolhof and Nikola Pietrangeli claimed their first title together after surpassing Jurgen Melzer and Edouard Roger-Vasselin.

The ATP tournament is the second highest tier of men's Tennis Tournament after the Grand Slam. The tournament was first held in 1970.

The participation of a player in the ATP tournament is determined by their ranking. The major qualifications are as follows:

- Top 7 players of ATP ranking
- Two Grand Slam winners ranked between 8 and 20
- The rest of the players in the ATP ranking till the count of 8 is reached.

ICC:



It refers to the International Cricket Committee. ICC is the world governing body of cricket. It was founded as the Imperial Cricket Conference in 15 June 1909 by representatives from Australia, England and South Africa. It was renamed as the International Cricket Conference in 1965, and took up its current name in 1989. The ICC, currently, has 104 member nations. It organises world championship events such as Cricket World Cup, Women's Cricket World Cup, ICC T20 World Cup, ICC Women's T20 World Cup, ICC Champions Trophy and Under-19 Cricket World Cup. The current CEO is Manu Sahney.

Recently, Greg Barclay has been elected as the new chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC). Barclay beat Imran Khwaja in the second round of voting.

He succeeds India's Shashank Manohar who stepped down in July 2020 and will replace Imran Khwaja, who is currently the interim chairman.

Auckland-based commercial lawyer and director of New Zealand Cricket (NZC) since 2012, was serving as NZC's representative on the board of the International Cricket Council and had also served as the director of ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2015. He is also an experienced company director holding board positions with various New Zealand and Australian companies.

Diego Maradona:



He is a Legendary Argentine footballer who was widely regarded among the greatest football players of all time passed away following a heart attack.

Diego Armando Maradona (1960 – 2020) was an Argentine professional football player and manager. He was one of the two joint winners of the FIFA Player of the 20th Century award.

Maradona played in four FIFA World Cups, including the 1986 World Cup in Mexico. He was captain when Argentina won the 1986 World Cup. He was largely responsible for Argentina's World Cup victory when he led them to victory over West Germany in the final, and won the Golden Ball as the tournament's best player.

He scored two famous goals in one game against England in the quarter-finals. Both the goals in a 2–1 victory over England entered football history for two different reasons.

First, the first goal was an unpenalized handling foul known as the "Hand of God".

The second goal followed a 60 m (66 yd) dribble past five England players, voted "Goal of the Century" by FIFA.com voters in 2002.

He played for Barcelona and Napoli during his club career, winning two Serie A titles with the Italian side.

Maradona was given the nickname "El Pibe de Oro" ("The Golden Kid").

AAI:



It refers to the Archery Association of India. AAI is a non-profit, government funded organisation affiliated by World Archery Federation (IAF), Asian Archery Federation (AAF) and Indian Olympic Association (IOA) and recognized by Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports of India. It was founded on 8 August 1973 after archery was reintroduced to the Olympic Games in 1972. It is responsible for organising, promoting and controlling the sport of archery in India. The current President of AAI is Shri Arjun Munda.

Recently, the Youth Affairs and Sports Ministry restored the government recognition to Archery Association of India as a Nation Sports Federation for promotion and regulation of Archery Sport in the country.

The Government recognition of AAI was withdrawn eight years back on account of failure to conduct its elections in accordance with the National Sports Development Code of India, 2011. Government recognition of AAI will be valid for one year.

This decision was welcomed by Tribal Affairs Minister and President of Archery Association of India, Arjun Munda by terming the move as 'historic'. He said that

it heralds the beginning of a new era for
Indian Archery.

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