Important Monthly Current Affairs Capsule – August 2020

Important Days

Date	Day	Theme/Others
August 1 – August 7	World Breastfeeding Week	Support breastfeeding for a healthier planet
August 1	World Lung Cancer Day	Campaign was first organised in 2012by the Forum of International Respiratory Societies
August 3	World Sanskrit Day	
August 6	Hiroshima Day	
August 7	National Handloom Day	To commemorate the Swadeshi Movement
August 8	Quit India Movement Day	Known as August Movement or August Kranti
August 9	International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples (World Tribal Day)	COVID-19 and indigenous people resilience
August 9	Nagasaki day	
August 10	World Bio-Fuel Day	Biofuels Towards Atmanirbhar Bharat
August 10	World Lion Day	
August 12	International Youth Day	Youth Engagement for Global Action (1st IYD was observed in 2000)
August 12	World Elephant Day	
August 13	International Left Handers Day	1st observed in 1976 by Dean R. Campbell
August 13	Organ Donation Day	
August 14	Youm-e-Azadi or Pakistan Independence Day	
August 15	74thIndependence Day	
August 17	Indonesian Independence Day	
August 19	World Photography Day	
August 19	World Humanitarian Day	
August 20	World Mosquito Day	Malaria
August 20	Sadbhavna Diwas	Former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's birth anniversary
August 21	International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism in	Online high-level event entitled "Not Forgotten: Stories of Remembrance of Victims of Terrorism", was held
August 21	World Senior Citizen's Day	
August 22	Earth Overshoot Day	
August 22	International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on	

	Religion or Belief	
August 26	Women's Equality Day	Celebrated in the United States
August 24 to 28	World Water Week (organized by the Stockholm International Water Institute)	Water andClimate change: Accelerating Action
August 26	International Dog Day	1stNational Dog Day in the US - 2004
August 29	National sports day	Celebrated for the first time in 2012
August 29	International Day against Nuclear Tests	Established on December 2, 2009
August 30	International Day of the Disappeared	It was first observed in 2011
August 30	National Small Industry Day	

Important Banking News

RBI

Reserve Bank of India keeps repo rate unchanged at 4 percent

- RBI governor Dr. Shaktikanta Das stated that the apex bank's monetary policy committee has decided to unanimously leave the policy repo rate unchanged at 4 per cent. He added that RBI will continue with the accommodative stance of monetary policy as long as necessary to revive growth, mitigate the impact of COVID-19, while ensuring that inflation remains within the target going forward.
- He stated, the reverse repo rate stands unchanged at 3.35 per cent. He stated the MPC's assessment is that the global economic activity has remained fragile and in retrenchment in the first half of 2020.
- The RBI Governor stated the headline CPI inflation, which was at 5.8 per cent in March 2020, was placed at 6.1 per cent in the provisional estimates for June 2020.
- He stated given the uncertainty surrounding the inflation outlook and extremely weak state of the economy in the midst of an unprecedented shock from the ongoing pandemic, the MPC decided to keep the policy rate on hold, while remaining watchful for a durable reduction in inflation to use available space to support the revival of the economy.

RBI to set up innovation hub

- To rope in start-ups for IT solutions for financial inclusion, efficient banking services
- The Reserve Bank will set up an innovation hub aimed at roping in start-ups to come up with ideas for addressing issues related to financial inclusion and efficient banking services.
- The new innovation hub will encourage solutions in areas such as cyber security, data analytics and delivery platform. To promote innovation across the financial sector by leveraging technology and create an environment which would facilitate and foster innovation, Reserve Bank will set up an innovation hub in India. The innovation hub will support, promote and hand-hold cross-thinking spanning regulatory remits and national boundaries, the RBI stated in a statement.
- The central bank had earlier set up a regulatory sandbox framework in which solutions related to digital payments were invited. Six proposals were accepted under the sandbox, the pilot studies/trials of which have been delayed on account of the Covid-19 situation.

RBI sets up panel under KV Kamath for one-time restructuring of loans

- The RBI has decided to provide a window under the June 7 Prudential Framework to enable lenders to implement a resolution plan in respect of eligible corporate exposures — without a change in ownership — as well as personal loans, while classifying such exposures as standard assets.
- The central bank is constituting an Expert Committee under KV Kamath which shall make recommendations to the RBI on the required financial parameters, along with the sector-specific benchmark ranges for such parameters, to be factored into resolution plans. The Expert Committee shall also undertake a process validation of resolution plans for borrowal accounts above a specified threshold.
- The "Prudential Framework on Resolution of Stressed Assets", dated June 7, 2019, provides a principle-based resolution framework for addressing borrower defaults. Any resolution plan implemented under the Prudential Framework, which involves granting of any concessions on account of financial difficulty of the borrower, entails an asset classification downgrade except when accompanied by a change in ownership, subject to prescribed conditions.

RBI permits banks to invest in debt instruments through mutual funds

- RBI has permitted banks to invest in debt instruments through mutual funds or exchange traded funds without allocating additional charges.
- As per RBI's extant Basel III guidelines, if a bank holds a debt instrument directly, it would have to allocate lower capital as compared to holding the same debt instrument through a mutual fund- or exchange traded fund.
- While unveiling the bi-monthly monetary policy review, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das stated it has been decided to harmonise the differential treatment existing currently.
- He stated, this will result in substantial capital savings for banks and is expected to give a boost to the corporate bond market.
- The RBI Governor stated the general market risk charge of 9 per cent will apply on both direct holdings, as well as through mutual funds or ETFs.

RBI announces 'positive pay' feature to enhance safety of cheque payments

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to introduce a mechanism of 'Positive Pay' for all cheques of value Rs 50,000 and above.
- Under the 'positive pay' system, a customer who issues the cheque clicks a picture of the cheque before handing it over to the beneficiary and uploads the same on the bank's mobile application.
- The limit of Rs 50,000 will cover approximately 20 per cent of transactions by volume and 80 per cent by value.
- Positive pay is a fraud-prevention system offered by most commercial banks to companies to protect them against forged, altered and counterfeit checks.
- When the beneficiary submits the cheque for encashment, the cheque details are compared with the details provided to the Bank through Positive Pay. If the details match, the cheque is honoured. In case of mismatch in cheque details, the cheque is referred to you.

RBI to implement system-based asset classification in urban co-operative banks

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to implement system-based asset classification in urban co-operative banks (UCBs), prescribing a timeline based on their asset size.
- The central bank stated this move is aimed at improving the efficiency, transparency and integrity of the asset classification process.

- System-based asset classification means asset classification (downgrading as well as upgrading) carried out by the core banking solution / computerised systems of the bank in an automated manner on an ongoing basis, based on the relevant RBI instructions/guidelines.
- The RBI stated UCBs having total assets of Rs.2,000 crore or above as on March 31, 2020, have to implement system-based asset classification with effect from June 30, 2021.
- UCBs having total assets of Rs.1,000 crore or above but less than Rs.2,000 crore as on March 31, 2020, and having self-assessed themselves as being under Level III or Level IV in terms of the Comprehensive Cyber Security Framework for UCBs, have to implement system-based asset classification with effect from September 30, 2021.
- UCBs, which meet the aforementioned criteria as at the end of the current or subsequent financial years, have to implement system-based asset classification within a period of six months from the end of the financial year concerned.
- The central bank also encouraged UCBs not meeting the aforementioned criteria to voluntarily implement the system-based asset classification in their own interest.

RBI Board approves transfer of Rs 57,128 cr as surplus to central govt

- The RBI Board has approved the transfer of 57,128 crore rupees as surplus to the central government for the accounting year 2019-20.
- In a statement, RBI has informed that it has also decided to maintain a Contingency Risk Buffer at 5.5 percent.
- These decisions were taken at the 584th meeting of RBI's Central Board.
- The Board, chaired by RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das, discussed the bank's operations in the past year and approved its annual report and statement of accounts.
- It also reviewed the current economic situation, continued global as well as domestic challenges besides examining monetary, regulatory and other measures taken by the RBI to mitigate the economic impact of COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Board also discussed the proposal of setting up an Innovation Hub.

RBI releases framework for pan-India entity for retail payments

- Reserve Bank of India has unveiled the framework for setting up of pan-India Umbrella Entity for Retail Payments. As per the framework, the companies with a net worth of over 500 crore rupees will be eligible to set up an umbrella entity which among other things will be permitted to set up, manage and operate new payment systems in the retail space comprising ATMs, White Label PoS, Aadhaar-based payments and remittance services.
- The entity will be expected to monitor national as well as international developments so as to avoid shocks and frauds that may adversely affect the system and the economy in general.
- Inviting applications by February 2021, the RBI stated that the promoter/promoter group of the umbrella entity shall be owned and controlled by resident Indian citizens.
- RBI stated the application for setting up the umbrella entity should contain a detailed business plan covering the payment systems proposed to be set up and/or operated along with other documents to duly establish its experience in the payments ecosystem.

RBI releases guidelines for forming self-regulatory organisation in payments

- A recognised Self-Regulatory Organisation (SRO) for Payment System Operators (PSOs) has to work towards establishing minimum benchmarks, standards and help instil professional and healthy market behaviour among its members, according to Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

- As per RBI's "Draft framework for recognition of a SRO for PSOs", such an SRO shall promptly inform Reserve Bank about any violation of the provisions of the Payments and Settlement Systems Act that comes to its notice or any other regulation issued by RBI.
- The SRO, which will serve as a two-way communication channel between its members and Reserve Bank, will investigate any matter referred to by RBI. It shall establish a uniform grievance redressal and dispute management framework across its members.
- The SRO shall impart training to the staff of its members and others. It shall conduct awareness programmes for spreading safe digital transactions.
- An SRO is a non-governmental organisation that sets and enforces rules and standards relating to the conduct of entities in the industry (members) with the aim of protecting the customer and promoting ethics, equality, and professionalism.
- In its draft framework, the RBI emphasised that as the payment ecosystem matures and as the number of payments systems proliferate, it becomes necessary, in the interest of optimal use of regulatory resources, that the payments industry develops industry standards in respect of system security, pricing practices, customer protection measures and grievance redressal mechanisms.
- While self-regulation would release regulatory resources that can be better focused on issues of systemic importance, it would, by virtue of being developed by the industry itself, be more appropriate and encourage better compliance, the central bank stated.

RBI unveils 5-year national strategy for financial education

- The Reserve Bank of India released a national strategy for financial education to be implemented in the next five years. The central bank stated the multi-stakeholder led approach is aimed at creating a financially aware and empowered India.
- The strategic objectives include inculcating financial literacy concepts among various sections of the population through financial education to make them an important life skill. Besides encouraging active savings behaviour, it will encourage participation in financial markets to meet financial goals and objectives.
- The strategy will develop credit discipline and encourage availing credit from formal financial institutions as per requirement. Besides, it will improve usage of digital financial services in a safe and secure manner.
- The objectives include managing risk at various life stages through relevant and suitable insurance cover besides planning for old age and retirement through coverage of suitable pension products.
- It also includes knowledge about rights, duties and avenues for grievance redressal. It will improve research and evaluation methods to assess progress in financial education.
- To achieve these strategic objectives, the document recommends adoption of a '5 C' approach for dissemination of financial education through emphasis on development of relevant Content (including curriculum in schools, colleges and training establishments), developing Capacity among the intermediaries involved in providing financial services, leveraging on the positive effect of Community led model for financial literacy through appropriate Communication Strategy, and lastly, enhancing Collaboration among various stakeholders.
- The strategy also suggests adoption of a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to assess the progress made.

RBI announces OMO worth Rs.20,000 crore to tame G-Sec yields

- The Reserve Bank of India has decided to conduct simultaneous purchase and sale of government securities (G-Secs) under open market operation (OMO) for Rs.10,000 crore each on August 27 and September 3 in a bid to tame G-Sec yields, which jumped almost 24 basis points in the last six trading sessions.

- This announcement seems to have had the intended effect, with the yield on the benchmark 10-year G-Sec immediately softening about 5 basis points. One basis point is equal to one-hundredth of a percentage point.
- Under the OMO to be conducted on August 27, the Central bank will purchase four G-Secs — those maturing in 2024, carrying a coupon rate of 6.18 per cent (6.18 per cent G-Sec 2024); 8.24 per cent G-Sec 2027; 5.79 per cent G-Sec 2030; and 7.95 per cent G-Sec 2032 — for Rs.10,000 crore.
- Simultaneously, the RBI will be selling four 182-day Treasury Bills, maturing on October 15, October 22, October 29 and November 6, 2020, for Rs.10,000 crore.
- The spike in G-Sec yields came in the backdrop of a rise in retail inflation and the RBI holding the repo rate in the last policy review.
- The move to sell 182-day Treasury Bills will ensure that the liquidity that will be released due to purchase of G-Secs by the RBI is neutralised, he added.
- The securities for the second tranche auction (purchase and sale of G-Secs under OMO for Rs.10,000 crore each) on September 3 will be announced separately, the Central bank stated.

RBI to dissolve Banking Codes and Standards Board of India
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to dissolve the Banking Codes and Standards Board of India (BCSBI).
- BCSBI was set up by the Reserve Bank in February 2006 as an independent and autonomous body, assigned to formulate codes of conduct to be adopted by banks voluntarily for ensuring fair treatment of customers.
- The Reserve Bank has since set up CEPD (Consumer Education and Protection Department), issued the Charter of Customer Rights (CoCR), and considerably strengthened the Ombudsman mechanism to enhance consumer protection.
- It was, accordingly, decided to dissolve BCSBI, which is now in an advanced stage of completing its dissolution process, the central bank stated.
- CEPD acts as the single nodal point for receipt and disposal of all external complaints on deficiency of services provided by the Reserve Bank of India and the Reserve Bank-regulated entities.

Major functions of CEPD:
- The major functions of CEPD include administering the Banking Ombudsman Scheme; and acting as a nodal department for BCSBI.
- BCSBI, in collaboration with the Indian Banks' Association (IBA), has evolved two codes – Code of Bank's Commitment to Customers and the Code of Bank's Commitment to Micro and Small Enterprises – which set minimum standards of banking practices for member banks to follow when they are dealing with individual customers and micro and small enterprises.
- Meanwhile, the RBI will be implementing the recommendations of an in-house committee for integrating three existing Ombudsman schemes – Banking Ombudsman Scheme, 2006; Ombudsman Scheme for NBFCs, 2018; and Ombudsman Scheme for Digital Transactions, 2019 – into one scheme.

RBI launches surveys on consumer confidence, inflation expectations

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced the launch of the latest round of its surveys to capture consumer confidence and inflation expectations from households, which are useful inputs for monetary policy.
- The central bank has been regularly conducting the Consumer Confidence Survey (CCS) and the Inflation Expectations Survey of Households (IESH).

- The results of these surveys "provide useful inputs for monetary policy", the RBI stated while announcing the launch of September 2020 round of CCS and IESH through two statements.
- The CCS survey seeks "qualitative responses" from households, regarding their sentiments on general economic situation, employment scenario, price level, households' income and spending.
- The IESH survey aims to capture subjective assessments on price movements and inflation, of about 6,000 households, based on their individual consumption baskets, across 18 cities.
- "The (IESH) survey seeks qualitative responses from households on price changes (general prices as well as prices of specific product groups) in the three-month ahead as well as in the one year-ahead period," the RBI stated. The survey also seeks quantitative responses on current, three-month ahead and one-year ahead inflation rates.
- The studies will be conducted by a Mumbai-based agency on behalf of the RBI over telephone (instead of the regular personal interview mode) in view of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Policy Rates

Parameter	Percentage
Repo Rate	4%
Reverse Repo Rate	3.35%
Marginal Standing Facility Rate	4.25%
Bank Rate	4.25%
Cash Reserve Ratio	3%
Statutory Liquidity Ratio	18%

SBI

SBI rolls out YONO Krishi review to empower farmers

- State Bank of India (SBI) has introduced "KCC (Kisan Credit Card) Review option" on its digital agricultural solution platform, YONO Krishi, to enable farmers to access their KCC limit in four clicks.
- KCC Review on YONO Krishi is expected to benefit more than 75 lakh farmers having KCC accounts with SBI.
- The feature of paperless KCC review will not only help farmers save costs and effort involved in applying for revision of the KCC limit, but also make the process quicker for them especially during the harvesting season
- Farmers will no longer need to visit the bank branch to apply for a revision in their KCC limit.

About Scheme

- The scheme provides support to farmers to meet short term credit requirements for cultivation of crops; post-harvest expenses; produce marketing loan; consumption requirements of farmer household; working capital for maintenance of farm assets and activities allied to agriculture; and investment credit requirement for agriculture and allied activities.

About YONO Krishi

- YONO Krishi has four offerings/sections: Khata (caters to agriculture credit solutions like agri gold loans), Bachat (financial Super store for farmers investment & insurance needs), Mitra (agriculture advisory services) and Mandi (online market place for purchasing agricultural inputs & farm equipment).

AIIB

AIIB in talks with India for financing $8 billion health infrastructure scheme

- The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is in discussion with the Indian government for financing a USD 8-billion scheme for improving health infrastructure at the district level to make the country better prepared for the future healthcare challenges.
- The Beijing-based multilateral funding agency had earlier approved a financial assistance of USD 1.2 billion for India to fight the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The first loan of USD 500 million sanctioned in May was towards building a resilient health system that can effectively treat COVID-19 patients and prevent its spread.
- A USD 750 million loan was approved in June to help the government strengthen its battle against the adverse impact of COVID-19 on poor and vulnerable households.
- For AIIB, India is the largest borrower, which accounts for 25 per cent of the total lending by it so far. As of July 16, 2020, AIIB has approved up to USD 19.6 billion for 87 projects in 24 economies. Since its inception in 2016, AIIB has approved loans to the tune of USD 4.3 billion across 17 projects in India.

Government of India and AIIB Sign Agreement For $500 Million To Improve Network Capacity Of Mumbai Suburban Rail

- The Government of India, the Government of Maharashtra, Mumbai Railway Vikas Corporation and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) signed a loan agreement for a $500 million Mumbai Urban Transport Project-III to improve the network capacity, service quality and safety of the suburban railway system in Mumbai.
- The Project is expected to increase network capacity in the region with the reduction in journey time and fatal accidents of commuters. It is estimated that among primary beneficiaries of the project, 22% are female passengers who will benefit from improved safety and quality of service. The loan agreement was signed by Sameer Kumar Khare, Additional Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, on behalf of the Government of India.
- This project will assist in improved mobility, service quality and safety of passengers of the sub urban railway system of Mumbai, by providing faster, more reliable and higher quality transport services compared to road-based transport. There will be direct safety benefits to passengers and the public through introduction of trespass control measures.

<div align="center">ADB</div>

ADB to lend Thailand $1.5 billion to aid its coronavirus response

- The Asian Development Bank will provide a USD 1.5 billion loan to Thailand to aid its response to the coronavirus pandemic.
- The loan is being provided under the ADB's COVID-19 Active Response and Expenditure Support Program.
- It will help restore growth and set the stage for targeted private sector operations by ADB to support the government's post-COVID-19 recovery, including priority areas such as infrastructure, trade, and supply chain finance.
- ADB is committed to providing timely support to Thailand and helping reduce the pandemic's social and economic impacts on the country.

ADB Approves $750,000 Technical Assistance to Develop Distance Education Platform in Armenia

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a grant-financed $750,000 Knowledge and Support Technical Assistance project to help Armenia improve resilience to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and other disasters by developing and operationalizing a distance education platform.
- The project will support the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport (MoESCS) to ensure quality and continuous education during times of emergency and normal situations.
- The assistance will improve the regulatory and institutional framework supporting distance learning, as well as the capacity of users through a training of trainers scheme for effective operation of the distance education platform.

- Under the program, a distance education platform will be developed to provide more learning modalities and information in a learner-friendly format.
- The platform will support kindergarten through grade 12 education institutions to deliver online courses and provide teachers and students with real-time feedback mechanisms, assignment distribution and monitoring, and other student-centric learning tools.
- The program will help the government develop policies to provide equal opportunities for all to use the platform, which addresses the needs and diverse physical capabilities of learners, their caregivers, and teachers.

ADB approves USD 1 billion package for rapid transit system in India

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a USD 1 billion (about Rs. 7,485 crore) loan to support the construction of the modern, high-speed Delhi-Meerut regional rapid transit system, a first of its kind in India.
- The transit system project aims to help decongest the city and improve regional connectivity by establishing transit options through densely populated sections of the NCR connecting Delhi to Meerut in Uttar Pradesh.
- The 82-km Delhi-Meerut regional rapid transit system network is the first of three priority rail corridors in the country's integrated transport network under the NCR regional plan 2021.
- This project will finance the construction of railway tracks, station buildings, maintenance facilities and traction and power supply.
- The system will use advanced, high technology signalling systems based on latest standards and will have multimodal hubs to ensure smooth interchange with other transport modes. The design of the stations will feature and consider the needs of the elderly, women, children and differently-abled.
- Financing for the project will be implemented in four tranches between August 2020 and May 2025. The Indian government will provide USD 1.89 billion and co-financiers are expected to provide USD 1 billion of the total project cost of USD 3.94 billion.

ADB Approves $250 Million Loan to Support Myanmar's COVID-19 Response

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved a $250 million loan to help the Government of Myanmar respond to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic by mitigating the impacts on people's health, livelihoods, and the economy, while also ensuring that the poor and vulnerable benefit from the country's economic recovery.
- In April, the government announced a $2.5 billion stimulus package to boost the health care system, extend cash support to 5.5 million vulnerable families and provide tax relief, tax credits, and other measures to businesses and workers.
- ADB's COVID-19 Active Response and Expenditure Support (CARES) Program is funded through the COVID-19 pandemic response option (CPRO) under ADB's Countercyclical Support Facility. CPRO was established as part of ADB's $20 billion expanded assistance for developing member countries' pandemic response.
- The CARES Program, ADB's first countercyclical support for Myanmar, builds on ADB's ongoing program in the country, including a $6.6 million health security project that ADB reprogrammed in April to support Myanmar's early COVID-19 response.
- An additional financing of $30 million is being considered to help implement the government's contingency plan for the health sector, including isolating suspected cases at designated hospitals, conducting contact tracing, and the purchasing of test kits, ventilators, and personal protective equipment.

Other Banking News

SIDBI, TransUnion CIBIL launch financial knowledge platform for MSMEs

- The Small Industries Development Bank of India in association with TransUnion CIBIL has launched a comprehensive financial education and knowledge platform for micro, small and medium enterprises.
- The one-stop knowledge portal- MSMESaksham, will guide MSMEs (micro, small and medium enterprises) seeking seamless and quick access to finance and will also support them in managing their credit obligations.
- It will have a consolidated list of all the schemes launched by the Centre and state governments for MSMEs. It will be a knowledge hub with informative articles, business insights to help entrepreneurs and business owners start or grow businesses.

Canara Bank ties up with three insurers to provide Corona Kavach policies

- Canara Bank has tied-up with three insurance companies to sell short-term Corona Kavach policy to cover COVID-19 related health expenses.
- The bank has tied up with New India Assurance Company Ltd, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Co Ltd and HDFC ERGO Health Insurance.
- The bank in association with the tied-up insurance companies has launched the Corona Kavach Policies at a very competitive premium structure, starting with as low as Rs.300.
- Among the key features of the policy are - purchase on individual and family floater basis, minimum sum insured ofRs.50,000 to a maximum of Rs.5 lakh.

Kotak Mahindra Bank launches two-month campaign with offers, discounts

- Kotak Mahindra Bank has launched a special two-month campaign "Kona Kona Umeed" with offers and discounts across its suite of products, including for loans, savings accounts, current accounts, corporate salary accounts as well as important deals on Kotak debit cards, credit cards and digital payments.
- Kotak has tied up with over 100 brands to provide exclusive deals to its customers in categories such as shopping, essentials, personal care, education, fitness, health and wellness, kids and parenting, entertainment, cyber care and security, among others.

Sebi to set up virtual museum of securities market

- Regulator Sebi is planning to set up a virtual museum of securities market to highlight achievements and milestones in the Indian capital market.
- Sebi has invited Expression of Interest (EoI) from agencies to develop the virtual museum.
- The museum is intended to be a visual online organised collection of history of evolution, achievements and milestones in the
- Indian securities market over the decades in terms of market infrastructure, regulation and enforcement, among others
- The achievements will be told through photos, videos, articles, media clippings, interactive display like quiz, paintings, drawings, diagrams, graphs, newspaper articles, transcripts of interviews and numerical databases, among others.
- It will have its own digital platform and website for online visitors in order to provide them maximum possible experience and interest like in physical museum.
- The virtual museum will engage the audience with creative content through various means like video, audio, chat bot, voice assistants, virtual reality, analytics, interactive and animated elements.
- Latest technologies -- analytics, virtual reality or augmented reality, artificial intelligence and machine to machine communication -- would be used to provide best possible showcase and experience.
- Apart from English, the online platform should be able to develop and deliver content in Hindi and other Indian languages.
- Interested agencies are required to send their applications to the capital markets watchdog by August 24.

Paisabazaar.com launches 'Paisabazaar Stack' - to offer completely digital lending solutions

- Paisabazaar.com, India's largest digital marketplace for lending products, announced the launch 'Paisabazaar Stack' - a Stack of capabilities that would make loan disbursals and credit card issuance completely digital.
- The Stack, through integrations with bank and NBFC partners, would enable consumers on the Paisabazaar platform to access credit products through presence-less and contactless processes.
- Under the Digitization Stack, Paisabazaar.com has built completely digital solutions for KYC verification, income and employment validation, repayment set-up and consent on loan agreement.
- Paisabazaar.com is currently partnering with IndusInd Bank to offer customers on its platform a completely digital process for credit cards, using Paisabazaar Stack.
- Paisabazaar.com has built a Digital KYC Module in its Digital Stack which includes Offline KYC verification or O-KYC (automated XML Parsing) and the subsequent Video KYC enablement, which comprises video chat, liveliness check and face match with a bank official and location tagging.

Bank of Baroda Credit Card offers EMIs on PoS Terminals in partnership with Innoviti

- BOB Financial Solutions Limited ties up with Innoviti Payment Solutions.
- The Bank of Baroda credit cardholders pan India would be serviced at 70,000+ Innoviti PoS terminals across 1,000+ cities.
- Bank of Baroda Credit Card customers get another unique offering in terms of convenient and affordable EMI options.
- The proposed solution design has been kept simple in-line that offer great payment experiences. Customers wanting to opt for EMI, only need to notify the cashier during billing.
- The cashier can convert the payment into EMI over-the-counter on the POS terminal. Customers then enter their PIN to access the credit seamlessly right at the cashier point.

IFSCA sets up panel to suggest ways for development of international retail business

- International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) announced setting up an expert committee suggest ways for the development of international retail business.
- The committee will be headed by Pradip Shah (Chairman, Indasia Fund Advisors Pvt Ltd.).
- At the same time, members include G. Srinivasan (Ex-CMD, New India Assurance Ltd.), Siddhartha Sengupta (Ex-DMD, State Bank of India), Shyamal Mukherjee (Chairman, PWC), Prakash Subramanian (Head – Strategy, Standard Chartered Bank), Dipesh Shah (Head - IFSC Dept., GIFT IFSC) and Nitin Jaiswal, (Head - Govt Affairs & Strategic relations, Bloomberg, Singapore).
- IFSCA has been mandated to develop and regulate the financial services market in the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) in India.
- The Committee of Experts will suggest how to develop international retail business in IFSC along with potential strategies for making IFSC attractive for global financial services.
- It has been asked to provide a roadmap for the future growth of international retail business in IFSC The Committee will submit its report along with recommendations within three months.

Aditya Birla Health Insurance Provides a Health Cushion to Customers for COVID-19 with New Services and Products

- Aditya Birla Health Insurance (ABHICL), the health insurance arm of Aditya Birla Capital Limited, has introduced an array of services and product solutions that will enable customers to take care of their health in such difficult times.

- ABHICL has also launched an initiative 'Active Dayz@Home' during the lockdown to facilitate seamless healthcare to patrons during the lockdown.
- This Home treatment facility would be provided on a cashless basis through our Network Providers and Empaneled Service Provider.
- ABHICL also recently launched 'Corona Kavach Policy'- an indemnity health insurance product covering COVID-19.
- Additionally, all indemnity products of ABHICL, namely, Activ Health, Activ Assure and Activ Care offer hospitalisation covers, in-patient treatment, pre-hospitalisation, post-hospitalisation, and ambulance cover for COVID-19.
- Through the Activ Health app, customers can continue earning their HealthReturns by watching and working out with videos on the App.
- ABHICL also launched a campaign #HealthFromHome that re-imagined a healthy lifestyle for Indians during the lockdown. The campaign leveraged the strength of Facebook Live and health influencers to organise 100+ sessions across topics like yoga, fitness, nutrition, mental wellness and others for over seven weeks.

Bandhan Bank holding firm sells 20.95% stake to meet RBI norms

- Bandhan Bank Ltd stated it has met the promoter holding norms of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) after its holding company Bandhan Financial Holdings Ltd (BFHL) sold 20.95% stake in the bank to at least seven investors.
- The buyers included Singapore's state investors GIC and Temasek, which purchased the shares through affiliates Caladium Investment Pte Ltd and Camas Investment Pte Ltd respectively, and others such as Morgan Stanley Asia Singapore Pte, Bandhan Employees Welfare Trust, Copthall Mauritius Investment Ltd, Societe Generale and Credit Suisse Singapore Ltd.
- GIC is an existing shareholder of Bandhan Bank, owning a 4.9% stake through Caladium.
- Under the Reserve Bank of India norms, Bandhan's holding company was required to bring its shareholding to 40% of the paid-up voting equity capital of the bank.
- In January 2019, Bandhan Bank had acquired HDFC Ltd-owned Gruh Finance Ltd through an all-share deal, as part of its efforts to bring down promoter shareholding. Prior to the deal, Bandhan Financial held an 82.28% stake. The acquisition helped Bandhan Bank expand its housing finance portfolio.

Airtel Payments Bank partners Bharti AXA General Insurance to secure retailers and merchants

- Airtel Payments Bank has entered into a partnership with Bharti AXA General Insurance to offer shop insurance to the bank's retailers and merchants.
- Under the strategic alliance, the Smart Plan Shop Package Policy provides financial protection in case of damage to assets inside the shop due to fire and allied perils and burglary, among others, as covered in the product.
- A large number of the bank's retailers and merchants are small- and medium-size shop owners who are totally dependent on their shops for their livelihood.
- Any major accident because of fire or burglary can lead to a big financial loss. The shop insurance policy would provide financial protection against these losses.
- The Smart Plan Shop Package Policy covers assets inside the shop against burglary, fire and allied perils such as flood, earthquake, landslide, rockslide, riots, strike and malicious damage, among others. It also covers the loss of money in safe because of an accident. The shop insurance has a flexible sum insured option, starting from Rs.2 lakh up to a maximum of Rs.25 lakh.

BOB Financial Solutions Limited partners Fiserv Technology for Digital Transformation

- BOB Financial Solutions Limited (BFSL), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Bank of Baroda, has selected Fiserv, Inc., to enable the digitization of their end-to-end card issuance and processing cycle and support the unveiling of several new and high-tech products namely contactless credit cards, tokenisation and integration with branded wallets, and virtual credit cards.
- BFSL is one of India's earliest issuers of credit cards in India and has been delivering card products and services to its customers. To speed-up their digital strategy and keep pace with rapidly changing consumer expectations, BFSL will be deploying FirstVisionTM from Fiserv, an end-to-end managed services solution that enables card issuing and processing with global economies of scale and integrated capabilities that span the card lifecycle.

PayU introduces payouts solutions to scale up financial operations for merchant

- PayU has introduced Payouts from Payins feature that will help merchants in receiving payins (settlements and payments) directly into virtual accounts created by PayU, eliminating the need for constant recharging.
- This will help in enhancing its flexible fund source management and beneficiary management capabilities with its enhanced Payouts product suite.
- From pay-ins received in the accounts, merchants will be able to handle bulk disbursals to vendors, partners, employees and customers directly, streamlining operations. Merchants have the flexibility of selecting the payout option which suits them best, including connected banking, a feature which allows merchants to use PayU APIs and dashboard to make secure payouts from their existing bank accounts.

NPCI launches loyalty platform 'nth Rewards'

- NPCI has launched a business intelligence and analytics enabled omni-channel multi-branded loyalty platform, nth Rewards. It will allow users to earn points through various bank transactions and redeem them on various products, such as e-vouchers, donations, hotel and flight bookings.
- NPCI has created a comprehensive platform for the banks, which will enable them to retain and grow their customer base. This integration with the banking system will be secured with PCI-DSS compliance and APIs, with an onboarding time of 4 to 6 weeks. The platform can then be integrated in any existing website or app which will reduce the market time without changing customer's experience.
- It will consist of four platforms, starting with a loyalty engine that will allow consumers to earn points from various digital transactions, the analytics and business intelligence will provide access to the product portfolio, the offers and rewards platform will curate customer-specific offers and the campaign manager will enable communication with consumers through emails and messages.

SBM Bank collaborates with InstaReM to enhance outbound remittance

- SBM Bank India has partnered with InstaReM to improve existing outbound remittance service offerings from India. The users of both SBM Bank and InstaReM will be able to remit money to more markets and send funds overseas in real-time.
- SBM Bank India has partnered with InstaReM, the consumer and SME brand under global fintech platform Nium, to improve existing outbound remittance service offerings from India, including introduction of new remittance corridors, increased frequency of transactions for outbound transactions and enhanced delivery timings for transfers.
- The lender will be utilising InstaReM's payment rails to facilitate last mile outbound transfer deliveries for the users in India. Meanwhile, the customers will be able to remit money to over 100 corridors that InstaReM is present in, 65 of which are in real-time.

- SBM Bank will become the licensed banking partner for InstaReM and gain access to the United States, Canada, Australia, Europe, Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong and users of both SBM Bank and InstaReM will be able to remit money to more markets and send funds overseas in real-time.

IBBI amends Insolvency & Bankruptcy Board of India, Liquidation Process, Third Amendment, Regulations, 2020

- The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India notified the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India, Liquidation Process, Third Amendment, Regulations, 2020.
- The Regulations require the committee of creditors to fix the fee payable to the liquidator. Where the fee has not been fixed by the committee of creditors, the Regulations provide for a fee as a percentage of the amount realised and of the amount distributed by the liquidator.
- There have been instances where a liquidator realises the amount while another liquidator distributes the same to stakeholders. The amendment made to the Regulations clarifies that where a liquidator realises any amount, but does not distribute the same, he shall be entitled to a fee corresponding to the amount realised by him. These are available at www.mca.gov.in and www.ibbi.gov.in.

South India Bank gets RBI nod for setting up non-financial subsidiary

- Private sector lender South Indian Bank (SIB) said the RBI has given an in-principle approval for setting up a wholly owned non-financial subsidiary.
- SIB, which has been struggling to come out of its large bad loans trap, seems to be preparing the ground to set up subsidiaries or associate companies in order to try its hand at other areas including retail financing, insurance, reinsurance etc.
- However, the bank has not given additional details on the new entity or what the activity of the new non-financial subsidiary will be except that it will be a wholly-owned subsidiary.

EXIM Bank extends USD 250 mn line of credit to Mozambique

- Export-Import Bank of India (EXIM Bank) has extended a USD 250-million (about Rs 1,870 crore) line of credit (LOC) to Mozambique for improving power supply quality in the country.
- EXIM Bank till date has extended 14 LOCs to Mozambique, taking their total value to USD 772.44 million.
- EXIM Bank has now in place 264 LOCs, covering 62 countries across regions including Africa, Asia, and Latin America, with credit commitments of around USD 25.98 billion, available for financing exports from India.

Equitas SFB appointed as official retail banking partner for Chennai Super Kings

- Equitas Small Finance Bank announced that it has been appointed as the official retail banking partner for Chennai Super Kings (CSK) IPL team with effect from August 1, 2020.
- The Chennai-based bank was the principal sponsor of CSK in 2018. Equitas then announced that it will be the banking partner of Team CSK for three years.
- "The Bank becomes the official retail banking partner for the Chennai Super Kings Indian Premier League (IPL) team and offers various product offerings for its customers. The offering includes Video KYC, Higher interest rates on Fixed Deposits than before and Savings Account to name a few."

CDSL gets nod for e-KYC authentication

- Central Depository Services (India) Ltd, has received approval for local Authentication User Agency (AUA)/e-KYC User Agency (KUA) from UIDAI.

- The CDSL Group's AUA/KUA, once it goes on stream and the intermediaries register and go live as Sub-KUA, will facilitate intermediaries to offer seamless online account opening using online Aadhaar based eKYC, stated the depository.
- The Aadhaar-based eKYC service coupled with eSign service will facilitate online account opening and will reduce the turnaround time for online KYC and account opening, it further stated.
- In May, markets regulator Sebi had listed eight entities, including CDSL and CDSL Ventures, to undertake e-KYC Aadhaar authentication.
- The entities are required to get registered with UIDAI (Unique Identification Authority of India) as a KYC user agency and allow Sebi registered intermediaries or mutual fund distributors to undertake Aadhaar authentication in respect of their clients for the purpose of KYC, the regulator had stated.

Mahindra Manulife Mutual Fund launches Arbitrage Yojana

- Mahindra Manulife Mutual Fund has launched -Mahindra Manulife Arbitrage Yojana, an open ended scheme for investment in arbitrage opportunities available in equity, derivatives and debt markets.
- The scheme is suitable for investors who are looking for short term investment options with relatively low risk, tax efficient returns, and looking to park money in a scheme relatively less impacted by market volatility.
- Mahindra Manulife Arbitrage Yojana would invest minimum 65-100% in equity and equity related instruments including equity derivatives, upto 35% in debt and money market securities including tri-party repo, reverse repo upto 35 - 100% in debt and money market securities including tri-party repo, reverse repo, and upto 10% in units issued by REITs & InvITs.

Razorpay launches payment gateway 'Button' to digitise freelancers, NGOs

- Payment gateway startup Razorpay has introduced a feature that allows micro-entrepreneurs and freelancers to instantaneously accept digital payments online, a move attempted to corner the market of the rapidly digitising small businesses amid the ongoing pandemic.
- The feature called the 'Payment Button' will enable businesses and freelancers to add a single line of code on a website or blog and go live with a payment gateway within a few minutes.
- The new product will need no technical integrations or back-end support and can be almost instantaneously set up for collecting digital payments through cards, wallets and UPI.

Federal Bank chooses Fiserv to support launch of first independent credit card

- Private sector lender Federal Bank has chosen global provider of payments and financial services technology solutions Fiserv to enable digitisation of the bank's end-to-end card issuance and processing cycle, and support the launch of its credit card.
- The bank will also outsource associated operational processes to Fiserv, it stated.
- With a strong retail and remittance business in India, Federal Bank was looking for a flexible and scalable technology and business process outsourcing (BPO) solution to support the launch and subsequent growth of its credit card business, Federal Bank stated.

Sebi levies penalty of Rs.10 lakh each on LIC, SBI, Bank of Baroda

- Markets regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) penalized three state-owned financial companies, including State Bank of India (SBI), Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) and Bank of Baroda (BoB), for failing to reduce their stakes in UTI Asset Management Co. (AMC).
- The three companies have to bring down their stakes in UTI to 10%, each, from the existing 18.24%, each.

- The three public sector companies have considerable stakes in other fund houses, including LIC Mutual Fund, SBI Mutual Fund and Bank of Baroda Mutual Fund.
- The adjudicating officer fined the three companies Rs. 10 lakh each.
- The three financial entities in their submission to the market regulator would divest their stakes when the mutual fund came out with its initial public offer, which is to be completed by 30 September.

Standard Chartered & Airtel Africa partner to drive financial inclusion across Africa

- Standard Chartered Bank has entered into a strategic collaboration with Airtel Africa to drive financial inclusion across key markets in Africa by providing customers with increased access to mobile financial services.
- Through the collaboration, both Standard Chartered and Airtel Africa will work together to co-create new and innovative products aimed at enhancing the accessibility of financial services and, serve to people across Africa better.
- Besides, Airtel Money's customers will be able to leverage Standard Chartered bank accounts to make real-time online deposits and withdrawals and receive international money transfers directly to their wallets and access savings products, amongst other services.
- Mobile banking transfers between Standard Chartered Bank and Airtel Money are now live in Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, and Zambia. The companies are also planning to roll out the services further, subject to regulatory approvals.

NHB, NABARD get special liquidity facility of Rs.5,000 crore each

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced additional special liquidity facility of Rs.5,000 crore each for the National Housing Bank (NHB) and the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) at the policy repo rate of 4 per cent.
- In the case of NHB, the central bank stated the Rs.5,000 crore facility is being provided to shield the housing sector from liquidity disruptions and augment the flow of finance to the sector through housing finance companies (HFCs)
- The RBI excepts the Rs.5,000-crore facility for NABARD to ameliorate the stress being faced by smaller non-bank finance companies (NBFCs) and micro-finance institutions in obtaining access to liquidity.
- The RBI had earlier announced refinancing of Rs.25,000 crore to NABARD and Rs.10,000 crore to NHB on April 17 as they were facing difficulties in raising resources in view of tightening financial conditions amid the pandemic.

Digital Apnayen: PNB launches campaign to encourage digital banking

- State-owned Punjab National Bank launched a campaign to encourage customers to use digital banking channels.
- Under the campaign 'DIGITAL APNAYEN', the bank will contribute Rs 5 towards the PM CARES Fund on behalf of each customer conducting the first financial transaction to activate their RuPay Debit card either on point of sale (PoS) or e-commerce platform.
- PNB would continue to play an integral and indispensable part in the country's journey towards economic progress and urged all employees to help fulfill the dreams of an economically vibrant and inclusive India.
- The contribution of various government schemes, aimed at the financial and digital inclusion of millions of Indians, for making banking services universally accessible to all.

Bharti AXA Life, SBM Bank India enter into bancassurance partnership

Bharti AXA Life Insurance has entered into bancassurance partnership with **SBM Bank India** for distribution of **life insurance products** through the latter's network.

Under this agreement, Bharti AXA Life Insurance will offer its entire suite of life insurance products, including protection, health, savings and investment plans, to the customers of SBM Private Wealth, the retail banking arm of SBM Bank India.

SBM Bank India, one of the youngest new age banks in the country, has presence in six cities and serves its customers through direct and collaborative networks. The collaboration would offer different life insurance products to SBM Bank's customers in Mumbai, New Delhi, Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Ramachandrapuram.

Bharti AXA Life Insurance tied up with **Karnataka Bank** as its first major bancassurance partnership to distribute its various insurance solutions.

Lakshmi Vilas Bank launches instant account opening facility

- Lakshmi Vilas Bank (LVB) has launched LVB DigiGo, a digital initiative to enable opening of savings account instantly.
- LVB's new initiative will help people to avail the most required banking services instantly through the website.
- As a Lakshmi DigiGo customer, one can visit the nearest LVB Branch and convert his/her "Lakshmi DigiGo", account to a fully featured regular account of choice and avail cheque book, debit card and a host of other facilities.

Muthoot Finance, Kotak Mahindra General Insurance partner to offer COVID-19 cover

- Muthoot Finance has teamed-up with Kotak Mahindra General Insurance in bid to offer COVID-19 insurance cover of up to Rs 1 lakh against gold loan.
- The company will be providing complimentary COVID-19 insurance cover to their eligible customers through Muthoot Finance Ayush Gold Loan, an exclusive initiative of Muthoot Group.
- This specific cover will only be available for the customers opting to avail gold loan under the Super Loan scheme.

Fino Payments Bank launches Aadhaar Auth based Digital Savings account to offer Neo-Banking Experience

- Fino Payments Bank has launched Jan BachatKhata, an Aadhaar Authentication based digital savings account that brings neo-banking experience to consumers.
- The Jan BachatKhata (JBK) is available to everyone who is comfortable with AadhaarAuth based banking on fingertips. However, the primary segment would be low income household families and beneficiaries of government's direct benefit transfer (DBT).
- For this set of customers Aadhaar enabled payment system (AePS)has emerged as the preferred mode of transaction as it is convenient, secure and completely digital.

PayMate launches full stack supply chain payments automation platform

- B2B payments player PayMate launched the country's first full-stack supply chain payments automation platform for large enterprises and their suppliers (SMEs).
- The new version of the PayMate platform will add further value to supply chains by allowing enterprises to extend payables using commercial cards and SMEs to receive early payments towards outstanding invoices via discounting where cashflow for SME is the lifeblood, especially in these challenging times, it stated.
- Ajay Adiseshann, Founder and CEO, PayMate, stated small and medium businesses will be able to sustain themselves through the troubled Covid times by offering discounts on their overdue invoices.

YES BANK launches digital `Loan against Securities` under the Loan in Seconds platform for instant loan disbursements

- YES BANK announced the launch of digital 'Loan against Securities', a unique solution enabling customers to lien mark their mutual funds digitally and avail quick and hassle-free loan.
- This digital solution has been launched under YES BANK's 'Loan in Seconds' platform, allowing customers to set an instant credit limit against securities held.
- Customers can now avail a loan digitally without any additional documentation from the safety and comfort of their homes.
- Customers can avail the facility from the Bank's website,https://www.yesbank.in/yes-bank-loans/loan-in-secondsand lien mark mutual funds with KFin Technologies as the registrar.

Benefits of the solution

- Instant availability of funds in account within minutes
- Loan up to Rs. 1 crore against debt mutual funds
- Available against both Debt and Equity Mutual Funds
- Customer retains mutual fund portfolio without liquidation
- Interest applied only on amount utilized for the number of days of utilization

IRDAI group recommends setting up loss prevention entity for non-life insurers

- A working group constituted by the insurance regulator has recommended the setting up of a non-profit company to reduce insurance losses arising from property and motor related liabilities for the industry.
- The ten-member committee headed by Irdai member T L Alamelu has recommended the regulator and industry participants to join hands in establishing this company.
- The committee which has representations from the regulators, insurers, experts and brokers was constituted in December of 2019 to study various risks and losses suffered by companies insuring property and motor related losses.
- The Company may also set standards and benchmarks for various activities from the insurance perspective.
- However, the company cannot directly get involved in commercial activities such as risk inspection and management.
- The committee has also suggested that the proposed company could subsequently also expand to the areas of health and general insurance as well, with a broader perception once the full-term effects of the pandemic also plays out.
- The Company should collaborate with bodies such as Insurance Information Bureau of India as well as with various academic institutions, bodies dealing with insurance education and build synergies.

Edelweiss Tokio Life partners with Element AI for AI transformation journey

- Edelweiss Tokio Life Insurance has partnered with Element AI, a global developer of artificial intelligence-powered (AI) solutions and products, to develop a strategic AI roadmap for the new-age insurer and prioritise investments.
- The Element AI Advisory and Enablement team will work closely with Edelweiss Tokio Life to create an actionable roadmap for strategic AI deployment for the company, which will ultimately support a detailed AI transformation plan.
- This work will utilize unique learnings and insights from Element AI to establish technical feasibility and identify AI use cases.

Lakshmi Vilas Bank launches instant account opening facility

- Lakshmi Vilas Bank (LVB) has launched LVB DigiGo, a digital initiative to enable opening of savings account instantly. LVB's new initiative will help people to avail the most required banking services instantly through the website.
- This can later be converted to a fully featured account, upon visiting the nearest LVB branch
- As a Lakshmi DigiGo customer, one can visit the nearest LVB Branch and convert his/her "Lakshmi DigiGo", account to a fully-featured regular account of choice and avail cheque book, debit card and a host of other facilities.

KVG Bank inks pact with SBI General Insurance

- The Dharwad-headquartered Karnataka Vikas Grameen Bank (KVGB) and SBI General Insurance Co Ltd have signed an MoU to sell general insurance products through the branches of KVGB.
- The customers of KVGB will get access to bouquet of products that can cover their health, home, motor, property through the range of solutions that the company offers.
- The bank is committed to rural development and to bring an improvement of the social fabric of rural people, apart from undertaking its usual business.

SBI partners with AddaCorner to boost real estate deals in Bengaluru

- State Bank of India (SBI) unveiled an online home carnival in partnership with real-time group negotiation e-platform AddaCorner.
- The carnival will invite prospective home-buyers to virtually come together as a group and directly negotiate with impaneled real estate sellers on real-time basis.
- This will ensure that buyers are able to unlock group pricings and negotiate the best deal on the property while allowing developers to close sales in bulk
- Developers empanelled on the AddaCorner platform include Brigade Group, Purvankara, Shriram Properties, Salarpuria, Assetz and Sumadhura.

Bharti AXA's non-life insurance business to merge with ICICI Lombard General Insurance

- Bharti AXA's non-life insurance business is set to merge with ICICI Lombard General Insurance, in what will end up creating the country's third largest non-life insurance company.
- The board of directors of ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company and Bharti AXA General Insurance Company at their respective meetings held today, approved entering into definitive agreements for demerger of Bharti AXA's non-life insurance business into ICICI Lombard through a Scheme of Arrangement, the companies stated
- Based on the share exchange ratio recommended by independent valuers and accepted by the respective boards of the companies, the shareholders of Bharti AXA will receive two shares of ICICI Lombard for every 115 shares of Bharti AXA on the date when the Scheme of Arrangement is approved by the boards of both companies.
- The combined entity shall have a market share of about 8.7 per cent on pro-forma basis, the statement stated, adding that through the proposed transaction, ICICI Lombard shall be able to augment its distribution strength with Bharti AXA's existing distribution partnerships.
- The transaction is subject to regulatory approvals, following which the non-life insurance business will be demerged from Bharti AXA into ICICI Lombard.

HSBC India comes up with green deposit programme for corporate clients

- HSBC India launched a "green deposit programme", exclusively for corporate clients, under which deposits will be used by the bank to finance green initiatives and environment friendly projects. The deposit scheme will come in the form of a term deposit, which typically attracts higher interests as compared to savings deposits.
- In a statement, the bank stated that deposits under this scheme will go towards financing eligible businesses and projects that promote the transition to a low-carbon, climate resilient and sustainable economy.
- This deposit scheme of the bank will offer its corporate clients stable and pre-agreed returns, and offer the same protection as a normal bank deposit does. Furthermore, clients will get quarterly reports containing portfolio-level information regarding the use of the deposited funds.
- "Corporates looking for inclusion of a sustainability agenda into their treasury activities or those that have limited opportunities for investment in environmentally beneficial projects will find this product particularly relevant", the bank stated.
- HSBC has extended green loans to support environment friendly projects in the past across multiple sectors. In India, it has extended credit to a 250 MW wind power project at Kutch, Gujarat, India.

Digit Launches SME Buddy to Simplify Insurance for SMEs and Startups

- Digit Insurance has launched an exclusive do-it-yourself (DIY) advisory tool for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and startups, SME Buddy.

- The online tool helps entrepreneurs calculate the insurance coverage for their business in just a few simple steps. The business owner has to key in details about the nature of his business, its industry, assets linked to the enterprise and the businesses resources.
- Founded in 2017 by insurance veteran Kamesh Goyal, Digit is a full-stack insurtech startup powered by Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), image analytics, tracking technologies and data lakes, that builds general insurance products, such as motor, health, travel and home insurance, among others.
- SME Buddy is also part of the company's larger initiative to make insurance simpler, but this time for smaller businesses that are more susceptible to risks, especially with the ongoing pandemic.
- SME Buddy will give small businesses an idea on what type of insurance covers will be helpful for them and will protect them from eventualities.

Paytm Payments Bank enables banking through Aadhaar cards
- Paytm Payments Bank has enabled banking services through Aadhaar cards by integrating Aadhaar-enabled Payment System.
- Paytm Payments Bank's customers can now access basic banking services such as cash withdrawal, balance enquiry and obtain a mini statement through the business correspondent of any banking and financial institution in the country, it stated, adding that this will benefit people in rural and semi-urban areas who have limited access to bank branches and ATMs.
- The lender has also partnered with over 10,000 business correspondents, who will have access to BC App for facilitating AePS transactions. It plans to add more correspondents to its network.

RBL Bank Selects Accenture to Accelerate Its Digital Journey
- RBL Bank announced that Accenture (NYSE: ACN) will transform and enhance the future readiness of the bank's information technology (IT) systems and accelerate its digital transformation journey. The engagement will enable RBL Bank to offer next-generation banking services, enhance the resilience and scalability of its systems and business processes, and improve its operational efficiency.
- Accenture will provide managed services and help RBL Bank modernize and consolidate its large and disparate applications environment, which will help streamline and automate key business processes such as finance and compliance, human resources and sales.
- Accenture will also create a flexible and more responsive technology backbone for RBL Bank by using its expertise in Devops and Agile working methodology to enable the continuous roll-out of improved digital capabilities and long-term system improvements while helping the bank manage IT costs more effectively.

Axis Bank launches hiring initiative named 'Gig-a-Opportunities'
- Axis Bank has launched a new initiative named 'Gig-a-Opportunities'. The initiative aims to attract skilled talent that can work with the bank remotely, from anywhere in the country.
- This hiring model comprises two working patterns. One is the full-time permanent job and the second is based on the duration of a project and is temporary in nature. Axis Bank aims to employ 800-1000 people over the next under this initiative.
- GIG-A-Opportunities, as the name suggests, is pegged for large opportunities in the job market. It will open up large prospects in digital banking, technology, risk modeling, virtual sales, audit and credit policy, which are the first set of pilot offers for the model. It will attract talent through two work models – 1) 100% virtual roles and 2) flexible, project based short term contracts. These jobs offered go beyond the traditional association of freelance or work from home.

Nabard introduces debt and credit guarantee product

- The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard) has introduced a dedicated debt and credit guarantee product, 'Structured Finance and Partial Guarantee Program for Non-Banking Finance Companies (NBFC)-Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs)', to ensure unhindered flow of credit to the last mile in rural areas hit by the pandemic.
- The program entails providing partial guarantee on pooled loans extended to small and mid-sized MFIs.
- Pooled Loan Issuance (PLI) structure provides the lending bank adequate comfort through partial credit protection, reduces cost of capital as the rating of the loans get notched up, and helps lenders meet priority sector goals.
- Average size of Rs.500 crore of assets under management) that operate in rural hinterlands and serve farmers, traders, rural businesses and households.
- Nabard has collaborated with Vivriti Capital, a technology-led credit platform, as the structurer for the facility.
- Vivriti Capital manages and runs CredAvenueTM, a marketplace for enterprise debt, which enables enterprises to raise debt from loan, bond and securitisation markets.
- National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has tied up with Ujjivan Small Finance Bank and Vivritti to provide Rs 25000 crore funding support to low income households.

ICICI Bank Becomes First in India to Use Satellite Data To Assess Farmer Loans

- ICICI Bank has announced that it will make use of satellite data, in combination with technologies from agri-tech and fin-tech firms, to offer advanced, remote credit assessment for extending loans to farmers.
- The technology will involve using advanced satellite imagery to assess farm lands in parameters such as land quality, location, irrigation and year-round crop patterns.
- This data set will be combined with demographic data as well as financial spending patterns from fin-tech companies, in a bid to increase maximum credit allocation for farmers with existing credit history, as well as introduce farmers new to the credit system with faster assessment and lesser hassle.
- The technology, ICICI Bank claims, will help them introduce first time credit users into the system, and also increase the creditworthiness of farmers with existing credit history.
- It will also help reduce the time taken to process these loans, since the use of satellite technology combined with analytical all-round data will further help ICICI Bank executives to remotely assess farm details, and not travel to the farm lands physically.
- This can be particularly beneficial for times such as these, when despite considerable relaxation of rules, travel restrictions still persist in many areas due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- ICICI Bank has also claimed that it is the first bank in any sector (public or private) to use a combination of satellite imagery and advanced analytics in order to extend loans to farmers.
- It also claims to be among a few banks around the world to use this technology for agriculture sector loans.

SBI General Insurance Launches 'Shagun – Gift an insurance' policy

- SBI General Insurance, one of the leading general insurance companies in India, today announced the launch of first-of-its-kind offering, 'Shagun – Gift an Insurance", a unique gift of Personal Accident policy. This product was filed by SBI General under Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority's (IRDAI) Sandbox regulations.
- The key differentiating feature of the policy is that it can be gifted to anyone you want, which means it is not necessary for the policy buyer to be related to the insured.

- Shagun covers personal accident insurance which provides complete financial protection to the insured person against uncertainties such as accidental death and partial or total disabilities, and permanent as well as temporary disabilities resulting from an accident.

Bajaj Allianz General Insurance launches cover for pet dogs

- Bajaj Allianz General Insurance launched its pet insurance product called 'Bajaj Allianz Pet Dog Insurance Policy'.
- This is India's only retail comprehensive pet insurance offering for pet dogs. This policy provides comprehensive coverage to domesticated pet dogs of indigenous origin, pedigree, non-pedigree, cross-bred and also exotic breeds over the lifetime of the dogs from age three months to 10 years, the insurer stated.
- The premium starts from Rs.315 and a 5 per cent discount on premium is available in case the dog is RFID-tagged.
- The insurer stated that medical tests for pet dogs are not mandatory, even at higher ages. "It covers treatment of any injury, surgery or mortality resulting from any accident from the moment of policy issuance, without any waiting period," it further stated.
- The mandatory coverage includes surgery and hospitalisation charges while optional covers for mortality benefit, terminal diseases, long term care, OPD, third party liability as well as theft and straying.

HSBC launches one-stop solution for multiple payment options

- HSBC India introduced Omni Collect — a one-stop solution to provide multiple payment options on single platform.
- The aim is to simplify the way businesses collect payments through various digital modes. With this, the businesses can offer various digital payment modes to their customers.
- It also helps them with a comprehensive view of their collections.
- Some of key features of Omni Collect are — 1) Centralised digital collections management, 2) Integrated collections solution with partnered aggregators, 3) Real-time connectivity via API for immediate collection and transaction status enquiry, 4) A comprehensive report including Customer Reference number (Order ID) and transaction amount, 4) Data of all transactions (card/mobile wallet, etc.).
- Advanced Travel Partners International (ATPI), is HSBC India's first client to go live with Omni Collect solution and has started receiving payments through the online payment gateway.

Axis Bank Introduces 'Liberty Savings Account' for the Indian Youth

- Axis Bank, India's third-largest private sector bank, announced the launch of its 'Liberty Savings Account'.
- This unique proposition offers customers the flexibility to either maintain a minimum balance of Rs 25,000 per month or spend the same amount every month through the Liberty debit card or savings account (via NetBanking, Axis Mobile or UPI) on lifestyle requirements.
- The Liberty Savings Account also offers a complimentary hospital cash insurance cover of upto Rs 20,000 per year, which covers hospital expenses incurred under COVID -19, making this a first of its kind savings account to cover the pandemic.
- The Liberty Saving Account is targeted to cater to the lifestyle requirements of the working class that falls under 35 years of age.
- A customer can enjoy 5% cashback every weekend on expenses incurred on food, entertainment, shopping and travel. This reward is part of the overall package, which comprises benefits worth Rs 15,000 annually through cashbacks, banking benefits, dining delights and quarterly spend vouchers.

Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance launches real-time assistance service

- Private life insurer Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance has launched a new technology service called 'Smart Assist' that provides real-time assistance to customers.

About Smart Assist:

- Smart Assist is designed to help customers know all about their product, through virtual assistance, since face-to-face meetings have been a challenge amid the coronavirus pandemic.
- It can be accessed from any device, including desktop, laptop and mobile phone. This platform provides application processing, providing consent through a one-time password and online payment collection.
- Using a screen sharing feature, the agent will be able to assist customers live to fill up the proposal form and also help them in the policy purchase journey.
- Even if there is an error in the form that has to be corrected in the proposal form, this can be done through the screen-sharing process. No additional application needs to be downloaded.

<p style="text-align:center;color:red;">Revision Points</p>

Name of the Organization	Headquarters	Head of the Organization
Reserve Bank of India	Mumbai	Shaktikanta Das
Bharti AXA General Insurance	Mumbai	Sanjeev Srinivasan
Karnataka Bank	Mangalore	Mahabaleshwara MS
NABARD	Mumbai	Govinda Rajulu Chintala
Dhanlaxmi Bank	Thrissur	Sajeev Krishnan
Indiabulls Housing Finance Ltd	Gurugram	Subhash Sheoratan Mundra
Securities and Exchange Board of India	Mumbai	Ajay Tyagi
Canara Bank	Bengaluru	T N Manoharan
Oriental Insurance Company Limited	New Delhi	SN Rajeswari
Nippon Life India Asset Management	Mumbai	Parekh Ashvin
PNB Housing Finance	New Delhi	Hardayal Prasad
Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India	Hyderabad	Subash Chandra Khuntia
National Payments Corporation of India	Mumbai	Dilip Asbe
HDFC Bank	Mumbai	Sashidhar Jagdishan
IndusInd Bank	Pune	Sumant Kathpalia
Axis Bank	Mumbai	Rakesh Makhija
State Bank of India	Mumbai	Rajnish Kumar
ICICI Bank	Mumbai	Sandeep Bakshi
Federal Bank	Aluva	Shyam Srinivasan
SBM Bank	Port Louis, Mauritius	Mohit Dhoorundhur
Lakshmi Vilas Bank	Chennai	Lakshmi Vilas Bank

Muthoot Finance	Kochi	M G George Muthoot
HSBC Bank	London	Noel Quinn
South Indian Bank	Thrissur	Salim Gangadharan
Punjab National Bank	New Delhi	S.S Mallikarjuna Rao
Bank of Baroda	Vadodara	Hasmukh Adhia
YES Bank	Mumbai	Prashant Kumar
DBS Bank	Singapore	Piyush Gupta
RBL Bank	Mumbai	Vishwavir Ahuja
EXIM Bank	Mumbai	David Rasquinha
Bajaj Allianz General Insurance	Pune	Tapan Singhel
National Housing Bank	New Delhi	Sriram Kalyanaraman
Kotak Mahindra Bank	Mumbai	Uday Kotak
Small Industries Development Bank of India	Lucknow	Mohammad Mustafa
National Stock Exchange	Mumbai	Vikram Limaye
Razorpay	Bengaluru	Harshil Mathur
Central Depository Services	Mumbai	B V Chaubal
Equitas Small Finance Bank	Chennai	Vasudevan P N
Bandhan Bank	Kolkata	Anup Kumar Sinha
Life Insurance Corporation of India	Mumbai	MR Kumar
Edelweiss Tokio Life Insurance	Mumbai	Rashesh Shah
Fino Payments Bank	Mumbai	Rishi Gupta
Standard Chartered Bank	London	José Viñals
Airtel Payments Bank	New Delhi	Anubrata Biswas
Aditya Birla Health Insurance	Mumbai	Mayank Bathwal
PayU	Hoofddorp, Netherlands	Anirban Mukherjee

Important Financial & Economy Affairs

Organization	GDP Rate (2020 – 21(FY21))
Reserve Bank	-4.5%
Pronab Sen	-12.5%
India Ratings	-5.3%
ICRA	-9.5%
NSO Data	-23.9% (FY 21 – Q1)
Barclays	-6%
SBI	-16.5% (FY 20 - April – June Quarter)

NSE, IIM-Bangalore join hands to offer platform for investor education

- The National Stock Exchange (NSE) announced the launch of a digital learning platform for investor education.
- The platform, an online investor education resource centre, has been developed jointly by NSE Investor Protection Fund Trust and IIM Bangalore.
- The platform was launched by Sebi''s executive director Nagendraa Parakh, in a virtual function.
- NSE stated the Platform for investor education (PIE) imparts investor education in simple easy-to-understand video, audio, and other digital media formats.
- The platform has four learning modules each comprising number of videos, audios, podcasts, deep-dives and blog posts presenting the content using the latest animation and data visualization technology to actively engage different cohorts of potential investors, it added.
- One of the unique aspects of the platform is involvement of top notch experts in the field and experienced faculty making the offering relevant to the entire spectrum of investors from first-time investors to experienced investors.
- An option is made available to the user to access the audio content in multiple languages to cater to a larger set of audience, it added.

Universal Sompo General Insurance and BSE EBIX join hands

- Universal Sompo General Insurance Company Ltd, a joint venture between Indian Bank, Indian Overseas Bank, Karnataka Bank, Dabur Investment Corp and Sompo Japan Insurance Inc, announced its alliance with BSE Ebix Insurance Broking Private Limited (BSE Ebix), a joint venture between BSE (Bombay Stock Exchange), the first stock exchange of Asia and Ebix Fincorp Exchange Pte Ltd to sell General Insurance products using strong distribution network of BSE Ebix in a completely digitized environment.
- The partnership has been initiated with the offering of Universal Sompo's recently launched Corona Kavach cover which is a short-term policy to cover COVID-19 related hospitalization expenses through certified Point of Sales Persons (PoSPs) of BSE Ebix. Presently BSE Ebix has more than 7,200 registered PoSPs, and is growing daily.
- The strategic association between Universal Sompo General Insurance and BSE EBIX will enable more people to avail insurance plans and protect themselves and their families against the deadly virus.

RIL picks majority stake in Netmeds for Rs 620 crore

- The online pharmacy space is set to become a hotly contested segment with Reliance Industries (RIL) now throwing its hat into the ring. The Mukesh Ambani-owned conglomerate announced acquisition of a majority equity stake in Chennai-based online pharmacy delivery startup Netmeds (Vitalic Health Pvt. Ltd) for a cash consideration of approximately Rs 620 crore.
- This investment represents 60 per cent holding in the equity share capital of Vitalic and 100 per cent direct equity ownership of its subsidiaries - Tresara Health Private Limited, Netmeds Market Place Limited and Dadha Pharma Distribution Pvt. Limited, a late evening statement by RIL stated.
- RIL's acquisition comes at a time when arch rival Amazon has just started selling pharmaceutical products in Bangalore markets. Also, two other prominent players Medlife and PharmEasy are now heading for a merger to create a have agreed for a merger, to create a large combined entity in the online pharmacy space.
- Promoted by Dadha Pharma, Chennai-based Netmeds is one of the earliest players in this space having incorporated in 2015. The company which connects customers to pharmacists and enable door step delivery of medicines, nutritional health and wellness products, is stated to have raised close to $100 million funding so far from investors such as

Tanncam, Sistema and Daun Penh. Till date, the company has served close to 4 million customers across over 610 cities and towns.

World Bank sees higher GDP fall in India than 3.2% it projected for FY21

- The World Bank stated it was likely to project a steeper contraction in India's economy than the 3.2 per cent it had forecast for the current financial year, given the rising number of Covid-19 cases and the resultant regional lockdowns. It cautioned India against using its tariff policy to attract firms seeking a shift away from China.

- In its report on India Development Update, 2020, it also warned that credit risks could play out as firms and households find it more difficult to service interest and repayment obligations. It called for full privatisation of some public sector banks and private capital injection in others.

- Despite India making progress in poverty reduction in recent years, the deadly virus has made half of the population vulnerable to be pushed to poverty, the report stated.

- It added, new information would have been incorporated, especially given the rising infections resulting in several state and district lockdowns. Further, the available high frequency indicators show that the economy is yet to revert to baseline.

- Various agencies and economists have provided varying figures for India's GDP contraction for FY21. While former chief statistician **Pronab Sen has pegged it at 12.5 per cent, ICRA had forecast 9.5 per cent and India Ratings 5.3 per cent.**

Apple becomes first U.S. Company to reach a $2 trillion market cap

- Apple hit a market cap of $2 trillion, doubling in valuation in just over two years to become the first publicly traded U.S. Company to reach the milestone.

- Apple first reached a $1 trillion market cap on Aug. 2, 2018.

- Recently, Apple passed the state oil giant Saudi Aramco to become the world's most valuable publicly traded company.

- Also FutureBrand Index 2020 list is topped by Apple.

Digital payments market in India likely to grow 3-fold to Rs 7,092 lakh cr by 2025

- Digital payments in India are expected to grow over three-folds to Rs 7,092 lakh crore by 2025 on account of government policies around financial inclusion and growing digitisation of merchants, according to a research report.

- The country's digital payment market was worth around Rs 2,162 lakh crore in 2019-20, RedSeer Consulting stated in its report.

- The current 160 million unique mobile payment users will multiply by five times to reach nearly 800 million by 2025. This growth will be driven by a number of demand and supply-side drivers, the Bengaluru-based management consultancy stated.

- Mobile payments will drive around 3.5 per cent of total digital payments of Rs 7,092 trillion by financial year 2025, up from the current 1 per cent. The total mobile payment users, who currently stand at about 162 million, would reach around 800 million during this period, the report stated.

- According to the report, the payment gateway aggregator market in India, which is currently estimated at Rs 9.5 trillion, is expected to grow by 2.4 times driven by large value transactions. It is expected to grow at a compounded annual growth rate of 19 per cent in the next five years to reach Rs 22.6 trillion by FY 2025.

NSE to launch 'silver options' in commodity derivatives segment from September 1

- Leading stock exchange NSE will launch 'silver options' in the commodity derivatives segment from September 1.

- The exchange has received markets regulator SEBI's nod for 'options' in goods contracts on the underlying silver spot price for trading in the commodity derivatives segment, the NSE stated.

- The move is aimed at offering new products to commodity market participants and to deepen the market ecosystem.

- Earlier, the National Stock Exchange (NSE) had launched 'gold mini options' on June 8.
- An options contract gives the buyer or holder of the contract the right (but not the obligation) to buy or sell the underlying asset at a pre-determined price within or at the end of a specified period.

RBI projects country's growth rate at (-) 4.5 per cent for 2020-21

- The Reserve Bank has projected India's growth rate at (-) 4.5 percent for 2020-21. In its annual report released, RBI projected global growth rate between (-) 6.0 per cent and (-) 7.6 per cent. The report says that expected headline inflation will remain elevated in the current quarter, but likely to ease in the second half of the fiscal.
- In its report, RBI has asked for wide-ranging reforms to regain losses due to COVID-19 crisis adding that it will take quite some time to mend and regain the pre-COVID-19 momentum. Noting that meeting the fiscal targets budgeted in 2020-21 has become even more challenging due to COVID-19, RBI has stated that the government must have a clear exit strategy with credible consolidation milestones and timelines in reworking the path towards fiscal rectitude in the coming years.
- The report also notes that government consumption spending has provided a measure of relief, with the central government's revenue expenditure, having risen by 33.7 per cent in the first quarter. It stressed that the pandemic will inflict deep disfigurations on the world economy adding that the future is heavily contingent upon the evolving intensity, spread and duration of COVID-19 and the discovery of the elusive vaccine.

Important Business News

ICICI Pru MF launches ETF on Nifty Alpha Low Volatility index

- ICICI Prudential Mutual Fund has launched 'Alpha Low Vol 30 ETF' an open-ended index exchange traded fund.
- The offering aims to provide returns that closely correspond to the returns of Nifty Alpha Low-Volatility 30 Index.
- The New Fund Offer will be open for învestment between August 3 and 10. The units of this ETF will be listed on NSE and BSE.
- The new ETF of ICICI MF intends to counter the cyclical theory of single factor index structure strategy. The index provides exposure to a portfolio of stocks from various sectors, based on top combination of alpha and low volatility.
- Through this ETF, an investor gets access to smart beta strategy which is rule-based and cost-effective, he stated.
- Investors can achieve greater diversification and become less reliant on any one factor to drive returns. Owing to these benefits, globally too, investors are moving to multiple factor strategies.

Amazon's Project Kuiper gets FCC approval for over 3,200 internet satellites

- Amazon has received approval from the U.S. Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to launch and operate a planned constellation of 3,236 internet satellites.
- Amazon's Project Kuiper, an initiative to create a satellite-based broadband internet service designed to provide high-speed, low-latency connections to U.S.-based households that currently don't have great access to a high-speed connection.
- Amazon also announced that it would be committing over $10 billion in Kuiper, it will generate U.S. jobs and involve not only building and testing satellites for the constellation, but also building out key ground network infrastructure that's required in order to actually make the connectivity available to consumers.

Tech Mahindra launches 'Mhealthy' to screen employees for COVID-19 risk factors at workplaces

- Tech Mahindra announced the launch of Mhealthy, a solution to enable workforce and community safety against COVID-19.
- Mhealthy is a comprehensive solution powered by new generation technologies including artificial intelligence and machine learning to enable data driven digital diagnostics.

- Tech Mahindra has rolled-out phase-wise screening starting with third-party vendors across its India offices and plans to extend the benefits to its employees, customers, and partner ecosystem.
- Tech Mahindra is also working towards safely reopening offices for a limited number of employees using the best available screening technology.
- Mhealthy enables screening of the individuals at the workplace on a regular interval to check for risk factors of COVID-19, such as comorbid conditions, immunity status, and biomarkers of infection.

Airtel, Amazon Web Services to help MSMEs, others adopt cloud solutions

- Airtel announced a multi-year strategic collaboration with Amazon Web Services (AWS) to offer cloud solutions to small and medium enterprises (SME) as well as large businesses in India.
- Airtel Cloud will set-up an AWS Cloud Practice to offer its customers multiple AWS services such as Windows on AWS, SAP on AWS, VMware Cloud on AWS, database migration, and security and risk governance solutions.
- Airtel Cloud will also help customers adopt new services and migrate to the cloud through the support of AWS's services across analytics, data warehousing, Internet of Things (IoT), and machine learning (ML).
- The partnership between Airtel and AWS follows similar tie-ups between other leading technology players in the country looking to tap into the vast SMB market.

IFC to invest $10 mn in Endiya Partners Fund II for product start-ups

- Endiya Partners Fund II, a city-based venture capital fund has received a commitment of Rs 75 crore ($10M approx.) from the International Financial Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group, the company stated.
- IFC has also committed an additional $10 million for direct co-investments alongside Endiya Fund II, it stated in a press release. Endiya Partners is a seed and early-stageventure capital firm investing in IP-led Indian product start-ups that are globally relevant.
- Endiya Fund II has a corpus target of Rs 500 crore ($65 million) and has already completed its first close at Rs 280 crore ($40 million) in May 2019.
- Endiya Fund II will seek to invest in 16 - 20 start-ups, with an initial cheque size of $ 500,000 to $ one million in Seed/Pre-series A rounds and a planned investment of up to $5 million per company.

Paytm launches first pocket Android POS device for contactless payments in India

- Paytm has launched the first pocket Android POS device for contactless ordering and payments in India, a move that will make this technology more affordable for SMEs. The company has introduced 'Paytm All-in-One Portable Android Smart POS' at an introductory price of Rs 499 per month rental.
- Styled like a mobile phone for accepting orders and payments on the go, this is the first such Android-based device to be introduced in India and is much more powerful than the portable Linux based POS devices presently available in the country.
- It also comes bundled with Paytm's 'Scan to Order' service that is being adopted by thousands of restaurants and takeaway joints in the country. The company claims to offer the device effectively at the lowest price in the market, in an effort to empower a large number of SMEs to kickstart their businesses with contactless ordering and payment solutions. This device enables delivery personnel logistic players, Kirana stores, and small shopkeepers to accept digital payments on the go.

Reliance Foundation to partner W-GDP, USTATED to bridge gender digital divide

- Reliance Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Reliance Industries Ltd, stated it has forged a new partnership with US Agency for International Development and W-GDP to bridge the gender digital divide in India.

- The partnership was announced at a Women's Global Development and Prosperity (W-GDP) event hosted by Deputy Secretary of State of the United States Stephen Biegun and with special guest, Ivanka Trump, Advisor to the President of the United States, and Deputy USTATED Administrator Bonnie Glick, it stated .

- The W-GDP Women's Connect Challenge (WCC) supports private sector-led approaches that close the gender digital divide, expands business opportunities, and empowers women. As part of programme, W-GDP will partner with the Reliance Foundation to create an India-specific expression of the WCC and incorporate the lessons of previous W-GDP WCC Rounds.

- In 2016, Reliance launched Jio a tech ecosystem that has ushered in digital life for 1.3 billion Indians and delivered first-hand a pan-India digital revolution that has transformed lives in ways unimaginable before.

- In February 2019, the White House established the Women's Global Development and Prosperity (W-GDP) Initiative, the first whole-of-government approach to women's economic empowerment.

- W-GDP seeks to reach 50 million women in the developing world by 2025 by focusing on three pillars women prospering in the workforce, women succeeding as entrepreneurs, and women enabled in the economy.

Dell, NITI Aayog launch 2nd student entrepreneurship programme

- Dell Technologies in association with NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) announced the second Student Entrepreneurship Programme (SEP 2.0) that would mentor eight teams to foray into the world of innovation and entrepreneurship.

- In addition to the learning from SEP 1.0, the virtual SEP 2.0 will help students receive support and guidance to manufacture fully-functional, market-ready products along with patenting their ideas/processes.

- The 10-month SEP 1.0 helped top 6 innovations of the Atal Tinkering Marathon transform their innovative prototypes into functioning, scaled go-to-market products across six crucial themes having broader social impact.

- The SEP 2.0 will allow student innovators to work closely with Dell volunteers and avail mentorship to create a test bed for their innovation and collect customer feedback.

Xiaomi launches Mi For India initiative to distribute 2,500 phones to COVID-19 affected children

- Xiaomi India has launched an Independence Day initiative called Mi For India.

- The company has partnered with Teach For India to distribute 2500 new smartphones to children affected by the current COVID-19 pandemic.

- Mi For India has been launched to celebrate India's 74th Independence Day as well as the 5th anniversary of Xiaomi's Make In India initiative.

- The Chinese tech giant set up its first Indian manufacturing plant back in August 2015.

Tech Mahindra launches Upskilling-as-a-service platform

- Tech Mahindra was launching a new 'Upskilling-as-a-Service' (UaaS) platform to accelerate new-age skill development for over 60,000 employees globally to create a 'fit for future' workforce.

- The company also intends to make this available to academia so that students are industry ready when they graduate.

- Powered by New Age Delivery (NAD), UaaS will enhance employee competencies across emerging technologies like 5G, cloud, big data and robotic process automation.

- The learning platform leverages AI to provide interactive, on-demand, contextual and hyper-personalised upskilling to employees in self-service mode.

- The platform will provide holistic learning for employees across multiple technical as well as functional (domain), behavioural and professional skills. It will also recommend relevant career paths to the employees based on their current skillset, time to upskill and opportunities available.

Tata Capital launches 'Swift Insta Personal Loans' on WhatsApp

- Tata Capital, the financial services arm of the Tata Group announced the launch of its new service called 'Swift Insta Personal Loans' (SIPL) on WhatsApp.
- The company will now allow its existing customers to instantly apply and receive sanctions for personal loans using Tata Capital's chatbot TIA on WhatsApp.
- The chatbot was recently launched on WhatsApp as a service platform to facilitate customer requests including queries on EMI details or updating customer records.
- Customers can apply for Swift Insta Personal Loans through the company's WhatsApp number for TIA.
- They can then select 'Swift Insta Personal Loans ' from the Menu and verify themselves through a One- time Password (OTP).
- Post verification, they can choose the loan amount and await approval.'(Provisional) Sanction for loan applied will be received instantly,' Tata Capital stated.
- Post completion of the steps, details of the sanctioned SIPL amount will then be emailed to the customer's registered email address.

NPCI launches international unit to expand reach of UPI

- National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) launched its international arm-- NPCI International Payments Ltd -- to expand real-time payment system Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and card payment network RuPay in other countries.
- The primary focus of NIPL would be internationalization of RuPay and UPI, along with a few more offerings of NPCI.
- NIPL will be headed by Ritesh Shukla as Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

NRDC, NAL to establish incubation centre for start-ups in aerospace technologies

- The National Research Development Corporation (NRDC) and the National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL) will establish an innovation-cum-incubation centre with external private funding to promote startups in the emerging area of aerospace technologies, a statement stated.
- Under this programme startups in the area of aerospace engineering would be incubated, mentored and supported for product and prototype development and their validation.
- The NRDC is a PSU under the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research while the NAL is an institute under the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research.
- He also stated this partnership will help to create employment opportunities in the country.

Flipkart partners with Sastodeal in Nepal to enable cross-border trade

- Walmart-owned Flipkart has entered into a strategic partnership with Nepal's Sastodeal, a move that will help lakhs of Flipkart sellers get access to the neighbouring country's e-commerce market.
- Sastodeal will host over 5,000 products from Flipkart marketplace sellers operating across the categories of babycare and kids, audio devices, men's clothing, women's ethnic wear, and sports and fitness, among others, in turn opening access to Nepalese customers.
- Flipkart Private Brands - MarQ and SmartBuy - will also be listed on the Sastodeal platform with a focus on categories such as electronics, home appliances/home decor and furnishings.
- The partnership with Sastodeal will build the long-term development of the e-commerce industry in both countries.

- Flipkart will enable sellers to make these private brands readily-available to Nepalese consumers, with the fulfilment promise by Sastodeal.

IBM India, NSDC tie-up for offering free digital skills training

- IBM announced its collaboration with the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) to offer free digital skills training to learners in India.
- As part of its collaboration with NSDC, IBM will curate online courses from its Open P-TECH platform.
- It will then offer these course to users for free through NSDC's eSkill India portal.
- Under the partnership, Open P-TECH platform will offer courses to develop soft skills, interpersonal skills, problem-solving — a set of 11 key skills which are generally not available in a college curriculum, but are high in demand and are valued in the job market.
- These include courses on technologies such as Cyber Security, Blockchain, AI and Machine Learning, Cloud, Internet of Things, along with professional skills, like Design Thinking.
- The online education platform which is currently available only in English will soon be open in over 10 Indian languages including Hindi, followed by Kannada, Telugu, Tamil, Punjabi, Gujarati, Sindhi, Urdu, Bengali.
- Students can earn and share industry-supported 'digital badges' upon learning these courses and can add them to their resumes.

Tech Mahindra and NITI Aayog collaborate to support women entrepreneurs in India

- Tech Mahindra announced a collaboration with NITI Aayog's Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) to support women entrepreneurs across the country.
- Tech Mahindra will provide mentorship, co-create solutions leveraging new age technologies and support in developing a go-to-market strategy.
- The partnership is to recognise women leaders in entrepreneurship across various sectors like Healthcare and Lifesciences, Agritech, Education amongst others.
- Tech Mahindra's Research & Development arm, Makers lab will support women entrepreneurs through joint research, building go-to-market strategies to drive their growth and by leveraging next-generation technologies to develop cutting-edge solutions.
- Through this collaboration, Tech Mahindra and WEP will jointly focus on breeding new ideas, identifying gaps and providing technological prowess to develop innovative solutions for better positioning in the market and commercial success.

Mahindra ties up with Israel's REE Automotive to develop commercial EVs

- Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) has inked a pact with Tel Aviv-based REE Automotive to explore production of electric commercial vehicles.
- The Mumbai-based firm has signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the start-up to explore development and manufacturing of electric commercial vehicles for global markets.
- The partnership will support REE's global customer need for up to 250,000 electric commercial vehicle units over a few years, including any volumes for Mahindra's domestic and international markets.

TVS Automobile Solutions and Google tie up to digitise auto aftermarket

- TVS Automobile Solutions Pvt. Ltd. (TVS ASL) stated that it has joined hands with Google Cloud to build a digital ecosystem that can connect several stakeholders in the unorganised and fragmented auto aftermarket industry.

- As part of its digital transformation strategy, TVS ASL has migrated its on-premise data center infrastructure and existing public cloud deployments onto Google Cloud to develop this platform.
- TVS ASL and Google Cloud's digital solution will also connect upto 25,000 aftermarket retailers, who would be empowered with search tools provided by google.
- With a fragmented presence of over 40,000 retailers, 100,000 garages and thousands of small distributors across the country, TVS ASL estimates India's auto aftermarket at $10 billion, growing at a CAGR of 7-10% over the past five years.
- On the back of its new digital platform, it aims to grow its current market share of 4% to 10% by 2023. Raghavan estimates that the unorganised players would comprise upto 80% in the aftermarket.

Greenko and NTPC to partner for supplying on-demand green energy

- Hyderabad-based Greenko Energies Pvt Ltd plans to partner with state run NTPC Ltd to develop 'round-the-clock' power supply.
- Greenko is among India's largest green energy developers with a 6.4 gigawatt (GW) portfolio and is building power storage projects with total capacity of 7.2 GW across six states in India. While NTPC runs the largest fleet of coal based capacity in India, Greenko' integrated renewable energy assets with storage, will help it provide clean energy during peak grid demand.
- This comes at a time when India's largest power generation utility NTPC is planning a green energy push and is looking to acquire at least 1000 mega watt (MW) of operational solar power projects, as part of its strategy to have a 32 GW clean energy portfolio by 2032. NTPC currently has a 2,298 MW renewable energy projects under construction.
- Greenko Energies Pvt Ltd (Greenko) and NTPC Vidyut Vyapar Nigam Ltd. (NVVN), a wholly owned subsidary of NTPC Limited – India's largest power generation with generation fleet in excess of 60 GW and transitioning into Renewables, have entered into an MOU with an intent to explore possibility of development of Renewable Energy (RE) based RTC, flexible and despatchable power supply offering based on integration of RE sources and Pumped Storage projects," Greenko statement stated.

Important State Wise News

List of Festivals

Festivals	Place	Inaugurated by /Others
11-day Nanda Devi Lokajat yatra	Uttarakhand	
Nuakhai Festival (Harvest Festival)	Odisha	Celebrated in western Odisha and some parts of Chhattisgarh
Dragonfly Festival	Kerala	
Aadi Perukku	Tamil Nadu	
Onam	Kerala	

Andhra Pradesh

Andhra Pradesh's three-capital bills get Governor's assent

- Andhra Pradesh Governor Biswa Bhusan Harichandan gave his assent to the AP Decentralisation and Inclusive Development of All Regions Bill, 2020, and the AP Capital Region Development Authority (Repeal) Bill, 2020.

- The state law department promptly issued gazette notifications giving effect to the new acts but the government will have to clear legal hurdles before it could finally make its three capitals plan a reality.
- The Jagan Mohan Reddy government brought in the AP Decentralisation and Inclusive Development of All Regions Bill, 2020, to give shape to its plan of having three capitals for the state, with the executive capital in Visakhapatnam, Legislative capital in Amaravati and judicial capital in Kurnool.
- It also provides for dividing the state into various zones and establishing zonal planning and development boards.
- The other legislation is intended to repeal the AP Capital Region Development Authority Act, 2014.
- The CRDA Act was enacted on December 22, 2014 for the development of the state capital post-bifurcation with a specific area demarcated as the capital region.
- The government now intends to constitute a new Amaravati Metropolitan Region Development Area under the provisions of AP Metropolitan Region and Urban Development Authorities Act, 2016.

Andhra CM launches e-rakshabandhan program for women safety

- Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy launched an e-rakshabandhan program, to protect women and children from cyber and other crimes.
- Reddy stated that the launch of 4s4u.appolice.gov.in web portal will provide information on various issues like how to deal with cybercrime, harassment, and other issues pertaining to women's safety.
- He further stated, Women welfare has been high priority and immediately after taking over, we have provided 50 per cent reservations to women in nominated posts and in government contracts besides implementing schemes like Amma Vodi, Vasati Deevena, Asara, Cheyutha and 30 lakh house sites being registered in the names of the women of the household.
- Home Minister M Sucharita, DGP Gowtham Sawang, additional DG Sunil Kumar, State Women Commission Chairperson Vasireddy Padma, MLA Vidadala Rajani, State Mala Corporation Chairperson, P Ammaji and others participated in the function.

Andhra Pradesh govt ties up with ISB to set up public policy lab

- The government of Andhra Pradesh, through the AP Economic Development Board, has entered into an Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian School of Business (ISB) for policy guidance to spur growth in post pandemic with special focus on economic development and job creation.
- The MOU will nurture a think tank by setting up a Policy lab called the GoAP-ISB Policy Lab, a public policy laboratory to drive evidence-based policy decisions.

About Policy Lab

- It aims to create a Knowledge Bank for strategic planning, policy analysis, data analytics and action-research essential for sustaining high rates of growth and successful completion within the committed timelines with focus on investment flows, their efficacy in terms of value addition, employment generation and wealth creation.

AP CM YS Jagan Launches YSR Cheyutha For Women

- Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy launched YSR Cheyutha scheme from his camp office in Tadepalli. Through this scheme, the government will offer financial assistance to all the SC, ST, BC, Minorities women who are aged between 45-60.
- The state government had deposited Rs 18,750 directly into the bank accounts of every beneficiary.
- The YSR Congress party government had allotted Rs 4,700 crore in the budget, for the implementation of YSR Cheyutha scheme.

- Around 25 lakh women will get benefited from this scheme and goverment will implement this scheme over four years at a cost of Rs 17,000 crore. YSRCP is the first government ever to provide ample employment opportunities to women.
- The AP government had earlier signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with renowned companies like Hindustan Unilever, ITC, Procter and Gamble and Amul for self-empowerment of women.
- These companies provide the technical and marketing support needed to women for becoming an aspiring entrepreneur. They will also provide opportunities for sustainable economic progress. The partnership of these companies will not only provide the women with a livelihood but also boost economic activity at the village level.
- All the eligible women beneficiaries will get a financial assistance of Rs 75,000 for four years i.e, Rs 18,750 each beneficiary every year.

Andhra Pradesh teams up with NPCI for digital payments in hinterlands

- Andhra Pradesh government has announced teaming up with the National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI) and Canara Bank to empower over 15,000 village and ward secretariats with digital payments in the rural areas.
- The initiative, aimed at providing impetus to digital payments among last-mile customers towards financial inclusion was launched by the chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, introducing UPI QR code in 15,004 village and ward secretariats.
- NPCI's flagship product UPI allows users to transfer money on a real-time basis, across multiple bank accounts without revealing details of one's bank account to the other party.
- This first-of-its-kind initiative will not only reduce the time spent by villagers waiting in serpentine queues but also ensure secure, instant and contactless payments especially amid COVID-19 outbreak.
- The government has also designated a Digital Assistant, who will facilitate UPI payments for rural customers in the villages and transfer money to a common pool account where it is supposed to be credited.

<div align="center">ArunachalPradesh</div>

Khadi's first silk training-cum-production centre to come up in Arunachal

- The far-flung tribal village of Chullyu in Arunachal Pradesh will soon be bustling with spinning and weaving activities with the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) set to open the first-of-its kind training-cum-production centre of silk in the state.
- The KVIC has refurbished and converted a dilapidated school building into the training cum production centre. The school building has been provided to the KVIC by the education department of Arunachal Pradesh government on zero rent.
- Machinery like hand looms, charkha, silk reeling machines and warping drums have already arrived and installation of machines is in full swing. The project was conceived in February this year during the visit of KVIC Chairman Vinai Kumar Saxena to the tribal village of Chullyu.
- Identifying a great potential of silk production and other activities in the village, Saxena immediately sanctioned the setting up of a training cum production centre for the Eri Silk, which is traditionally worn by the local tribals. The work, however, progressed at a slow pace due to the Covid-19 lockdown.
- Located on the main highway just 30 km before the most popular tourist spot of Ziro, Chullyu is a scenic village known for its eco-friendly ways of living. It is easily approachable by tourists, which is an advantage for the local artisans.
- The KVIC will also create an exclusive page on its online portal to market their products, he added.
- The development assumes significance as the tribal population in Arunachal Pradesh, men and women alike, traditionally wear Eri Silk and Khadi cotton clothes which carries a deep significance to their egalitarian tribal society. However, the people of the state have to buy silk from the outside markets, including those from Assam.

Vijaynagar, one of the remotest corners in Arunachal Pradesh, gets mobile connectivity

- Vijaynagar in Arunachal Pradesh, one of the remotest and eastern most part of the country, has been connected with mobile connectivity.
- Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited has installed a network tower which has become functional now.
- The 2G mobile service that Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited, BSNL launched in Vijaynagar area on first of August this month will be a boon for the people of this isolated place.
- The State Govt and the Indian Air Force have extended necessary help and other logistic support to the BSNL for transportation of the mobile & satellite equipment.

Arunachal Pradesh assembly passes resolution to bring state under Sixth Schedule

- The Arunachal Pradesh Assembly has passed a resolution to bring the state under the ambit of Sixth Schedule of the Constitution besides amending Article 371(H) by inserting provisions to safeguard tribes of the state.
- The resolution which was moved by Legislative Affairs Minister Bamang Felix on behalf of the State Government was passed by voice vote following a marathon discussion in the house.

<div align="center">Assam</div>

Assam council of ministers approves "Assam Non-Government Education Institutions (Regulation of Fees) Rules 2020"

- In Assam, the council of ministers approved the Assam Non-Government Education Institutions (Regulation of Fees) Rules 2020.
- This would regulate the fees structure of the private educational institutes.The council of ministers meeting also approved the Assam Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) scheme 2020.
- The meeting also took decision for implementation of 'Uberization' scheme of Assam State Transport Corporation. Under this scheme, 668 new buses would operate for 5 years.
- A decision was also taken to create 2 new companies of State Disaster Response Force.

Assam to launch mega scheme for women's financial empowerment

- In a bid to financially empower women, the Assam government would provide Rs 830 per month each to 17 lakh poor families under the ambitious "Orunodoi" scheme, Finance and Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma announced.
- "The "Orunodoi" would be the biggest scheme in Assam which would initially benefit at least 17 lakh families and the number would subsequently increase to 25 lakh, he added.
- However, Sarma clarified, that while selecting the beneficiaries, there would be economic criteria and "those who have certain movable and immovable assets including land, big houses, vehicles, electronic gadgets, and most government and semi-government employees, would be excluded".
- A sum of Rs 280 crore has been earmarked for the new scheme.
- "Rs 830 per month aid would mean an additional annual income of Rs 10,000 to the poor households to meet their medical, nutritional, and academic needs besides to meet the additional spending during various festivals," he stated.
- The minister also stated that under the "Orunodoi" scheme, priority would be given to households with widows, divorced, unmarried or separated women, and disabled persons.
- To avail the benefits of the scheme, the beneficiary should be a permanent resident of Assam and their composite household income should be less than Rs two lakh per annum, Sarma added.

Assam: Handicraft production centre inaugurated in Guwahati

- In Assam, in a bid to give a boost to the Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Mission, a handicraft production centre is inaugurated in Guwahati by Assam Apex Weavers and Artisans Cooperative Federation Limited- ARTFED.

- The Managing Director of the ARTFED Mukul Chandra Deka that bamboo and cane based local items to be produced in the centre. Mr. Deka stated that during the lockdown period, the weavers under the ARTFED produced 13 thousand pieces of bedsheets and pillow covers for the National Health Mission. He stated that the Assam government has already set up yarn banks across the state so that weavers could get yarn at subsidised rate. He stated that a proposal has been sent to the state government to establish a cloth bank at Sualkuchi.
- There are 1 thousand societies with around 1 lakh members under the ARTFED. The Assam government has already set up yarn banks across the state so that weavers could get yarn at subsidised rate. ARTFED has recently sent a proposal to the state government to establish a cloth bank at Sualkuchi .

Assam Cabinet setting up of skill university in Darrang

- The Assam Cabinet approved the Assam Skill Development University Bill for setting up a state-of-the-art skill university at Mangaldoi in Darrang district.
- The university will be set up on a 100-bigha plot with an expense of Rs 900 crore.
- The university, which will be a Centre of Excellence, would be set up with financial assistance from the Asian Development Bank.
- The state Cabinet also gave its approval to complete the long-pending Dhansiri irrigation project in Udalguri district, a project that was launched in 1975 with a credit of Rs 116 crore from the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).
- Other key decisions of the Cabinet include approval for the Assam Heritage Protection and Preservation Bill; increase of the upper age limit for group III and group IV posts for two years so that unemployed youths can apply for jobs up to 40 years; insurance to the tune of Rs 50 lakh to journalists, home guards and all casual employees who succumbed to COVID-19 while performing their duties.
- The Cabinet also approved the Orunodoi Scheme for giving financial assistance to families with an annual income below Rs 2 lakh, besides giving its nod to amendment of the Assam MSME Bill.

Assam declared 'Disturbed Area' for 6 more months w.e.f. 28th August

- Assam has been declared as Disturbed Area for another 6 months with effect from 28th of this month. An official release issued in Guwahati said that the decision has been taken under the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958.
- The decision was taken in view of the attacks on security forces by militants during the last 6 months in the North East and recovery of illegal arms in Assam.

India's "longest" river ropeway over Brahmaputra inaugurated in Assam

- India's "longest" river ropeway has been opened
- Recently, the state government of Assam has inaugurated a 1.8 km ropeway across the river Brahmaputra and described it as the country's longest river ropeway.
- Every day, many people commute between the capital city of Guwahati and North Guwahati town, where IIT Guwahati is situated.
- The newly inaugurated ropeway cuts journey time between the two banks to around eight minutes, according to an IE report. Between the two banks, the current travel options are by ferry (half an hour or more, depending on the season and current) or by road through a bridge that generally takes more than an hour in the traffic.

Assam govt tells private educational institutions to offer 25 per cent concessions in fees

- The Assam government has told all private educational institutions to offer 25 per cent concessions in monthly fees from 1st of May till formal opening of schools.

- In a tweet, Education Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said that these private institutes teach students from pre- primary level to 12th standard. He said that these institutions are saving substantial expenditure under various heads including fuel and electricity charges. Educational institutes in the State are closed from 16th of March due to Covid-19 pandemic.

<p align="center" style="color:red">Bihar</p>

'Mukti Caravan', an anti-child trafficking drive launched in Bihar by Kailash Satyarthi's Foundation

- Kailash Satyarthi Foundation launched a campaign against child trafficking in Bihar over a webinar hosted by Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation (KSCF).
- The KSCF, founded by Nobel Peace Laureate, Kailash Satyarthi has been working towards ensuring a child-friendly world has been running a campaign called 'Mukti Caravan' in various parts of the country for many years.
- It was launched digitally in Bihar, a state which the foundation claims to be among the worst affected by child trafficking. The campaign intends to create awareness among people regarding COVID-19 safety, child trafficking, and child labor in Bihar.
- The campaign is expected to be another milestone in the direction of eradication of child labor by creating an efficient system in place. The foundation has been working at the forefront of movements too end child slavery, trafficking, forced labor, violence and other heinous crimes against children.

Bihar Pollution Control Board signs MoA with IIT, Delhi for air quality management

- The Bihar State Pollution Control Board has signed a "Memorandum of Agreement" (MoA) with IIT, Delhi for setting up of geographical information system (GIS) based platform for air quality management in the state.
- The agreement, which was signed on Saturday, will help in identifying sources and transport of PM 2.5 at a "very high resolution" and help the board to identify "effective mitigation measures".
- This particular project will help to identify local hot spot of particulate matter PM 2.5 in the non-attainment cities in Bihar namely Patna, Gaya and Muzaffarpur.

<p align="center" style="color:red">Chhattisgarh</p>

Chhattisgarh govt launches scheme for tendu leaves collectors

- Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel launched a social security scheme for tendu leaves collectors in the state, which will benefit over 12 lakh families, mostly tribals and forest dwellers engaged in its collection
- Shaheed Mahendra Karma Tendupatta Sangrahak Samajik Suraksha Yojana, named after slain Congress leader Mahendra Karma who was popularly known as Bastar tiger for his tough stand against Naxals, was among 29 people, including senior Congress leaders, who were killed in a Naxal attack in Jhiram valley of Bastar district on May 25, 2013.
- Tendu leaves, used for making bidis (leaf-wrapped cigarettes), are collected by forest dwellers and from them it is purchased by the state government.

About Benefits of Scheme

- Under the scheme, financial aid of Rs 2 lakh will be provided to the nominee or the heir in case of normal death of the head of the family of the registered tendu leaves collectors (if the age of the head of the family is not beyond 50 years).
- In case of death due to accident, additional financial aid Rs 2 lakh will be provided, whereas in case of permanent disability caused due to the accident, assistance of Rs 2 lakh will be given and Rs 1 lakh in case of partial disability in the mishap.
- If the age of the head of such family is between 50 and 59 years, then in case of his/her normal death, Rs 30,000 will be provided as financial aid to their kin or nominee, while Rs 75,000 in case of accidental death.

- Similarly in this category, Rs 75,000 will be given in case of permanent disability caused to the head of family in the accident and Rs 37,500 in case of partial disability.

Chhattisgarh's Jagdalpur Becomes Country's First Municipal Corporation To Provide Forestland Right Certificates To People Of Urban Area

- Chhattisgarh's Jagdalpur has become the first municipal corporation in the country where people of an urban area have been provided forest land right certificates.
- On the occasion of the International Day of World's Indigenous Peoples, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel commenced the distribution of forestland right certificates by giving away the certificates to four beneficiaries of Jagdalpur via video conferencing.
- Jagdalpur is among the few municipal corporations, jurisdiction areas of which includes forestlands. Nearly 1,777 applications have been received for forestland right certificates, which will be resolved as per the rules.
- Baghel stated the Forest Rights Act has the provision of allotting forestland lease to the eligible forest dwellers in forestland of urban areas. But till date, this provision was not enacted.
- Enactment of this provision has started in Chhattisgarh in public interest, he stated.
- On the occasion, the Chief Minister approved sanction of Rs 6 crores and allotment of 5 acres of land to the Koya Kutma community on the request of MLA Chitrakote Rajman Benham.
- He also approved a community hall for Koya Kutma community and a museum for preserving the historical and archaeological heritages, art and culture of Bastar.
- The Chief Minister distributed cheques to 271 beneficiaries symbolically under the Shaheed Veer Narayan Swalamban Yojana. He felicitated 140 meritorious tribal students with cheques worth Rs 5,100 and certificates for outstanding performance in Class 12 and 10 examinations.

Chhattisgarh CM Launches Indira Van Mitan Yojana

- Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel announced the launch of Indira Van Mitan Yojana on the occasion of World Tribal Day.
- He stated that under this scheme, groups of youth will be formed in 10,000 villages of tribal area of the state and all forest-based economic activities will be conducted through these groups.
- New doors will open for self-employment and prosperity of the forest dwellers through these groups. Under this scheme, arrangements for procurement, processing and marketing of forest produce will be ensured through groups. The government has set a target of establishing forest produce processing centres in every tribal development block of the state.
- Baghel stated that groups will be formed under this scheme in 10,000 villages of scheduled areas, in which youth will be given priority.
- The Indira Van Mitan scheme aims to add 19 lakh families from scheduled areas. Through this scheme, groups will be empowered to manage trees, so that they can collect the forest produce from the trees of the forest areas and get economic benefits. The purchase of forest produce will be arranged through the group, so that the right price of forest produce can be obtained.
- The estimated cost of a unit would be around Rs 10 lakh. An amount of Rs 8.50 crore will be made available for establishment of forest produce processing unit in 85 development blocks of scheduled areas. Instead of timber, fruit and vegetation plants will be planted in the forests, which can increase the income of forest dwellers.

Chhattisgarh CM announces 'Padhai Tuhar Para' scheme for school students

- Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel announced to launch a special scheme under which school students will be able to learn in their respective localities in view of the suspension of classes due to the coronavirus outbreak.
- The online education platform 'Padhai Tunhar Duar' scheme launched by the state government earlier during the lockdown yielded better results and around 22 lakh children are getting its benefit.
- Besides, a Bluetooth-based programme 'Bultu Ke Bol' will be introduced for providing study materials to students in remote areas who do not have access to internet facility.
- 'Mukhyamantri Slum Swasthya Yojana' will be launched in urban areas under which people will be provided health facilities at their doorstep through 70 mobile medical units in all the 14 municipal corporations.
- Similarly, Radhabai Diagnostic Centre Scheme will also be introduced under which pathology and other testing facilities will be provided at concessional rates.

Chhattisgarh declared as cleanest state of country

- Chhattisgarh has been declared as the cleanest state of the country as per the Cleanliness Survey 2020 organized by Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry. Chhattisgarh has bagged 14 national awards in various categories. The state had taken many initiatives to achieve this success.
- In Chhattisgarh, 100% door to door garbage collection was ensured. All 166 municipal bodies are ensuring collection of waste from every household and 100% disposal of the same in SLRM center. Various innovative initiatives were taken by all urban bodies and citizens for cleanliness. Garbage collection vehicles and all Swachhta Didis, Safai Mitra were monitored online.
- Besides, plastic has been banned in all municipal bodies. 3R Principle- Residue, Reuse and Recycle was implemented in all the urban bodies through innovations such as Neki Ki Diwar, Bartan Bank, Home Composting. Waste pickers were given employment under the Mission Clean City Scheme.
- All the West Pickers were issued ration cards, Aadhaar cards, life insurance cover and other government benefits. Cleanliness app was created and the complaints received by the urban bodies on this App are being resolved within time frame.

Delhi

Delhi government launches electric vehicle policy, announces incentives of up to ₹.5 lakh

- The Arvind Kejriwal government in Delhi launched the Electric Vehicle Policy for the national capital under which the AAP government will waive registration fee, road tax, and provide an incentive of up to ₹1.5 lakh for new cars.
- The government also aims to generate employment to give a boost to Delhi's economy and reduce pollution levels in the national capital.
- This policy also aims to constitute 25% electric vehicles by 2024.
- Under the policy, they will give incentive of up to ₹30,000 for two-wheelers, autos, e-rickshaws and freight vehicles while for cars incentive of up to ₹1.5 lakh.

"Dhanwantari Rath" to bring ayurveda at doorsteps of Delhi Police families

- A MoU was signed between the All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) and the Delhi Police for extending ayurvedic mode of preventive and promotive health services in the residential colonies of the force.
- These services will be provided by AIIA through a mobile unit named "Dhanwantari Rath" and Police Wellness Centres.
- AYURAKSHA, a joint venture of AIIA, an autonomous institute under AYUSH ministry, and the Delhi police, aims to maintain the health of frontline COVID warriors through ayurvedic immunity boosting measures.

- In continuation of the project, Ayurveda Preventive and Promotive health care are now planned to be extended to the families of Delhi police personnel.

Delhi govt launches Niraman Mazdoor Registration Abhiyan for construction workers

- The Delhi government launched Niraman Mazdoor Registration Abhiyan, under which a mega registration campaign will be held for construction workers from August 24 to September 11.
- Delhi government will set up camps at 70 schools for registration of construction labourers at all the 70 assembly constituencies.
- Carpenters, worker grinders, construction site guards, the people who work in concrete mixers, crane operator, electrician, comp operator, Mason (Raj Mistry), tiles stone fitters, welders, coolies, and others can apply for respective jobs.
- The labourers can also submit their application online by visiting --- edistrict.delhigovt.nic.in.
- For the registration, the age limit is between 18-60.
- Documents like -- certification of work, photo, local ID proof, bank account number and Aadhaar card are required for the registration.
- After the successful completion of this 15-day registration camp, the Delhi government will analyse the process and decide the future action plan.

Delhi government launches fitness channel on YouTube for students stuck at home

- The Delhi government launched 'Healthy Body, Healthy Mind' campaign for students confined to their homes as schools remain closed in view of Coronavirus pandemic.
- Universities and schools across the country have been closed since March 16, when the Centre announced a countrywide classroom shutdown as part of measures to contain the pandemic.
- A nationwide lockdown was imposed on March 25.While several restrictions have been eased, schools and colleges continue to be closed.
- The prolonged closure of educational institutions has mandated a shift from classroom teaching to online learning.
- Meanwhile, an online Entrepreneurial Mindset (EMC) Bootcamp organised by the AAP government to inculcate entrepreneurial abilities among the students, concluded.
- The camp began on June 10 with eight partner organisations participating in it. A total of 14 batches were formed and each batch consisted of 25 to 32 students, an official statement stated.

<div align="center">Gujarat</div>

Gujarat Launches New Scheme To Compensate Farmers For Crop Loss

- The Gujarat government launched a new scheme under which farmers facing crop losses due to drought, excess rain or unseasonal rain will get compensation without collection of any premium from them.
- The new scheme - Mukhya Mantri Kisan Sahay Yojana - will replace the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) for this year only.
- For crop loss between 33 and 66 per cent, a farmer will get a compensation of Rs 20,000 per hectare for maximum four hectares. For crop loss above 60 per cent, a farmer will get Rs 25,000 per hectare for maximum four hectares.
- This new scheme will benefit all the 56 lakh farmers of the state. It is also simpler than PMFBY.
- A dedicated portal will be launched so that farmers can apply online. Tribal farmers registered under the Forest Rights Act are also eligible for this scheme.

Gujarat: Two over bridges of Ahmedabad named after late Arun Jaitley, Sushma Swaraj

- In Gujarat, two over bridges of Ahmedabad city have been named after late Arun Jaitley and Sushma Swaraj. The Railway over bridge in Ranip area of the city will be known as Atmanirbhar Gujarat Railway Flyover.
- According to Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation sources, the newly built flyover at Income Tax circle will be known as Arun Jaitley flyover, while another flyover at Anjali cross road will be known as Sushma Swaraj Bridge.
- This was announced by the Chairman of AMC Standing Committee Amul Bhatt. He stated that flyover in Bapunagar area will be known as Maharana Pratap flyover while Hatkeshwar flyover will be known as Chhatrapati Shivaji flyover.

<p align="center" style="color:red">Haryana</p>

Haryana CM Khattar launches "Parivar Pehchan Patra"

- Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar launched "Parivar Pehchan Patras" to enable the citizens to get the benefits of various central and state government schemes.
- At present, four schemes -- Mukhya Mantri Parivar Samridhi Yojana (MMPSY), Old Age Samman Allowance Scheme, Divyang Jan Pension Scheme, and Widow and Destitute Women Pension scheme -- have been integrated with "Parivar Pehchan Patra" (PPP).
- Khattar distributed the "Parivar Pehchan Patras" or family IDs to heads of 20 beneficiaries at an event in Panchkula.
- The state government has decided to celebrate the year 2020 as "Susashan Sanakap Varsh"
- The state government is committed to provide good governance and has taken several e-governance initiatives including Meri Fasal Mera Byora Yojana, digitalisation of revenue records, Haryana Udhyam Memorandum (HUM) Portal and many more.

Haryana CM Khattar launches welfare schemes for women, kids

- Khattar launched the 'Mukhya Mantri Doodh Uphar Yojana' and 'Mahila Evam Kishori Samman Yojana'. He urged the DCs to include 'Mukhya Mantri Doodh Uphar Yojana' in their flagship programmes.
- This is to make targeted efforts towards addressing the problems of anaemia and malnutrition among women and children in their respective districts.

About the schemes

- Under the 'Mukhya Mantri Doodh Uphar Yojana', fortified flavoured skimmed milk powder will be provided to children between 1 and 6 years of age in anganwadi centres along with pregnant and lactating mothers.
- Under the 'Mahila Evam Kishori Samman Yojana', adolescent girls and women between 10 to 45 years belonging to as many as 11,24,871 BPL families will be provided free sanitary napkins.

Khattar launches anti-bullying campaign of Faridabad police

- Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar launched the anti-bullying campaign of Faridabad police by unveiling its Instagram, Facebook and Twitter pages to flag the problem of bullying at home, in neighbourhood, schools, colleges and workplace. The district police aims to implement targeted programmes to counter the menace of bullying.
- It is the aim of Chief Minister Manohar Lal to disrupt anti-social transactions that foster violent and predatory behaviour in society. The campaign will particularly target teenagers, the segment worst affected by the problem. Bullying destroys a victim's confidence, impairs their personality development, stunts their social intelligence and drives them to depression and a host of other diseases," a Faridabad police stated.
- Under the campaign, people will be encouraged to follow Instagram, Facebook and Twitter page with username @FBDpolice. It will carry interactive posts to make people aware of the prevalence of bullying. Besides, it will also have a platform for victims of bullying where they can report bullies.

- Police will follow it up with counselling bullies with the help of NGOs working with youth at risk. Against the violent and incorrigible, the police will take legal action under appropriate sections of law.

Chandigarh administration launches new website

- Environment Information System (ENVIS) of the Department of Environment of Chandigarh Administration has launched a new website. The URL of the website is http://chandigarhenvis.gov.in .
- Newly launched website has a fresh appearance & engaging features, and is developed on latest technologies. The website is accessible to all, especially to Divyangjan, under accessible India campaign.
- The website has the latest information about Environmental Notifications, Publications, Newsletters, Laws & Rules, Environment Education & Awareness and Activities Conducted by the Department. Additionally, the website is also linked with various services such as Parivesh Environment Clearance, Sameer, Solar Chandigarh.

Haryana govt inks deal with M3M foundation to provide online classes to students

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between the Department of Employment, Haryana and the M3M Foundation in order to facilitate the online preparation, training and mentoring for the government jobs for the students.
- The MoU has been signed between the two in order to build and strengthen the partnership between both the institutions in order to enable the students to access quality preparations for the entrance examinations for Government jobs.
- The MoU has been signed with an aim for the Haryana state government to link one approximately 1 lakh candidates to government jobs within and outside the state in the next two years.
- With the help of the MoU a programme will be conducted to select 50,000 candidates for the online training based on the performance of the candidates previously in the government examinations in the state.

<div align="center">Himachal Pradesh</div>

Foundation stone laid for Indian Institute of Management in Sirmaur, Himachal Pradesh

- Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal along with Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh Jai Ram Thakur; Minister of State for Finance Anurag Singh Thakur and Minister of State for Education Sanjay Dhotre laid the foundation stone of the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Sirmaur in Himachal Pradesh
- The IIM Sirmaur was operationalised by IIM Lucknow as the mentor institution with the commencement of the first batch of PGP of 20 students, from its temporary campus at Paonta Sahib, Sirmaur and over a period of less than five years, it has a student strength of over 300.
- The Centre has sanctioned an amount of Rs 531.75 crore out of which Rs 392.51 crore is for construction works covering the area of 60,384 sq mtr in Phase-I which caters to 600 students.

HP govt launches Nutritional Immunity Boosting 'Him Haldi Dudh' AIR

- Himachal Pradesh state government launched Nutritional Immunity Boosting 'Him Haldi Dudh(Turmeric Latte)' manufactured by MILKFED. On this occasion, Chief minister Jairam Thakur also disbursed incentives to the Milk Producers of Mandi, Shimla and Kullu district under the National Programme for Diary Development.
- Him Haldi Dudh has been developed by the Bio Technology Department of Punjabi University Patiala and has been patented. This drink is a Detox drink which has anti-hangover, anti-oxidant, anti-inflammatory and immunity booster contents in it.
- Mr Thakur stated that under the National Diary Development Programme, MILKFED transferred 2000 rupees each to the accounts of 835 milk producers as incentive amount and also 5 litre stainless steel buckets to 1000 mill producers for collection and transportation of milk for marketing.

- He stated that MILKFED has transferred 16.70 lakh rupees into the accounts of the milk producers. He expressed happiness that the annual turnover of the MILKFED was 132 crore rupees in the year 2019-20, which was 33 percent higher than the previous year's turnover.

<p align="center" style="color:red">Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh</p>

J&K govt orders fast tracking of Environment Clearance Process in minor minerals mining operations

- The **Jammu and Kashmir** government has ordered the **fast tracking of Environment** Clearance Process in **minor minerals mining operations** across the Union Territory.
- The order has been issued by the **Industries and Commerce Department**. The order stated, in view of the acute and unprecedented shortage of key material for development works and challenging Covid-19 pandemic, the Terms of Reference,ToRs, Public Consultation and Environment Clearance, till whichever stage already obtained, completed in favour of the previous allottees of the minor mineral blocks, shall be deemed to have been transferred in favour of the new allottees of e-auction process.
- The order stated, the new allottees shall complete the remaining elements of the EC/CTO process and shall commence mining operation only after the completion of the due procedure.
- The order stated that it is now provided, for major minerals that, successful bidders of the mining blocks, where mining leases are expiring under the provisions of the Act, and selected through auction as per prescribed procedure shall deem to have acquired all valid rights, approvals, clearances, licenses and the like vested with the previous lessee for a period of two years.

Ladakh celebrates first anniversary of becoming UT

- Ladakh is celebrating the first anniversary of realisation of its seven decades-old dream. It was on this day last year, Ladakh was granted the status of Union Territory. Lieutenant Governor RK Mathur has greeted the people on the occasion.
- Mr Mathur expressed his belief that Ladakhis have all the potential to prosper in all spheres of life. He stated, disciplined and hardworking Ladakhis deserve a better life.
- The UT administration is working on all aspects that could bring opportunities and fulfill expectations of people of Ladakh.

J&K Lt Guv approves creation of Block Development Fund on pattern of Constituency Development Fund

- Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Girish Chandra Murmu has approved the creation of Block Development Fund on the pattern of Constituency Development Fund.
- 25 lakh rupees each will be placed at the disposal of Block Development Council (BDC) Chairpersons to be used for local block developmental works. The works in this regard, could be identified by the BDC Chairpersons as per the local priorities.

J&K govt publishes its work done under 'Back to Village (B2V)' programme

- In a first of its kind, government of Jammu and Kashmir published its work done under 'Back to Village (B2V)' programme.
- All the 1930 projects finished during the financial year 2019-20 have been showcased in an e-book recently released by the Finance department. The same has been done to bring in transparency and accountability in the expenditure-making by the government departments.
- The e-book, depicting the pictorial images and other details of all the B2V works completed in previous year has been released to fetch the necessary feedback from the general public.

- The government is keen to draw feedback from the public so that they have say in the development process going in their areas. About 3 to 5 crore rupees were released to districts to enable them to meet urgent public demands raised during the B2V programme.

Jharkhand government launches new state emblem

- Jharkhand government launched a new state emblem, twenty years after the state was carved out of Bihar.
- The new logo is primarily in green and has the national emblem at the centre with "Satyameva Jayate" etched below. The Ashoka emblem, representing cooperative federalism, is enclosed in concentric circles depicting the state's culture and its abundant natural resources.
- The logo represents and its rings represent the urge for development, art, culture, customs, traditions, values, religion, the lush greenery in the state and last but not the least the abundance of minerals in the state.
- Red colour used in the logo represents the strength of the state to struggle and pave its own way out of adversities.
- Palash flowers, also known as flame of the forest, reflecting the natural beauty of Jharkhand, are also included in the new emblem.
- Elephants, being the state animal, have been also been included and represent calmness. Labours and group dance, in the emblem, represent culture and the strength of social bonding.

K'taka Medical Education Minister inaugurates nation's first ICMR approved mobile RTPCR Covid lab

- Nation's first ICMR approved mobile RTPCR Covid lab developed by Indian Institute of Science in Bengaluru was inaugurated by Karnataka Medical Education Minister Dr.K Sudhakar.
- Packed with all the safety features, this unique lab is capable of producing accurate results within four hours. In a month the mobile lab can conduct 9000 tests. The lab can be utilised for testing H1N1,HCV,TB,HPV,HIV virus also.
- The mobile lab was handed over to Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences in Bengaluru. Called as Mobile Infection Testing and Reporting lab, MITR can be deployed in Corona hot spots quickly.

Piyush Goyal, Pralhad Joshi dedicate Railway Museum at Hubballi in Karnataka through video conferencing

- Minister of Railways Piyush Goyal and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs Pralhad Joshi dedicated a Railway Museum at Hubballi in Karnataka through video conferencing. The event was presided over by Minister of State of Railways Suresh Angadi and was attended by other dignitaries and senior officials.
- This Rail Museum is first of its kind in North Karnataka and second in South Western Railway after the historic Rail Museum at Mysuru.
- Mr Joshi stated the museum is most relevant as Hubballi is an important Railway junction historically as well. He stated it will become another prominent tourist destination in the region.
- At Hubballi Museum, the artefacts are broadly arranged in three sections, at two cottages named Malaprabha and Ghataprabha and the outdoor section.
- Other highlights of the Museum are Galaxy of Rolling Stock, Theatre Coach, Suruchi Cafeteria, Toy Train, Memorabilia Shop, Ticket Printing Machine, Model train run and Children's Activity Room.

Karnataka CM B S Yediyurappa vows to build a 'Kalyana Rajya'

- Karnataka Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa has vowed to build a 'Kalyana Rajya', a Welfare state with the avowed principle of 'development' as the only mantra.

- Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa informed that the government has come to the rescue of farmers in distress by buying Rs 3,175 crore worth of farm products such as green gram, tur dal, groundnut, chickpea and copra under the minimum support price programme from 5.82 lakh farmers.
- Under Ayushman Bharat scheme health cards are distributed to 1.31 crore people in the State and offered health coverage to 8.5 lakh beneficiaries.

Price Monitoring and Resource Unit set up in Karnataka under the aegis of National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority

- A Price Monitoring and Resource Unit (PMRU) has been set up in Karnataka under the aegis of National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA), Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, Government of India.
- PMRU will function at the State level under the direct supervision of the State Drug Controller for increasing outreach of NPPA. PMRUs are societies registered under the Societies Registration Act having its own Memorandum of Association/ Bye laws. The Board of Governors of PMRU includes the representatives from Central Government and State Government concerned and other stakeholders.
- NPPA, under its Central Sector Scheme named Consumer Awareness, Publicity and Price Monitoring (CAPPM), has already set up of PMRUs in 12 States/ UTs, including Kerala, Odisha, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Haryana, Nagaland, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh, Mizoram and Jammu & Kashmir. NPPA has plans to set up PMRUs in all the 36 States/ UTs. The expenses of PMRUs, both recurring and non-recurring are borne by NPPA under the Scheme.
- The primary function of PMRUs is to assist NPPA in monitoring of prices of drugs, ensuring availability of drugs and raising consumer awareness. They act as collaborating partners of NPPA with information gathering mechanism at the grass-roots level. They will render necessary technical assistance to both the NPPA and the respective State Drug Controllers of States/ Union Territories.

Karnataka plans to implement new National Education Policy by 2030

- Karnataka has planned to implement all the provisions of the new National Education Policy by 2030. As part of this, the state has decided to launch six research oriented Universities, 10 teaching oriented Universities and 34 autonomous educational institutions in the next three years.
- The decision was taken at a meeting held under Deputy Chief Minister Dr. C N Ashwathnarayan and Primary Education Minister Suresh Kumar in Bengaluru with academicians.
- The Government appointed Task Force, which is mandated with the advisory role to implement the new Education Policy, will be handing over a draft road map to the Government.

<p align="center" style="color:red">Kerala</p>

Kerala's first-ever Dragonfly Festival

- WWF-India Kerala State Office is joining hands with the Society for Odonate Studies (SOS) and Thumbipuranam for the first-ever state Dragonfly Festival in Kerala, christened 'Thumbi Maholsavam 2020'.
- This is part of the National Dragonfly Festival organised by WWF India, Bombay Natural History Society and Indian Dragonfly Society in association with National Biodiversity Board, UN Environmental Programme, UN Development Programme and IUCN-CEC.
- Dragonfly Festival, a series of events will be rolled out in the coming months to reach out to various sections of the society.
- The official mascot of the festival is "Pantalu" which is the genus of dragonfly in the family Libellulidae commonly known as rainpool gliders.

- A 'Dragonfly Backyard Watch' has also been announced to enhance the participation of people and improve their observation skills.
- A field guide on 'Common Dragonflies of Kerala' and a 'Children's Dragonfly Coloring & Activity Book' is also under development.

First marine ambulance in Kerala to be launched

- 'Pratheeksha', the first marine ambulance will be commissioned in Kerala.
- The marine ambulance built by the Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) will be deployed at Vizhinjam.
- The ambulance built at a cost of 6.08 crore would help in saving the lives of fishermen during accidents at sea.
- Fitted with medical equipment the ambulance can provide critical care to five persons at a time and bed for 10 others.
- It contains paramedical staff, trained sea rescue squad, portable mortuary and medicines. The boat was designed by the Central Institute of Fisheries Technology as per the specifications of Indian Registry of Shipping.
- The marine ambulance project involves the construction of three vessels.
- The float-out ceremony of two other boats - 'Prathyasha' and 'Karunya' will be held.

Kerala to set up India's first International Women's Trade Centre

- Kerala will set up India's first international women's trade centre (IWTC), in consonance with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at Angamaly.
- This initiative aims to accelerate women entrepreneurship and secure gender parity while providing women with a safe place away from home to start new businesses, set up or expand, and get their products marketed globally.
- IWTC will enable women entrepreneurs to come forward and participate in international trade, enjoy greater economic benefits and enhance their competitiveness to tap market opportunities.
- REACH (Resource Enhancement Academy for Career Heights) is also aimed at empowering women with the required skills to ensure success in life.

Madhya Pradesh

Madhya Pradesh to begin 'Ek Mask-Anek Zindagi' public awareness campaign

- A public awareness campaign called '**Ek Mask-Anek Zindagi**' means one mask-many lives will be conducted till August 15 in many districts of **Madhya Pradesh.**
- During this campaign, people will be informed about measures to prevent COVID-19 infection. The Municipal Corporation will also run a public awareness chariot in the city on the same theme.
- Khandwa Municipal Commissioner Himanshu Bhatt stated that masks are the simplest and most effective means to prevent Corona infection.
- The **Mask Bank** will also be established under the **Ek Mask-Anek Zindgi Campaign**. In this mask bank, masks will be collected from donors and distributed free of cost to the poor people.

MP: 'Ek Sankalp - Bujurgo ke naam' campaign proves to be boon for senior citizens amid corona pandemic

- In Madhya Pradesh, a unique campaign 'Ek Sankalp - Bujurgo ke naam' i.e. 'a commitment for elders' is being run by the Chhatarpur Police in the midst of corona infection in the state.
- This unique campaign is proving to be a boon for the elderly people living alone in homes during the global pandemic COVID-19. In this campaign, the police are taking care of the elderly people from the food to their health.
- By this campaign, the motto of Madhya Pradesh Police- Desh Bhakti-Jansewa has now become a reality.

MP govt to provide poor people Rs. one per kg wheat, rice, salt from Sept 1

- In Madhya Pradesh, all poor people of the state, who have not received ration from the Public Distribution System so far, will now get one rupee per kg wheat, rice and salt from September 1.
- 37 lakh beneficiaries of the state will be benefited by this decision of the government. Apart from this, 5 kg per person free ration will also be provided to poor families by November.
- The Chief Minister has instructed all the collectors to ensure that all new beneficiaries in their districts are issued eligibility slips and their Aadhaar seeding will be completed by August 31, so that they can get ration from

September 1.

- Eligibility slips of new beneficiaries can be downloaded from the government's M-ration app and portal. Similarly, under the 'One Nation-One Ration Card' scheme, now the beneficiary can get ration from any ration shop.

Madhya Pradesh becomes first state to provide govt jobs on basis of NRA marks

- Madhya Pradesh has become the first state to provide government jobs on the basis of marks obtained in exams conducted by the newly-formed National Recruitment Agency (NRA).
- Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan stated the state government has decided to provide jobs only on the basis of marks obtained in the examinations conducted by the NRA.
- Madhya Pradesh is the first state to take such a decision. After this decision, there will be no need for the youth of the state to give any separate examination for government jobs in the state. Government jobs will be given to the youth of the state in the categories prescribed on the basis of NRA merit.

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari to lay foundation stone & inaugurate 35 highway projects in MP

- Road, Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari will lay foundation Stone and inaugurate 35 highway projects in Madhya Pradesh.
- The total length of road will be 1,139 kilometers, involving construction value of over Rs. 9,400 crore.
- These roads will enhance better connectivity, convenience and economic growth in the State.
- The Ministry stated, better roads will also contribute in saving transit time for both commuters and the transportation of goods.

Maharashtra

Maharashtra govt announces partnership with Google for introducing digital education tools in schools across state

- The Maharashtra government has announced a partnership with Google for introducing digital education tools in schools across the state. It will enable 2.3 crore students and teachers to access the technology giant's blended learning programmes that combine classroom approach with online learning.
- As part of the tie-up, which has come at a time when online classes have become a norm due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Google will deploy free tools like G Suite for Education, Google Classroom and Google Meet to facilitate remote learning.
- Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray stated Maharashtra is the first state in the country to launch G Suite for Education and Google Classroom. He requested Google to help use their technology for work from home.

Mumbai's Dadar becomes the first city to have female icons on traffic signals

- Mumbai has become the first city in India to have women symbols on traffic signals and signage.
- Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has installed traffic signals that display female icons sporting triangular frock, a shift from the default representation of men.

Manipur

Manipur celebrates Patriots' day, remembers fallen heroes of Anglo-Manipuri war

- In Manipur, the Patriots' Day is being observed commemorating the 1891 Anglo-Manipuri war during which many Manipuris sacrificed their lives to safeguard the independence of the State.
- The day is observed every year on the 13th August to pay homage to the great martyres. It was on this day in 1891, brave Manipuris including the then Prince of Manipur Bir Tikendrajit and Thangal General were hanged before the general public in the present Imphal area.
- This year, the day is being held without involving the general public due to COVID-19 pandemic.

<p style="text-align:center; color:red;">Meghalaya</p>

Meghalaya Cabinet approves 50 percent reservation for women in Village Employment Councils

- The Meghalaya cabinet has approved the "Policy on Reservation of seats for Women in Village Employment Councils (VECs)".
- Meghalaya Government has brought the policy of reserving at least 50 percent of seats for women in the grassroots village-level community institutions (VECs).
- The position of the Secretary of VEC will be reserved for women members in all VECs on a rotational basis. Adult women who are active community workers with leadership qualities shall be eligible.
- The position of Chairperson will be reserved for women in VECs where the posts of Chairperson are not held by the traditional heads; this will also be on a rotation basis.
- The policy aims to create an enabling environment for women to exercise leadership and give them equal opportunities in grassroots governance.
- Village Employment Councils (VEC) emerged as effective development delivery institutions; VEC consists of all male and female head of the households (like Gram Sabha) and is entrusted with the planning and execution of all works under MGNREGA.
- This new policy aims at bringing down the maternal mortality rate by providing impetus to women's active participation in public health.

Meghalaya govt. plans to launch 'Restart Meghalaya Mission', says CM Conrad K Sangma

- A 'Restart Meghalaya Mission' was launched by chief minister Conrad K Sangma on the occasion of Independence. This mission comprises a series of programs to support our farmers, and entrepreneurs and to build growth promoting basic infrastructure and services.
- He stated the Mission was based on the recommendations of the Chief Minister's Task Force on the Economy on short, medium and long term measures for reviving the State economy, which has been hit hard due to the pandemic.
- The Chief Minister stated the Mission is a series of programmes to support farmers, entrepreneurs working in different fields and sectors. An amount of Rs 14,515 crore will be spent over the next three years for the Mission and out of the amount Rs 7,839 crore have been earmarked for this year, he added.
- He further noted that the State government is promoting various other schemes and projects which include National Rural Livelihood Mission, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana besides others.
- The Chief Minister stated that the State government is also leveraging on the Jal Jeevan Mission and targeting to provide functional household tap connections to 5,89,000 households in the State by 2022.

<p style="text-align:center; color:red;">Nagaland</p>

Nagaland Cm Launches E-Commerce Platform 'Yellowchain'

- Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio launched an e-commerce platform 'Yellowchain' during the State level celebration of India's Independence Day at Secretariat Plaza, Kohima.
- Yellowchain is a single window e-commerce platform developed by Investment & Development Authority of Nagaland (IDAN) to promote local business and entrepreneurship, a DIPR report informed.
- The platform would create opportunity and environment for small time retailers and aspiring entrepreneurs to expand their scope of business opportunities, it stated.
- Described as a "dynamic, user friendly, easy to use interface designed" to create a link between Entrepreneurs, retailers and Service Providers with the Citizens, it stated that Yellowchain aims to provide integrated services on a wide range of economic activities.
- As per the report, any individual or group who are proactive and ready to work can build their own business enterprise through this platform by creating their own virtual supermarket or shopping mall and transact through digital payment with freedom.
- The service sector include as Home service (Baber, Electrician, Plumber, Painter, Carpenter, Water Service etc.), Delivery service, IT Products & Services, Cab & Taxi Service, Health Care & Education, Fast food & Catering, Bakeries & Confectioneries, Grocery Stores, Local Product/Produces, Trainings, Pre-owned Products, Real Estate, Rentals etc.

Odisha

Odisha CM Launches Online Portal To Issue Fire Safety Certificates

- **Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik** launched the **Odisha Agni-Shama Seva online** portal for issuance of fire safety certificates to different categories of buildings through online mode.
- As many as **eight services** would be available to the public through online mode. He asked the Fire Service Department to include all other services by October 2 this year.
- This will enhance efficiency, improve transparency and help provide timely services without actual human interaction.
- Fire service is a priority area of the Government under 5T Initiatives that aim at bringing transformation in governance through parameters of technology, teamwork, transparency and time.

Odisha Introduces Scheme to Promote Bio-Floc Fish Farming Technology

- Fisheries and Animal Resources Department of the Odisha Government has rolled out a new scheme to promote intensive Aquaculture through bio-floc technology in fisheries.
- This is an advanced fish farming technology introduced in the State to provide livelihood support to entrepreneurs, unemployed youth and interested progressive fish farmers of the state, aimed at increasing fish productivity and make the state self-sufficient in fish production, according to a release by Information and Public Relations Department.
- Bio-floc based farming system is a new technology for the promotion of intensive fish and shrimp production in a limited area without significantly increasing the usage of the basic natural resources of water and land.
- The programme aims to support fish farmers and young entrepreneurs for the generation of income and livelihood support.
- The unit cost for installation of a Bio-floc unit of 2 tanks is Rs 1.50 lakh, while a biflock unit of 6 tanks costs approximately Rs 4 lakh. Introducing the scheme, the State Government provides a subsidy of 40 per cent subsidy while 60 per cent subsidy is provided to SC and ST beneficiaries.

Punjab

Punjab Cricket Association's new international stadium to be named after Patiala's last ruler

- The Punjab Cricket Association has decided to name its new stadium in Mullanpur after the last ruler of erstwhile Patiala state, late Maharaja Yadavindra Singh, who played a Test match for India in 1934.
- Mullanpur International Cricket Stadium officially Maharaja Yadavindra Singh International Cricket Stadium is an under construction cricket stadium in New Chandigarh, Mohali district, Punjab.
- He was the father of Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh.
- The PCA has also started the process of renovating the existing IS Bindra Stadium to turn it into an international cricket academy.
- The facilities to be upgraded include grounds, swimming pools, gyms and other infrastructure.

Punjab govt distributes free smartphones to class 12 students

- Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh launched a state-wide Rs 92 crore `Punjab Smart Connect Scheme' that aims at providing more than 1.74 lakh class XII students with smartphones by November 2020.
- The scheme will benefit a total of 1,74,015 Class XII students of government schools in the first phase. Of these, 87,395 are boys and 86,620 girls, with the majority in the OBC and SC/ST categories.
- While 36,555 beneficiaries are OBC students, there are 94,832 SC students and 13 ST students. The bulk of the students – 1,11,857, are from rural areas, and the remaining in urban government schools.
- The scheme will provide a global connectivity to the students and enable access to online education amid COVID-19 pandemic.

Rajasthan

Rajasthan solar shines bright amidst gloom, adds max capacity in FY20 in India

- Solar sector continues to occupy a bright spot in the otherwise cloudy, overcast business environment in the state.
- According to a recent survey of states by JMK Research and Analytics, Rajasthan has added maximum capacity of 1,745 megawatt solar plants in the country in 2019-20, followed by Karnataka (1,443 MW) and Tamil Nadu (1,342 MW).
- The pipeline of projects also remains robust at 23,176 MW, which is within the striking distance of 30,000 megawatt, the five-year target announced in the solar policy 2019-20. While the state may have been dislodged from the number 1 position by Karnataka in about two years ago, it seems to be bouncing back aggressively. Karnataka currently has 7,045 MW installed capacity against Rajasthan's 4,932 MW.

Rajasthan govt approves 5% reservation for MBC in judicial service

- Rajasthan government has approved 5% reservation to the 'most backward classes' (MBC), including Gurjars, in the state judicial service.
- The government amended Rajasthan Judicial Service Rules, 2010, through the state cabinet on CM Ashok Gehlot's initiative to provide 5% reservation in place of 1%.
- The MBC also include Raika-Rabari, Gadiya-Lohars, Banjara and Gadariya.

Tamil Nadu

TN govt forms 12-member panel to study new EIA draft

- Tamil Nadu government has constituted a 12-member State-level committee to look into all aspects of merits and demerits of the draft Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2020, issued by the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- The EIA is a process to evaluate the likely environmental impacts of a proposed project or development taking into account socio-economic; cultural and human-health impacts. The Centre had proposed the draft EIA 2020 to replace the

EIA Notification 2006 and was put in public domain on March 12 for obtaining comments from all stakeholders within a period of 60 days.

- On June 30, the Delhi High Court directed the Centre to publish a draft EIA notification 2020 in all 22 official languages for the comments of the State government by August 11.
- Other members in the committee are from Chennai Metropolitan Department Authority; Municipal Administration; Public Works Department; Geology and Mining; CII Tamil Nadu (represented by S Chandramohan, Chairman, CII TN); NGO; National Centre of Sustainable Coastal Management; T Sekar (former member secretary of TNPCB); Thangavelu (former Chairman of State Level EIA Authority) and the Member Secretary of State Level EIA Authority, the Order stated.

<div align="center">Telangana</div>

Telangana launches iMASQ mobile covid-19 testing centers

- The Telangana government has rolled out mobile covid-19 testing centers in containment zones and low income group residential areas across the state.
- In the first set, 20 mobile testing facilities were pressed into service in the GHMC area. Equipped with advanced technology, each bus has 10 sample collection counters and antigen test results will be notified to the individuals within a few minutes.
- Those having symptoms, but test negative will again be tested in RT-PCR method. The mobile center comes with facilities to collect samples for further tests, which will be done at a government approved testing center.
- The details of testing and results will be integrated with the universal data on a real-time basis. Private healthcare firm VeraSmart is providing the technical and staff support.
- The buses are built with 'Intelligent Monitoring Analysis Services Quarantine' (iMASQ) technology by Hyderabad-based Vera Smart Healthcare. Each mobile center has two sample collection teams and 10 sample collection counters. The mobile centers will visit the pre-designated containment areas from 8am to 5pm so that local people can avail the services.
- Besides sample collection counters, each bus is equipped with a ventilator, four ICU beds supported with oxygen, essential medicines and an isolation cubicle.
- The government provides PPE kits, N95 masks, gloves and other instruments and designates each bus to a particular zone on a daily basis.

Telangana launches Artificial Intelligence to help in farming

- Telangana government launched it's Artificial Intelligence for Agricultural Innovation (AI4AI) programme.
- The programme will be held in collaboration with the Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution (C4IR), World Economic Forum, India.
- The team from C4IR, WEF India has worked closely with Professor Jayashankar from the Telangana State Agricultural University (PJTSAU) and Telangana government's ITE&C Department to identify high impact use cases of AI - which would benefit both the farmers and the policymakers.
- The programme is part of the State government's Year of AI programmes. "The State government has declared 2020 as the Year of AI to accelerate AI readiness and develop a conducive AI innovation ecosystem in the State, opening new avenues of AI-led innovation for social impact - especially in the public sector.

<div align="center">Uttarakhand</div>

India's first snow leopard conservation centre to come up in Uttarakhand

- Uttarakhand state forest department will open India's first conversation centre for snow leopards in Uttarakashi district.
- The centre will come up at Lanka in Bhairoghhati area of Uttarkashi forest division. The decision will help to conserve the precious species.
- The exercise which is being termed as the first-ever in the country by experts got delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- In Uttarakhand, snow leopards are found in Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve, Gangotri National Park, Askot Wildlife Sanctuary and other places of altitude between 3000-4500 meters in total geographical area of around 13,000 square kilometres.
- This global snow leopard project seeks to identify at least 20 landscapes and secure them as protected areas for the species by the end of 2020.

<p align="center" style="color:red">Uttar Pradesh</p>

UP to set up MSME industrial parks

- Uttar Pradesh government will set up industrial parks for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) in six of its most industrialised districts, including Varanasi and Kanpur, and has invited proposals from consultants for it.
- The state government has also started work on a detailed project report (DPR) for the proposed 601km-long Ganga Expressway between Meerut and Prayagraj.
- UP has decided to set up MSME parks in Varanasi, Agra, Kanpur, Moradabad, Gorakhpur and Azamgarh. The state has the largest number of MSM units in the country at 14%.
- UP already had the 302km-long Agra-Lucknow Expressway and has also started construction of the 340km-long Purvanchal Expressway, 296km-long Bundelkhand Expressway, and the 91km-long Gorakhpur Link Expressway.

New Electronics Manufacturing Policy announced in UP

- Uttar Pradesh government has announced it's Electronics Manufacturing Policy 2020. The policy aims at inviting investment of 40 thousand Crore rupees in next five years and generate four lakh direct employment.
- Immediately after assuming office in 2017, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had announced Electronics Manufacturing Policy 2017 for Noida, Greater Noida and Yamuna Expressway regions. It had achieved the given target of investment and employment generation in the 3rd year itself and all three regions are now one of the emerging mobile manufacturing hubs in the world. More than 60 percent of all mobile phones manufactured in India are from UP.
- The new electronics manufacturing policy 2020 has been extended to the entire state now. The incentives proposed in the policy shall be applicable to all units setting up their bases anywhere in UP. To address the regional imbalance, double the rate of land subsidy has been provided to investors for setting up manufacturing units in Bundelkhand and Purvanchal regions.
- With this new Electronics Manufacturing Policy state government wants to become a new Global Electronics Hub and also eying for the international investors looking to shift their base to India post Covid Scenario.

UP Govt Launches 'Major Dhyan Chand Vijaypath Yojana' To Build Roads To 19 Int'l Players Houses

- Deputy Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh Keshav Prasad Maurya launched the Major Dhyan Chand Vijaypath Yojana under which 19 international players from the state will get road connectivity to their houses.
- Indian pacer Bhuvneshwar Kumar, former pacer Praveen Kumar, Piyush Chawla and Mohammad Kaif are among the 19 athletes who will be benefited from the scheme.
- Late Cabinet Minister and former cricketer Chetan Chauhan will also have a road named after him. The initial list includes 19 players but later on, more players will be added to the scheme.

West Bengal

BHEL begins civil works at 660-MW Sagardighi power plant in West Bengal

- State-owned engineering firm BHEL has commenced civil works at 660-MW Sagardighi supercritical thermal power project in West Bengal.
- The Sagardighi thermal power station is already equipped with two sets of 500 MW installed by BHEL in 2016. BHEL has so far contributed over 80 per cent of the total coal-based generating capacity of WBPDCL.

West Bengal government launches scheme to provide soft loans, subsidies to youth

- On the occasion of International Youth Day, the West Bengal government launched 'Karma Sathi Prakalpa' scheme under which one lakh unemployed youth would be provided soft loans and subsidies to make them self-reliant.

Revision Points

State	Capital	Chief Minister	Governor
Andhra Pradesh	Amaravati	Y. S. Jaganmohan Reddy	BiswaBhusanHarichandan
Arunachal Pradesh	Itanagar	Pema Khandu	Brigadier BD Mishra
Assam	Dispur	SarabanandaSonowal	Jagdish Mukhi
Bihar	Patna	Nitish Kumar	Phagu Chauhan
Chhattisgarh	Raipur	Bhupesh Baghel	AnusuiyaUikey
Goa	Panaji	Pramod Sawant	Bhagat Singh Koshyari (Additional Charge)
Gujarat	Gandhi Nagar	Vijaybhai R. Rupani	Acharya Dev Vrat
Haryana	Chandigarh	Manohar Lal Khattar	Satyadeo Narain Arya
Himachal Pradesh	Shimla	Jai Ram Thakur	BandaruDattatraya
Jharkhand	Ranchi	Hemant Soren	Droupadi Murmu
Karnataka	Bengaluru	B S Yediyurappa	VajubhaiRudabhaiVala
Kerala	Thiruvananthapuram	Pinarayi Vijayan	Arif Mohammed Khan
Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal	Shivraj Singh Chouhan	Anandiben Patel
Maharashtra	Mumbai	Uddhav Thackrey	Bhagat Singh Koshyari
Manipur	Imphal	N Biren Singh	Najma Heptulla
Meghalaya	Shillong	Conrad Sangma	Satya Pal Malik
Mizoram	Aizawl	Pu Zoramthanga	P S Sreedharan Pillai
Nagaland	Kohima	Neiphiu Rio	RN Ravi
Odisha	Bhubaneshwar	Naveen Patnaik	Ganeshi Lal
Punjab	Chandigarh	Amarinder Singh	V P Singh Badnore
Rajasthan	Jaipur	Ashok Gehlot	Kalraj Mishra
Sikkim	Gangtok	Prem Singh Tamang(PS Golay)	Ganga Prasad

Tamil Nadu	Chennai	Edappadi K. Palaniswami	Banwarilal Purohit
Telangana	Hyderabad	K. Chandrasekhar Rao	TamilisaiSoundararajan
Tripura	Agartala	Biplab Kumar Deb	Ramesh Bais
Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow	Yogi Adityanath	Anandiben Patel
Uttarakhand	Dehradun	Trivendra Singh Rawat	Baby Rani Maurya
West Bengal	Kolkata	Mamata Banerjee	Jagdeep Dhankhar

Important National News

Atal Innovation Mission launches 'AIM-iCREST', in partnership with Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Wadhwani Foundation

- In a major initiative to encourage and enable holistic progress in the incubator ecosystem across the country, NITI Aayog's **Atal Innovation Mission** (AIM), has launched **AIM iCREST** – an Incubator Capabilities enhancement program for a Robust Ecosystem focused on creating high performing Startups. This is a first of its kind initiative for advancing innovation at scale in India.
- AIM has joined hands with **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Wadhwani Foundation -** organizations that can lend credible support and expertise in the entrepreneurship and innovation space. These partnerships will provide global expertise and showcase proven best practices to the AIM's incubator network.
- AIM iCREST, as the name suggests, has been designed to enable the incubation ecosystem and act as a growth hack for AIM's Atal and Established incubators across the country. Under the initiative, the AIM's incubators are set to be upscaled and provided requisite support to foster the incubation enterprise economy, that will help them to significantly enhance their performance. This will be complemented by providing training to entrepreneurs, through technology driven processes and platforms.
- The program aims at going beyond incubator capacity building. Given the current pandemic crisis, the effort will focus on supporting start-up entrepreneurs in knowledge creation and dissemination as well as in developing robust and active networks.

Housing minister Hardeep Puri launches digital platforms to market residential properties

- Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri launched digital platforms of real estate bodies CREDAI and NAREDCO to market residential properties, besides releasing a guide book for affordable rental housing scheme for migrants.
- The minister launched 'CREDAI Awaas App' and NAREDCO's online portal 'HousingforAll.com' through a video conference.
- Puri released the knowledge pack of the government's 'Affordable Rental Housing Complexes' (ARHCs) programme, which has been recently launched to provide rental accommodations to migrant and urban poor.
- The ARHCs scheme, which has been launched under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Urban (PMAY-U) as part of Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, will help in providing dignified and affordable living spaces for urban migrants/ poor in need.

- CREDAI Awaas App is a residential project discovery online platform through which buyers will be able to virtually explore and experience the projects from 220 cities across the country. The app aims to facilitate transparent home buying in India of RERA approved projects by CREDAI developers.

Narendra Singh Tomar releases booklet on Best Practices in Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme

- Union Minister of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Narendra Singh Tomar released a booklet on "Best Practices in Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP)" of Department of Land Resources (DoLR), Ministry of Rural Development based on the presentations made by the States during Regional and National workshops since inception of the programme.
- This publication lists various 'good practices' followed in land records modernisation across national policy framework and in nine study states namely Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Maharashtra, Tripura, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand and Rajasthan.
- It also covers the gaps in implementation of different processes (such as registration, mutation, survey, settlement, land acquisition), technological initiatives and legal and institutional aspects.Substantial progress has been achieved under the Digital India Land Record Modernization Programme (DILRMP) since its inception.
- Computerization of Land Records has been completed (more than 90%) in 23 States/ UTs and substantial progress has been achieved in 11 States/ UTs.
- Digitization of Cadastral Maps has been completed (more than 90%) in 19 States/ UTs and substantial progress has been achieved in 9 States/ UTs.
- Computerization of Registration (SRO) has been completed (more than 90%) in 22 States/ UTs and substantial progress has been achieved in 8 States/ UTs.
- Integration of SRO with Revenue Office has been completed (more than 90%) in 16 States/ UTs and substantial progress has been achieved in 8 States/ UTs.

Nitin Gadkari inaugurates upstream carriageway of Mahatma Gandhi bridge over river Ganga in Bihar

- Road, Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari inaugurated the upstream carriageway of Mahatma Gandhi bridge over river Ganga in Bihar through video conference.
- Over 5.5 kilometres long, the four lane bridge lies on NH-19 between Patna and Hajipur.
- It is being constructed at a cost of one thousand 742 crore rupees.
- It involves replacement of the existing concrete superstructure of old bridge by new steel deck superstructure. The work on the bridge was started in June 2017.
- A new 5 km long, 4-lane Bridge over river Ganga in parallel to MG Setu, was also announced by Nitin Gadkari to facilitate movement of ships under it.
- It will cost about three thousand crore rupees.

Government launches programme for artisans involved in manufacturing of agarbatti

- The government (MSME Ministry) has approved a programme for the benefit of artisans involved in manufacturing of agarbatti and to develop village industry under the 'Gramodyog Vikas Yojana'.
- Initially four pilot projects will be started as part of the programme, including one in the North East.
- This decision will help to boost the indigenous production of agarbatti and will pave way to generate rural employment.
- This will also start the process of mitigating the gap between the indigenous production and demand and will reduce import of agarbatti in the country.

- Each targeted cluster of artisans will be supported with about 50 automatic agarbatti making machines and 10 mixing machines. Accordingly, a total of 200 automatic agarbatti making machines and 40 mixing machines will be provided to the artisans.
- The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), a statutory organisation under the Ministry of Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), will provide training, and assist artisans working in this area, with Agarbatti manufacturing machines.
- KVIC will tie up with khadi institutions and agarbatti manufacturers in the country, having good track record, to provide work and raw material to agarbatti making artisans.

Amit Shah inaugurates international webinar on 'Lokmanya Tilak - Swaraj to Self-reliant India' organized by ICCR

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated a two-day international webinar on the theme of 'Lokmanya Tilak - Swaraj to Self-reliant India' organized by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations on the 100th death anniversary of the great freedom fighter Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak.
- In his address, Mr Shah stated that Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak played a key role in the making of the Indian Independence movement complete in letter and spirit. The Home Minister stated that the slogan of 'Swaraj is my birth right and I shall have it' given by Lokmanya Tilak, will always be written in golden letters in the history of the Indian Independence Movement.
- Mr Shah stated that this slogan may seem natural to utter in our times, but in the 19th century very few people could have dared of uttering it and sacrificing their life and working for it to make it turn into reality. Mr Shah further stated that Tilak's idea of India as a nation, Indian culture and Indian customs are equally relevant.

Swachh Bharat Mission (Rural) moves towards 2nd phase, ODF-Plus

- In the run up to 74th Independence day. The Swachh Bharat mission has focused on rural and urban areas separately and played a crucial role in ensuring sanitation in the country.
- Since the launch of the mission in 2014, more than 10 crore individual toilets have been constructed across the country and as a result, rural areas in all the States have declared themselves Open Defecation Free ODF on 2nd October, 2019.
- To ensure that the open defecation free behaviours are sustained, no one is left behind, and that solid and liquid waste management facilities are accessible, the Swachh Bharat Mission (Rural) has moved towards its second phase which is also called ODF-Plus.
- This phase will continue till 2024-25. The Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban) has also made remarkable progress in the area of both sanitation and solid waste management. Over 4,324 Urban Local Bodies have been declared ODF in the country so far.
- More than 66 lakh individual household toilets and over 6 lakh community and public toilets have also been constructed or are under construction. In the area of solid waste management, 96 per cent of wards have 100 per cent door-to door collection while 66 per cent of the total waste generated is being processed.

Dr Harsh Vardhan launches 'Vidyarthi Vigyan Manthan 2020-21

- Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan launched 'Vidyarthi Vigyan Manthan, 2020-21. This initiative is a national programme for popularizing science among school students of Class 6th to 11th. It was designed to identify the bright minds with a scientific aptitude among the student community.
- While launching the Vidhyarthi Vigyan Manthan, 2020-21, the Minister stated, this is a platform to identify the talent in the field of science and to promote the scientific acumen among the students. He stated, students will help in creating the New India and this initiative will play leading role in it.

Northern Railway runs first-ever Vyapar Mala Express train

- Northern Railway ran first-ever Vyapar Mala Express train. General Manager of Northern and North Central Railway Rajiv Chaudhry stated, this train destined for Jirania in Tripura has 46 wagons.
- He stated, Railways has earned more than 94 lakh rupees from this Vyapar Mala Express train. This is an express service where piece-meal stock will reach its destination in a shorter time.
- The train departed from Delhi Kishanganj for Jirania and it will cover a distance of two thousand 673 Kilometres from Punjab to Tripura.
- It will help small traders in moving their cargo through Railways, in a short time, cost effective, convenient and environment-friendly mode of transportation. He stated, Railways has been focusing on closer ties with the industry and trade to further strengthen its freight sector.

Central Government to fund 112 startups to promote Agri Firms

- The Central Government will spend nearly twelve crore rupees for funding 112 startups to promote agri firms in the current financial year.
- Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Narendra Singh Tomar stated the funds will be given to the start-ups selected by different knowledge partners and agribusiness incubators in the area of agro-processing, food technology and value addition.
- He stated, the funds will be provided under the Innovation and Agri-entrepreneurship Development Programme launched under the revamped Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana. These start-ups were trained for two months at 29 agri-business incubation centres spread across the country.
- The Minister stated that the government is promoting start-ups in the field of agriculture for enhancing income of farmers and providing employment opportunities to youth. He stated, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had stated that start-ups and agri-entrepreneurs need to be promoted to ensure innovation and use of technology in agriculture and allied sectors.

Shri Sanjay Dhotre inaugurates BHARAT AIRFIBER , a last mile telecom connectivity solution based on Radio Network

- Shri. Sanjay Dhotre, Union Minister of State for HRD, Electronics, Communication, and IT, Govt Of India, inaugurated "Bharat Air Fibre Services" at Akola in Maharashtra. With inauguration of Bharat Air Fibre services, residents of Akola & Washim district will get Wireless Internet Connections on demand.
- The Bharat Air Fibre services are introduced by BSNL as part of digital India initiates by the Government of India and it aims of providing Wireless Connectivity in the range of 20 KMs from the BSNL Locations and thus customers at remote places also will be benefitted as BSNL comes with cheapest services with support of Telecom Infrastructure Partners (TIPs).
- BSNL is providing the "Bharat Air Fibre Services" through local business partners of BSNL from Akola & Washim District and these services will give fastest internet connectivity in quick time. These services are special and different from other operators as BSNL is providing unlimited free voice calling.
- These Bharat Air Fibre services opens new way of fastest Wireless internet connectivity as well Voice services in reasonable cost. BSNL provides Bharat Air Fibre connectivity upto 100 Mbps speed. BSNL is offering attractive Broadband plans in Wireline & Wireless segments and during lockdown BSNL has come up as most reliable brand for Internet connectivity there by successfully implementing the Work From Home started by Government as well as many private firms.

Govt formulates draft Defence Production and Export Promotion Policy 2020FILE PIC

- Defence Ministry has formulated a draft Defence Production and Export Promotion Policy 2020 (DPEPP-2020).

- The policy aims to provide impetus to self-reliance in defence manufacturing under the Atmanirbhar Bharat Scheme.
- The DPEPP-2020 is envisaged as overarching guiding document of Defence Ministry to provide a focused, structured and significant thrust to defence production capabilities of the country for self-reliance and exports.
- Defence Production and Export Promotion Policy 2020 has marked out clear goals and objectives to be undertaken by the Defence Ministry.
- First and foremost amongst all is to achieve a turnover of Rs. 1 lakh 75 thousand Crore including an export of Rs. 35 thousand Crore in the Aerospace and Defence goods and services by the year 2025.
- Developing a dynamic, robust and competitive Defence industry, including Aerospace and Naval Shipbuilding industry to cater to the needs of Armed forces with quality products has also been clearly laid out in the new draft policy.
- The ministry has also laid emphasis on reducing dependence on imports and taking forward the Make in India initiatives through domestic designs.
- Efforts will be made to create an environment that encourages Research and Development, rewards innovation, creates Indian IP ownership and promotes a robust and self-reliant defence industry.
- Defence Ministry has solicited comments on the draft DPEPP-2020 policy from all stakeholders latest by 17th of August this year.

24 states in the country get linked to 'One Nation One Ration Card'

- Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Ram Vilas Paswan, reviewed the progress of 'One Nation One Ration Card' plan implementation throughout the country.
- As four new states complete technical requirements, they have also been linked to the scheme. These four states are UT of Jammu & Kashmir, Manipur, Nagaland and Uttarakhand.
- With the addition of these four states, now 24 states across the country are connected with the One Nation One Ration Card Scheme.
- The plan aims to ensure the delivery of food security entitlements to all beneficiaries covered under the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA), irrespective of their physical location anywhere in the country.
- The government had first implemented the scheme as a pilot project in four states in 2019.
- The timely implementation of the scheme helped the government to effectively deliver food grains under PM Garib Kalyan Yojna announced till November 2020.

India's tourism ministry inaugurates Thenzawl Golf Resort project in Mizoram

- Ministry of Tourism, Government of India virtually inaugurated the state-of-the-art Thenzawl Golf Resort project in Mizoram.
- The project is developed under Swadesh Darshan scheme's 'Integrated Development of New Eco-Tourism' with a sanctioned amount of Rs.92.25 crore out of which Rs.64.48 crore has been allocated for various components including the golf course at Thenzawl in Mizoram.
- The golf course is designed by Canada based-Graham Cooke and Associates.
- Currently, India boasts over 220 golf courses. With this new project, the tourism ministry of India aims to promote golf tourism as a niche product for attracting both international and domestic tourists.

Union Minister Narendra Singh Tomar launches the Sahakar Cooptube NCDC Channel

- Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar launched the National Cooperative Development Corporation's YouTube channel, 'Sahakar Cooptube NCDC India', to encourage farmers and the youth to take benefit of cooperatives.

- Shri Tomar also launched guidance videos produced by NCDC on 'Formation and Registration of a Cooperative' for eighteen different states in Hindi and regional languages.
- The initiatives are steps towards One Nation One Market with the objective for India to become food factory of the world.
- This intended to strengthen all activities and services in agriculture, horticulture and allied sectors through creation and development of agriculture infrastructure, micro food enterprises, value chains and logistics for fishery and animal husbandry, medicinal and herbal plants, bee keeping and Operation Green.

HRD minister releases 8-week alternative academic calendar for classes 6 to 8

- Union Human Resource Development Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank released an eight-week alternative academic calendar, developed by NCERT, for classes 6 to 8. The alternative calendar maps the themes with learning outcomes to facilitate the assessment of progress in the learning of children.
- The Education minister while tweeting about alternative academic calendar wrote, 'Alternative Academic Calendar for upper primary stage (Classes VI to VIII) for four weeks was released earlier.
- The academic calendar contains week-wise plans consisting of interesting and challenging activities, with reference to theme/chapter taken from syllabus or textbook. Most importantly, it maps the themes with the learning outcomes.

FAO claims new platform to help fight food loss, wastage

- The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has unveiled a new platform to help accelerate global reduction in food loss and waste. The platform will contain information on measurement, reduction policies, alliances, actions and examples of successful models applied to reduce food loss and waste.
- Wasting food means wasting scarce natural resources, increasing climate change impacts and missing the opportunity to feed a growing population in the future, stated FAO Director-General QU Dongyu.
- The platform will be officially launched on the first International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste on 29 September, 2020.
- At least 14 per cent of food is lost (food wastage and food loss together), valued at $400 billion annually. In terms of greenhouse gas emissions, the food that is lost is associated with around 1.5 gigatonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent.
- Major losses are seen in roots tubers and oil-bearing crops (25 per cent), fruits and vegetables (22 per cent), and meat and animal products (12 per cent).
- The platform is as a gateway to information on food loss and waste from various resources, including the largest online collection of data on what food is lost and wasted; examples of successful initiatives as well as food waste and losses a policy brief in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic; and few tips on what everyone can do to reduce food waste. Links to related portals from development partners are also provided.
- The FAO chief urged public and the private sectors and individuals to promote, harness and scale-up policies, innovation and technologies to reduce food loss and waste.

India contributes over $15 million to India-UN Development Partnership Fund

- India has contributed $15.46 million to the India-UN Development Partnership Fund, underscoring the country's commitment to supporting developing nations in their developmental priorities across all the Sustainable Development Goals.
- India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador T S Tirumurti handed over a cheque of $15.46 million to the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) Director Jorge Chediek at a low-key ceremony held within social distancing guidelines at the Permanent Mission of India to the UN.

- The tranche of $15.46 million includes $6 million to the overall fund, in which all the developing countries are eligible for partnership, and $9.46 million dedicated to the Commonwealth countries.
- The India-UN Development Partnership Fund is managed by the UNOSSC and implemented under the leadership of partner developing countries leveraging the strengths of United Nations Agencies, Funds and Programmes.

The Indian government has renewed its commitment to supporting fellow developing countries in their national developmental priorities across all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

NIDM in collaboration with IMD organises webinar series on "Hydro-Meteorological Hazards Risk Reduction"

- National Institute of Disaster Management in collaboration with India Meteorological Department organised a webinar series on "Hydro-Meteorological Hazards Risk Reduction". The webinar series include four webinars focusing on Thunderstorms and Lightning, Cloudburst and Floods, Cyclones and Storm Surges and Climate Change and Extreme Weather Events.
- The webinar series exhorted on enhancing human capacity in terms of better understanding of Hydro-Meteorological Hazards Risk and effective collaborative actions.
- Minister of State for Home Affairs, Nityanand Rai inaugurated the first webinar on "Thunderstorms and Lightning". He highlighted the major interventions carried out by the Government departments and agencies for reducing the adverse risks of Hydro-Meteorological disasters.
- He also emphasised on focusing on collaborative short and long term mitigation and reduction measures to diminish the adverse impacts of these disasters.

Indian Railways to run first Kisan Rail special service between Maharashtra-Bihar

- Indian Railways is all set to run its first timetabled "Kisan Rail" special parcel service.
- Piyush Goyal chaired Railway Ministry is introducing the first Kisan Rail service from Devlali in the state of Maharashtra to Danapur in the state of Bihar.
- The Kisan Rail, which comprises 10 parcel vans and one luggage cum brake van, will run on a weekly basis.
- The city of Nasik in Maharashtra and its surrounding region produces a huge quantity of fresh fruits, vegetables, flowers, onions, other perishables, as well as other agro products.
- Mainly, these perishable items are transported to areas around Allahabad, Patna, Satna, Katni, etc. The Kisan Rail special parcel service has been provided scheduled halts at Nasik Road, Jalgaon, Manmad, Bhusaval, Burhanpur, Itarsi, Khandwa, Jabalpur, Satna, Katni, Prayagraj Chheoki, Manikpur, Buxar and Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Nagar.

Govt to launch National Clinical Registry for COVID-19

- The Government is set to launch a National Clinical Registry for COVID-19. The main objective of this registry is to collect real time clinical data which will help in evidence based clinical practice, research, formulation of guidelines and policy making.
- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and All India Institute of Medical Sciences have proposed to establish a COVID-19 clinical registry for data collection from 100 hospitals across the country. The duration of the study will be one year and any COVID-19 lab confirmed and hospitalized patient will be enrolled.
- ICMR invited a letter of intent from institutions, hospitals identified as dedicated COVID Hospitals and COVID Health Centres to establish this registry.
- This study is aimed at collecting data regarding clinical and laboratory features, treatments and outcomes of hospitalized COVID-19 patients in India.

Ministry of Jal Shakti launches new version of India Water Resources Information System

- The Ministry of Jal Shakti has launched a new version of the India Water Resources Information System (India-WRIS) with new functionalities and features.
- The web portal www.indiawris.gov.in, this portal contains information related to Water Resources through dashboards for rainfall, water levels & discharge of rivers, water bodies, ground water levels, reservoir storages, evapotranspiration and soil moisture, as well as modules on water resources projects, water bodies, hydro-met data availability and tools for GIS layer editing.
- Through this portal, any stakeholder can visualize the information in a user friendly manner, as well download the information in the form of excel reports and graphs.
- The key features of the system are Water information easily made available to users and general public, for decision makers, water managers, farmers & experts, Direct access to hydro-met information from Central and State agencies, Real-time data available with one click, Variety of modules for different needs, Latest technologies, continuous development and improvement.

PM Modi launches week long campaign 'Gandagi, Bharat Chorho'

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a week long cleanliness campaign 'Gandagi, Bharat Chorho' till August 15.
- Every day till August 15 there will be a special swachhata initiatives in urban and rural India to re-enforce the jan andolan for swachhata.
- The Rashtriya Swachhata Kendra will be open to the public from 9th August from 8 AM to 5 PM, in accordance with the prescribed guidelines for social distancing and hygiene.
- No tours will be organised for students in the short term. However, virtual tours of the Rashtriya Swachhata Kendra will also be organised till such time as physical tours are possible.

PM Modi Launches Rs 1 Lakh Crore Finance Facility For Agri-Infrastructure

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched a debt financing facility under the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund with a budget of Rs 1 lakh crore.
- Under this, Farmer Producer Organisation Schemes, self-help groups and agri-entrepreneurs can take loans to build infrastructure for post-harvest management and community farming assets, like cold storage, collection centres and processing units.
- The scheme, already cleared by the cabinet, will be implemented from this month.
- Rs 1,000 crore has already been sanctioned to over 2,280 farmer societies. The assets will help them get more value for their produce, as a proper post-harvest infrastructure will help them reduce wastage and store and sell crops at higher prices.
- The government has also released the next instalment of Rs 2,000 each to 8.5 crore farmers under the PM-Kisan scheme.
- This was the sixth instalment of the scheme, which, launched in 2018, promised to provide direct cash benefit of Rs 6,000 per year to to more than 10 crore farmers. Rs 17,100 crore has been spent on the scheme this time.

Indian Railways committed to integrate with GeM portal

- Indian Railways is committed to integrate with the government e-marketplace (GeM) portal to move all its procurement to the platform.

- Railways buys more than 98 percent of its goods and services in India and moving this purchase to the GeM platform in the next "probably 8-12 months" will help in making the procurement process more transparent, seamless, efficient, and faster.
- The railways' direct procurement of goods for its operations or its public sector undertakings or production units stood at about Rs 70,000 crore-Rs 75,000 crore.
- The Commerce Ministry launched GeM for public procurement in August 2016 with the objective of creating an open and transparent procurement platform for the government.
- If any supplier or vendor provides bad quality goods, it will be black listed not only on GeM, but throughout the government system.

Panel set up to fix ceiling rates under duty reimbursement scheme for exporters

- The government has constituted a three-member committee for determination of ceiling rates under a scheme for reimbursement of taxes and duties to exporters.
- The reimbursement of taxes under the Remission of Duties and Taxes on Export Products (RoDTEP) such as duty on power charges, VAT on fuel in transportation, farm sector, captive power generation, mandi tax, stamp duty and central excise duty on fuel used in transportation would make Indian products competitive in global markets.
- According to an order of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), the committee would be chaired by Secretary (retd) G K Pillai. The other two members are Y G Parande (retd CBIC member) and Gautam Ray (retd chief commissioner of custom and central excise).
- The terms of reference of the committee include interacting with the administrative ministries, export promotion councils, commodity boards, trade bodies and other stakeholders so as to take their views on the ceiling rates under RoDTEP scheme.
- The committee will submit its main report to the government within three months from identification and prioritisation of sectors/items by the government.

India will be self-sufficient in Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients production in next 2 years

- Chemicals and Fertilisers Minister DV Sadananda Gowda has said that in the next couple of years, India will be self-sufficient in the production of Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients and Key Starting materials to reduce import dependency and attain drug security.
- The Minister also informed that 50 new Janaushadhi outlets were opened recently taking the total such outlets to 6500 across 732 districts in the country.
- Three medical device parks and three pharmacy parks being developed at an investment of 13,600 crore rupees.
- Janaushadhi outlets sell quality medicines at 50 to 90 percent less rate than the branded medicines. For example it sells sanitary pad for just one rupee. During the previous year Janaushadhi kendras sold medicines worth 430 crore rupees.

Indian Traders Launch 'China Quit India' Campaign To Boycott Chinese Goods

- The Confederation of all India Traders launched the 'China Quit India' campaign to boycott Chinese goods, while its members held protests across 600 places across the country.
- This is a new dimension to its nationwide campaign "Bhartiya Saamaan-Hamara Abhimaan" .
- The imports from China should be closely monitored and higher customs or anti-dumping duty should be imposed on the goods that are being dumped or are non-essential imports.

Defence minister Rajnath Singh to launch Atmanirbhar Bharat Saptah

- Defence minister Rajnath Singh will launch the Atmanirbhar Bharat Saptah. The move is aimed at promoting Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for a self-reliant India with increased local manufacturing.
- Mr Singh announced that India will stop the import of 101 weapons and military platforms like transport aircraft, light combat helicopters, conventional submarines, cruise missiles among others on a staggered basis till 2024.
- The move is meant to give an impetus to domestic defence production. Defence minister stated that the defence ministry is ready for a big push to encourage indigenous defence manufacturing in line with Prime Minister Modi's clarion call for an Atmanirbhar Bharat.

PM Modi inaugurates submarine Optical Fibre Cable connecting Chennai, Port Blair

- The Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated 2300 kilometre submarine optical fibre cable network between Chennai and Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Mr Modi stated this project is Union government's commitment for Ease of living. Saying this project will boost tourism in the Islands, Prime Minister expressed happiness for completion of the project before deadline.
- Mr Modi stated this is Independence Day gift for Andaman and Nicobar islands people . He stated not only Andaman people will get a big boost but also sea trade will rise exponentially. Mr Modi stated, high speed net in Andaman and Nicobar islands is a big day as the people will get all the benefits of digital India.
- Prime minister emphasised the tourists who will travel to the Islands will also be benefitted by the digital initiative. Information and Technology minister Ravi Shankar Prasad was also present on the occasion.

Union Minister Prakash Javadekar launches portal on Human Elephant Conflict on World Elephant Day

- The Minister for Environment and Forest Prakash Javadekar released document on Best Practices and launched a portal on Human Elephant Conflict on the eve of World Elephant Day, 2020.
- Mr Javadekar stated, efforts are in full swing to provide food and water to the animals in the forests itself to deal with the growing human-animal conflict cases.
- He stated, India is committed to the cause of saving elephants and other animals and is working towards robust, practical and cost effective solutions to end the human animal conflict.
- He stated, Government has taken initiative of fodder and water augmentation in forest areas so that animals will get food and water in forest area and will not come outside. He added that LiDAR technology is being used for it.
- Minister of State for Environment and Forest Babul Supriyo stated, it is a moment of pride that India is having 60 percent of Global population of Asian Elephants. The World Elephant Day is observed every year on 12th August to spread awareness about the animal. It was launched in 2012 to bring attention to the urgent plight of Asian and African elephants.
- Poaching, habitat loss, human-elephant conflict and mistreatment in captivity are some of the threats to both African and Asian elephants.
- Indian Elephant has also been listed in the Appendix I of the Convention of the Migratory species in the recently concluded 13th Conference of Parties on Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) at Gandhi Nagar, Gujarat in February this year.

FM Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurates NIP Online Dashboard

- Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated the National Infrastructure Pipeline, NIP, Online Dashboard in New Delhi through video conferencing.
- The online dashboard is envisaged as a one stop solution for all stakeholders looking for information on infrastructure projects in New India.

- The dashboard is being hosted on the India Investment Grid, IIG www.indiainvestmentgrid.gov.in. IIG is an interactive and dynamic online platform that showcases d and real-time investment opportunities in the country.
- She stated, the availability of NIP projects on IIG will ensure easy accessibility to project information and attract investors for PPP projects.
- The Minister has asked all concerned Department and Ministries to immediately the status of projects on NIP portal and keep it in real time.

Govt aims to develop 10 Craft and Handloom Villages in India: Smriti Irani

- Union Minister Smriti Irani stated the government is aiming to develop ten Craft and Handloom Villages in the country so that tourists from across the globe can visit them and learn the rich legacy of Indian weavers and lend support to the Make in India initiative.
- Almost 95% of the handwoven fabrics used globally are produced in India.
- The minister stated the National Handloom Awards, which are presented on the occasion of the Handloom Day, are being deferred upon the request of weavers who wish to celebrate the honour instead of receiving it digitally due to the prevailing circumstances posed by COVID-19.
- Irani shared that students from the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) are contributing to the upgradation of 9 out of 28 Weavers' Service Centres across the country in terms of design, marketing and research.
- These centres are located in Delhi, Srinagar, Jaipur, Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Varanasi, Guwahati, Kanchipuram and Bhubaneswar.

Narendra Singh Tomar launches ICAR's data recovery centre 'Krishi Megh'

- Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar has launched ICAR's data recovery centre - Krishi Megh. The move is aimed at protecting the precious data of the government's premier research body Indian Council of Agricultural Research. It has been set up at National Academy of Agricultural Research Management (NAARM) in Hyderabad.
- Currently, the main data centre of the ICAR is at the Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute (IASRI) in the national capital. Krishi Megh has been set up under the National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP), funded by both the government and World Bank.
- Mr Tomar stated NAARM, Hyderabad has been chosen as it lies in a different seismic zone with regard to the Data Centre at ICAR-IASRI in New Delhi. He stated Hyderabad is also suitable as skilled IT manpower is available along with other suitable climatic conditions such as low humidity level which is controllable in the data center environment.
- Mr Tomar stated, the data recovery centre at NAARM is synchronised with the data centre at IASRI. He stated it has been built to mitigate the risk, enhance the quality, availability and accessibility of e-governance, research, extension and education in the field of agriculture in India. Mr Tomar emphasised the need to save and preserve the important research-based data in a prompt digitised form to enable its access anywhere in any corner of the country and the world.

Education Minister launches Minimum Standards of Architectural Education Regulations, 2020

- Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank virtually launched the Minimum Standards of Architectural Education Regulations, 2020 in New Delhi.
- Mr Pokhriyal highlighted about unique architectural beauty of India, its monuments and temples.
- He stated that Council of Architecture should draw inspiration from the present and past treasures of Architecture and bring a paradigm shift in the field of Architecture to make India a world leader again.
- The Minister stated, the architecture of India is rooted in its history, culture and religion.

Tribal Affairs Ministry develops nine 'Tribal Freedom Fighters' Museums

- Tribal Affairs Ministry is developing "Tribal Freedom Fighters' Museums dedicated to the contributions of the tribal people in India to the freedom struggle.
- Out of nine sanctioned museums, two museums are near completion and remaining seven are at different stages of progress. The Ministry stated that by the end of 2022 all the museums will come into existence.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced setting up of these tribal freedom fighters' museums during his Independence Day Speech on 15th August 2016.
- All the museums will have strong usage of technologies like Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality and 3D/7D holographic projections.
- These museums will demonstrate the way tribals struggle to protect their custodial concerns for the biological and cultural diversity of the country.

Jal Shakti Minister launches Swachh Bharat Mission Academy as part of campaign Gandagi Mukt Bharat

- Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat launched Swachh Bharat Mission, SBM Academy in New Delhi, as part of the ongoing week-long behaviour change campaign Gandagi Mukt Bharat.
- He launched SBM Academy by dialling the designated IVR toll-free number. Mr Shekhawat stated, the IVR based free mobile online learning course on ODF Plus will be crucial in achieving goals underlined in Phase - 2 of Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin).
- He stated, the mission has transformed rural India by manifesting into a Jan Andolan for sanitation. This led to the historic achievement of Open Defecation Free declaration by all villages, districts and states on 2nd October, last year.
- The Minister added that Swachh Bharat Mission Academy, with its mobile based technology will significantly boost the capacity building efforts in training of Swachhagrahis as well as community-based organizations, NGOs and others associated with phase 2 of the mission. The Ministers also interacted online with few swachhagrahis, field level functionaries and state officials.

Centre Forms Committee For Procurement, Administration Of COVID-19 Vaccine

- The Centre constituted a committee to consider the logistics, ethical aspects of procurement, and administration of COVID-19 vaccine.
- The committee titled National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration has been formed under the chairmanship of Dr VK Paul, who is member (health) at the NITI Aayog.
- The committee will also consider other issues related to logistics of the vaccine like cold chain, inventory, how to arrange resources to procure vaccine and how to address the equity issues linked to vaccination. This expert group will together discuss with all state governments and vaccine manufacturers.

PM Modi launches 'Transparent Taxation - Honoring the Honest' platform

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Transparent Taxation - Honoring the Honest' platform. He stated it will strengthen the efforts of reforming and simplifying India's tax system. The Prime Minister also unveiled the next phase of direct tax reforms aimed at easing compliance and rewarding honest taxpayers in a bid to rebuild Indian economy.
- Mr Modi stated, effort is to make the tax system seamless, painless and faceless. The Prime Minister stated, amidst all the reforms introduced by the Centre, the number of people who have filed income tax returns has increased by about two-and-a-half crores in the last 6-7 years. He, however, stated , it is also true that in a country of 130 crores and it is still very less.

- Mr Modi emphasised with faceless assessment, the taxpayer is assured of fair, courteous and rational behavior. He stated, the income tax department now has to take care of the taxpayer's dignity sensitively and the department cannot doubt anyone without any basis.

MoRTH allows sale and registration of electric vehicles without batteries

- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) has allowed registration of electric vehicles without pre-fitted batteries. In a letter to Transport Secretaries of all the States and UTs, the ministry has clarified that vehicles without batteries can be sold and registered based on the type approval certificate issued by the test agency.
- Further, that there is no need to specify the make/type or any other details of the battery for the purpose of registration. However, the prototype of the electrical vehicle, and the battery (regular battery or the swappable battery) is required to be type approved by the test agencies specified under Rule 126 of the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989.
- The Government is striving to create an ecosystem to accelerate the uptake of electric mobility in the country. It is time to come together to work Jointly to achieve the broader national agenda to reduce vehicular pollution and oil import bill. This will not only protect the environment and reduce the import bill but also provide opportunities to sun rise industry.
- For the promotion of electrical two wheelers and three wheeler vehicles, there are recommendations brought to the notice of the Ministry to delink the cost of battery (which accounts for 30-40% of the total cost) from the vehicle cost. Vehicles could then also be sold in the market without the battery. This will make the upfront cost of the electrical 2 wheeler (2W) and 3 wheelers (3W) to be lower than ICE 2 and 3W. The battery could be provided separately by the OEM or the energy service provider.

India's Katra-Delhi Express Road to be completed by 2023

- The work has started on the first-of-its-kind Katra-Delhi express road corridor, which will be ready by 2023 and when it becomes functional, the travel time from Katra to Delhi will get reduced to around six and half hours, and from Jammu to Delhi to just about six hours.
- It was announced by Union Minister Jitendra Singh.
- The hallmark of this road corridor is that it will connect the holy cities of Katra and Amritsar, and at the same time offer connectivity for some other major important religious shrines between the two destinations.
- The project is estimated to cost over Rs350bn ($4.6bn). This corridor will pass through Jammu and Kathua in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, as well as Jalandhar, Amritsar, Kapurthala and Ludhiana in Punjab.
- The project will also involve simultaneous widening of the National Highway between Pathankot and Jammu. This highway will be upgraded from four lanes to six lanes.

Rajnath Singh launches Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched the Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (NIIO) through an online webinar. The NIIO puts in place dedicated structures for the end users to interact with academia and industry towards fostering innovation and indigenisation for self-reliance in defence.
- The Draft Defence Acquisition Policy 2020 (DAP 20) rolled out by the Defence Ministry last month envisaged establishment of Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation by the Service Headquarters. Indian Navy already has a functional Directorate of Indigenisation and the new structures created will build upon the ongoing indigenisation initiatives, as well as focus on innovation.
- The Indian Navy signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Uttar Pradesh Expressway Industrial Development Authority, Raksha Shakti University of Gujarat, Maker Village in Kochi and Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers. A compendium of Indian Navy's Indigenisation perspective plans titled 'SWAVLAMBAN' was also released.

Govt forms 5 members panel to probe into Kozhikode plane crash

- Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau has ordered probe into the Air India Express aircraft crash at Kozhikode airport.
- The Investigation of the aircraft crash will be done by a five member team headed by Captain S S Chahar.
- The team will investigate and determine the probable causes and contributory factors leading to the accident.
- It will also make recommendations to avoid such recurrences in the future. Investigator in-charge Captain S S Chahar will submit his report within 5 months.
- An Air India Express flight from Dubai with over 190 people, skidded off the tabletop runway during landing at the Kozhikode airport in heavy rains, killing 18 people on 7th of this month.

National Health Authority board gives nod to integrate central health schemes with Ayushman Bharat

- The governing board of National Health Authority (NHA) approved a proposal to integrate existing health schemes of Central Ministries and public sector undertakings with Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY).
- The move is expected to benefit government employees, including contractual employees, Central Armed Police Force personnel and other beneficiary groups such as building and construction workers, manual scavengers, and road accident victims, a statement stated.
- When implemented, the proposal will help integrate existing health schemes run by Central ministries and departments with Ayushman Bharat.
- The meeting chaired by Minister of Health and Family Welfare Harsh Vardhan, gave in-principle approval for implementation of any healthcare scheme for employees (including Government employees) and other beneficiaries extended by central ministries, departments and other Central government bodies, based on their request, to be implemented on a common Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY platform. This is expected to seamlessly integrate all stakeholders in the ecosystem leading to enhancement of the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the extension of health services, it stated.
- The governing board also gave a go-ahead to conduct insurance pilots for covering missing middle/non-poor population (comprising varied sections of non-poor population such as informal sector workers, self-employed, professionals, employees in MSMEs etc) spread across occupations, geography and income strata, utilising the PM-JAY framework.

About National Health Authority:

- The National Health Authority or the NHA is the apex body responsible for implementing India's flagship public health insurance/assurance scheme Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY).
- NHA has been set-up to implement the PM-JAY at the national level. In the States, SHAs or State Health Agencies in the form of a society/trust have been set up with full operational autonomy over the implementation of this scheme including extending the coverage to non SECC beneficiaries.

PM launches Project Lion, Project Dolphin

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the launch of Project Lion and Project Dolphin for the conservation of the two endangered species in the country using modern technology.
- Project Lion would involve conservation of the Asiatic Lion, and its landscape.
- The project will entail habitat development by engaging modern technologies in management and addressing the issue of diseases in lion and its associated species through advanced world-class research and veterinary care.
- The project would also address the Human-Wildlife conflict. This would involve local communities living in the vicinity of lion landscape, and would also provide livelihood opportunities.

- Notably, the Asiatic Lion Conservation Project was launched in the NDA's first term with a budgetary contribution of Rs 97.85 Cr from Central Government.
- Meanwhile, Project Dolphin aims at the conservation and protection of the Dolphins in rivers and oceans of the country.
- It involves conservation of Dolphins and the aquatic habitat through the use of modern technology—specially in enumeration and anti-poaching activities.
- The conservation of Dolphin will also envisage activities which will also help in the mitigation of pollution in rivers and the oceans.

NITI Aayog launches 'ATL AI Step Up Module' for students on Independence Day eve

- After a successful launch of a unique initiative to take Artificial Intelligence (AI) to schools through 'ATL AI Modules', Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog in collaboration with NASSCOM have launched the 'ATL AI Step Up Module' for students on the eve of India's Independence Day in order to drive AI education and innovation to the next level in schools across the country.
- This module is the next step in bringing AI to Indian classrooms and is a successor to the AI Base module launched in February this year.
- With this new launch, through hands-on projects and activities, the step-up module encourages a deeper understanding of AI which can be applied in the real world.

PM Modi launches National Digital Health Mission; Every Indian to have Health IDsPTI

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched the National Digital Health Mission (NDHM). Every Indian will have an Aadhar like ID card containing all relevant information about his/her medical conditions and treatments and tests.
- Mr Modi stated that the initiative which is completely technology based will revolutionise the health sector in India.
- The vision of National Digital Health Mission is to create a national digital health ecosystem which provides timely and efficient access to inclusive, affordable, and safe healthcare to all citizens.

NTPC develops infrastructure at Rihand project for increased use of fly ash

- To transport fly ash to cement plants located at distance, NTPC Limited has developed infrastructure at Rihand project in Uttar Pradesh, informed the central public sector unit (PSU).
- The development is in line with NTPC's commitment towards 100 per cent utilisation of fly ash from power plants, stated NTPC.
- As per a statement issued by the PSU under Ministry of Power, the first rake of 59 BOXN type of railway wagons carrying 3450 Metric Tonne (MT) of fly ash was flagged off from NTPC's Rihand Super Thermal Power station for ACC Cement Manufacturing Plant, situated in Tikaria of Uttar Pradesh.
- NTPC added that the effort marks the beginning of a new era for the transportation of fly ash from a remote location to a consumption centre.
- According to the PSU, the move will enable power plants for upgrading the utilisation of fly ash with the availability of additional material loading avenues for Indian Railways and accessibility of fly ash to the cement plants in an environment-friendly manner at a competitive price.
- During the financial year 2019-20, almost 44.33 million tonnes of fly ash was utilised for various productive purposes, being 73.31 per cent of the ash generated.

AYUSH Ministry launches campaign "Ayush for Immunity" for awareness on affordable immunity boosting practices

- The Ministry of AYUSH launched a three-month campaign aimed at increasing awareness about affordable and easy practices that can be adopted for enhancing immunity and preventing any disease.

- The campaign, called "Ayush for Immunity", was launched through a webinar which saw the participation of more than 50,000 people.
- The webinar was staged on Ayush Virtual Convention Centre (AVCC), the new digital communication platform of the ministry.
- Personalities like spiritual guru Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and actor-model Milind Soman were also part for this event.

India Post Issued Stamps on UNESCO World Heritage Sites in India

- India Post has released a set of five commemorative postage stamps and a miniature sheet on UNESCO World Heritage Sites in India on 15th August 2020 on the occasion of 74th Independence Day. This is the third part of the series .
- The stamps depicts following five cultural sites of India-
- Historic City of Ahmedabad
- Churches and Convents of Goa
- Group ofMonuments at Pattadakal
- Khajuraho Group of Monuments
- Qutub Minar

About UNESCO World Heritage Sites

- The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Sites are important places of cultural or natural heritage as described in the UNESCO World Heritage Convention, established in 1972.
- There are 38 World Heritage Sites located in India . These include 30 cultural sites, 7 natural sites and 1 mixed-criteria site. India has the sixth largest number of sites in the world.

Nitin Gadkari lays foundation for 13 highway projects in Manipur

- Union Minister Nitin Gadkari laid the foundation stones of Rs.3,000-crore highway projects in Manipur and stated the government will soon take up additional projects worth Rs.16,023 crore in the state.
- Laying the foundation stone of the 13 highway projects and inaugurating a road safety project in a virtual ceremony, the road transport, highways and MSME minister promised to also expedite the ongoing Rs.2,250-crore highway works in the state and termed it as his "priority".
- "Projects worth Rs.16,023 crore will be awarded soon for highway works of 874.5 km. Projects worth Rs.2,250 crore are already underway in the state which will also be expedited," Gadkari stated.
- He also stated, new projects will be taken up. These include a 106.5-km four-lane project between Kohima and Imphal at Rs.2,663 crore, a 220-km four-lane project on a stretch of NH-37 from Imphal to Jiraban at Rs.5,425 crore, and a 118-km two-lane project on NH-129A at Rs.1,765 crore.
- At the same time, he asked the CM to provide the utilisation certificate for the CRF funds so that a fresh tranche of Rs.250 crore should be granted to states in order to facilitate legislators to start highway projects in the state.

Google partners CWC for flood forecasting initiative

- Google in association with the Central Water Commission (CWC) has taken flood forecasting initiative over the past several months, and sent numerous public alerts to people in impacted regions across the country.
- These alerts provide timely, updated, and critical information that can help users make informed decisions on their safety, and that of their families and friends, Google stated.
- Any user in the affected region having an Android smartphone with location services enabled will receive these alerts, it added. Various parts of the country, including Assam and Bihar, are grappling with floods.

- Users can also use Search to enter a query on a flood-affected area to see key information on the current situation in that region, it added.
- If there is a current flooding situation in the area, the user will see a visual overview of key information, including the rise or fall in the water level in the next day with a description of the recent situation containing specific guidance.
- A colour-coded map indicating the flooded areas is also shown and clicking on this map opens a larger, more detailed view in Google Maps where users can zoom in to get a better understanding of water levels in specific regions, the statement stated.

Government modifies Partial Credit Guarantee Scheme 2.0

- The Finance Ministry, announced plans to extend and modify the Partial Credit Guarantee Scheme (PCGS) 2.0.
- It has been decided to extend the scheme for three more months to build up the portfolio. At the end of six months(by November 19), the portfolio will be crystallised based on the actual amount disbursed for the guarantee to come into effect. At the portfolio level, 'AA' and 'AA (-)' rated investment sub-portfolio under the scheme should not exceed 50 per cent against 25 per cent earlier of the total portfolio of bonds/ CPs (commercial paper) purchased by Public Sector Banks under the scheme.
- In May, Aatma Nirbhar Package revamped and extended the existing PCGS to cover the borrowings of lower-rated NBFCs, (non-banking finance companies) HFCs (housing finance companies) and other MFIs (micro finance institutions). Under the Rs.45,000-crore PCGS 2.0, the government will provide 20 per cent first loss sovereign guarantee to PSBs for the purchase of bonds or commercial papers with a rating of AA and below (including unrated paper) issued by NBFCs/HFCs or MFIs.
- In addition, the government had separately announced the Special Liquidity Scheme for purchase of Commercial Papers (CPs) and non-convertible debentures (NCDs) issued by NBFCs/HFCs with a residual maturity of up to three months, which could be extended for a further period of up to three months, of a total value not exceeding Rs.30,000 crore, to be extended by the amount required as per need.
- Under PCGS 2.0, PSBs have approved purchase of bonds/ CPs rated 'AA/AA-' issued by 28 entities, and bonds/CPs rated below AA- issued by 62 entities, amounting to Rs.. 21,262 crore. The average ticket size of bonds/CPs rated below 'AA-is significantly lower than the average ticket size of bonds/CPs rated 'AA/AA-'. Under SLS, proposals of Rs. 7,464 crore have been approved so far for purchase.

Govt launches 'Swadeshi Microprocessor Challenge'

- The Union Ministry of Communications, Electronics and Information Technology has launched the "Swadeshi Microprocessor Challenge- Innovate Solutions for #Aatmanirbhar Bharat" to provide further impetus to the strong startup ecosystem, and drive innovation and research in the country.
- This challenge was launched by Union Minister of Law and Justice, Communications, Electronics and Information Technology Ravi Shankar Prasad.
- This initiative is aimed at not only meeting India's future requirements of strategic and industrial sectors but also has the potential to mitigate the issues of security, licensing, technology obsolescence and most crucially cutting dependency on imports.
- IIT Madras and Centre for Development of Advance Computing (CDAC) have developed two microprocessors named SHAKTI (32-bit) and VEGA (64-bit) respectively using Open Source Architecture under the aegis of Microprocessor Development Programme of Ministry of Electronics and IT.

- The participants in this challenge will receive various incentives which include internship opportunities and technical guidance from leading VLSI and Electronics System Design experts. Besides, there will be financial assistance to the tune of Rs 4.30 crore given at various stages of the challenge for developing the hardware prototype.

Home Ministry approves renaming of Manduadih railway station in UP as Banaras

- The Union Home Ministry has approved the renaming of Manduadih railway station in Uttar Pradesh as 'Banaras'.
- The Uttar Pradesh government had sent a request for renaming the railway station in Varanasi district.
- A 'no objection certificate' has been issued for changing the name of the Manduadih railway station to 'Banaras'.
- The home ministry considers proposals for name change according to the existing guidelines in consultations with agencies concerned.
- It gives its approval to any proposal for change of name of any place after taking no-objections from the Ministry of Railways, Department of Posts and Survey of India.

Indian Railways introduces drone-based surveillance system to protect railway assets

- The Mumbai Division of Central Railway zone has recently procured two Ninja UAVs.
- For drone flying, surveillance as well as for its maintenance, a team of four Railway Protection Force (RPF) staff, Mumbai has been trained.
- These drones are capable of Real Time Tracking, Video Streaming, as well as they can be operated on Automatic Fail Safe Mode. The extensive use of drones has been planned by the RPF for the purpose of Railway security.
- RPF has procured as many as nine drones at a cost of Rs 31.87 lakh at Central Railway, South Eastern Railway, South Western Railway, Modern Coaching Factory, and Raebareli.
- The drone-based surveillance system acts as an "Eye in the sky" and monitors the whole area.

Union Cabinet gives a go ahead to setting up of National Recruitment Agency, to benefit job seeking youth of the country

- The Cabinet has approved the setting up of the National Recruitment Agency (NRA) to conduct Common Eligibility Test. Union Minister Prakash Javadekar termed it as a historic decision which will benefit job seeking youth of the country. He stated, this fulfills the long standing demand of the youth of the country.
- The National Recruitment Agency will conduct a Common Eligibility Test to screen and shortlist candidates for the Group B and C (non-technical) posts. The NRA will have representatives from the Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Finance, SSC, RRB and IBPS. Special focus on creating examination infrastructure in the 117 Aspirational Districts would go a long way in affording access to candidates at a place nearer to where they reside.
- The CET score of the candidate shall be valid for a period of three years from the date of declaration of the result. The best of the valid scores shall be deemed to be the current score of the candidate. There shall be no restriction on the number of attempts to be taken by a candidate to appear in the CET subject to the upper age limit. Relaxation in the upper age limit shall be given to candidates of SC/ST/OBC and other categories as per the extant policy of the Government.
- Candidates would have the facility of registering on a common portal and give a choice of Centres. Government has sanctioned a sum of 1517.57 crore rupees for the National Recruitment Agency. The expenditure will be undertaken over a period of three years. National Recruitment Agency will ensure transparency and ease in recruitment process, both for the candidate and the recruiting organisation. CET scores can be shared with Central and State Governments, PSUs, private sector thus reducing recruitment costs of these organisations.

Other approvals:

- The Cabinet which met under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister also approved a proposal for leasing out three airports of the Airports Authority of India through Public Private Partnership. Union Minister Prakash Javadekar stated, the three airports are Jaipur, Guwahati and Thiruvananthapuram.
- Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved Fair and Remunerative Price of sugarcane payable by sugar mills for the sugar season 2020-21 at 285 rupees per quintal for a basic recovery rate of 10 per cent.
- CCEA also approved one-time relaxation to Power Finance Corporation and Rural Electrification Corporation for extending loans to DISCOMs above limits of working capital cap of 25 percent of last year's revenues under Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana.

Government has launched schemes for development of three Bulk Drug Parks and four Medical Device Parks across the country

- Department of Pharmaceuticals has taken several measures to create suitable environment for development of domestic capacity in the pharma sector.
- India's Pharma Industry is an asset not just for India but for the entire world. It has played a leading role in reducing the cost of medicines especially for developing countries.'
- CII's 12th MedTech Global Summit Charting the MedTech route to AtmaNirbhar Bharat inaugurated by Union Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers Shri. D.V. Sadananda Gowda.
- Government has launched schemes for development of three Bulk Drug Parks and four Medical Device Parks across the country. Apart from increasing Central assistance for development of common infrastructure facilities in the parks.
- Union Government will also extend Production Linked Incentive (PLI) to manufacturers of bulk drugs and medical devices in these parks.

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh virtually releasing a book on Cancer edited by noted Oncologist Dr Ashok Vaid

- Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh, who is himself a known Diabetologist and medical professional, released a book on Cancer edited by noted Oncologist and Padma Shree recipient, Dr Ashok K. Vaid.
- Over the last two decades there had been a significant shift from communicable diseases to non-communicable diseases with an upsurge in disorders like Diabetes Mellitus, hypertension, Coronary Heart Disease and Cancer.
- The prevalence of Cancer has rapidly increased across the country and has begun to affect different organs. For example, while in Jammu & Kashmir, particularly in the Valley, Gastrointestinal and Lung Cancers are more prevalent, in the North Eastern Region Cancers of head and neck take the highest toll.

Dr Harsh Vardhan launches interactive first-of-its-kind video game 'Corona Fighters' to spread awareness

- Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan has launched an interactive first-of-its-kind game on COVID-19, the Corona Fighters. The Minister also launched two new videos urging adherence to key COVID Appropriate Behaviours.
- Dr. Harsh Vardhan stated that the game presents a new and extremely creative way to teach people the right tools and behaviours to fight the Covid-19 pandemic. He stated that the game was designed to influence the players' actions in the real world, reminding them to take the right precautions and escape infection.
- The Minister also recollected his experience with the Polio Abhiyaan which was transformed into a social movement through people's participation and support and contribution of many film industry professionals.

Arjun Munda virtually launches 'TRIFOOD' Project in Raigad, Jagdalpur

- Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda virtually launched the tertiary processing centres under the 'TRIFOOD' project at Raigad in Maharashtra and Jagdalpur in Chhattisgarh. The TRIFOOD Project aims at enhancing the income of tribals through better utilization and value addition to the Minor Forest Produces (MFPs) collected by the tribal forest gatherers. 'TRIFOOD' project is being implemented by Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED).
- Under the project, two Minor Forest Produce (MFP) processing units will be set up. The unit at Raigad in Maharashtra will be used for value addition to traditional tribal drink mahua, amla, custard apple and jamun and will also produce mahua drink, amla juice, candy, jamun juice and custard apple pulp.
- The multi-commodity processing centre at Jagdalpur in Chhattisgarh, will be used for the processing of commodities like mahua, amla, honey, cashew, tamarind, ginger, garlic and other fruits and vegetables.

Niti Aayog suggests linking sugarcane prices to sugar rates
- Niti Aayog task force has recommended linking sugarcane prices to sugar rates.
- The report of the panel on "Sugarcane and Sugar Industry", headed by Niti Aayog Member (Agriculture) Ramesh Chand, was finalised in March 2020.
- The task force feels that linking sugarcane prices to sugar prices will prevent the problem of cane arrears and keep the sugar industry in sound financial health.
- The task force has also recommended the central government to give incentive to sugarcane farmers to shift to another crops.

Shri Ram Vilas Paswan launches online system of Registration and Renewal for Jewellers and online system of recognition and renewal of Assaying and Hallmarking (A&H) Centers
- The Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution Shri Ram Vilas Paswan virtually launched the online system of Registration and Renewal of Jewellers and online system of recognition and renewal of the Assaying and Hallmarking Centres.
- This online system can be accessed through Bureau of Indian Standards web portal www.manakonline.in.
- Hallmarking of precious metals will be mandatory from 1st June 2021.

India's longest river ropeway connecting Guwahati and North Guwahati over Brahmaputra river inaugurated
- In Assam, the longest river ropeway of the country is inaugurated connecting Guwahati and North Guwahati. Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and Guwahati Development Department Minister Siddhartha Bhattacharya inaugurated the 1.8- kilometre long ropeway service. The ropeway has been operated from Kachari Ghat in Guwahati to Dol Govinda temple in North Guwahati.
- The ropeway has been built as per state-of -the-art technology following relevant norms. The opening of ropeway service would reduce the travel time between Guwahati and North Guwahati as well as boost the tourism sector.
- The distance is to be covered in seven to eight minutes . The ropeway service would provide opportunities to see the landscapes of Guwahati city, mighty Brahmaputra and the Umananda Temple on Peacock island among others.

Govt activates Aadhaar authentication for new GST registration
- Government has activated Aadhaar authentication for new goods and services tax (GST) registration to enhance ease of doing business. For those opting for Aadhaar authentication, new GST registration will be issued within three working days and will not need to wait for physical verification.
- However, those not opting for Aadhaar authentication will be granted it only after physical verification of the place of business or documentary verification which may take up to 21 working days or more.

- Government stated Aadhaar authentication for new registration will substantially enhance ease of doing businesses for genuine businesses. It stated, the move will facilitate genuine and honest taxpayers while at the same time keeping the fake and fraudulent entities away from GST.
- The facility of quick approval of GST registration through Aadhaar authentication can be availed by all Indian citizens.

Centre Forms National Council for Transgenders to Formulate Policies Aimed at Equality & Participation

- The Centre has constituted the National Council for Transgender Persons to formulate policies, programmes, legislation and projects regarding members of the community for achieving equality and full participation by them.
- The council was established by the Centre in exercise of the powers conferred by the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019, according to a gazette notification issued.
- According to the Act, the functions of the council include advising the Centre on the formulation of policies, programmes, legislation and projects with respect to transgender persons; monitoring and evaluating the impact of policies and programmes designed for achieving equality and full participation of transgender persons.
- The other functions of the council are to review and coordinate the activities of all the departments of government and other governmental and non-governmental organisations dealing with matters relating to transgender persons, to redress the grievances of transgender persons, and to perform such other functions as may be prescribed by the Centre.
- The council have representatives from community members, five states and 10 central departments. Its chairperson will be the Union Minister of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment while the vice-chairperson will be the junior minister in the ministry.

Validity of motor vehicle documents extended till Dec 31 amid Covid-19 pandemic

- Central government extended the validity of expiring driving licenses and motor vehicle documents till December 31 in the wake of coronavirus crisis.
- This is the third such extension after the earlier advisories on March 30 and June 9.
- "Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has decided to extend the validity of Fitness, Permits, Licenses, Registration or other documents under Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 and Central Motor Vehicle Rules, 1989 till the 31st of December 2020," a release from the ministry stated.
- "The Ministry had earlier issued advisories on 30th March and 9th June this year regarding extension of validity of the documents related to Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 and Central Motor Vehicle Rules, 1989. It was advised that the validity of Fitness, Permit (all types), License, Registration or any other concerned document(s) may be treated to be valid till 30th of September 2020," the statement added.

CMIA partners with UNDP to set up help desk for MSMEs

- Chamber of Marathwada Industries and Agriculture (CMIA) has partnered with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to establish Covid-19 help desk to facilitate Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).
- The help desk will provide various information on government safety guidelines, regulatory norms and government Covid-19 response schemes and support measures.
- 'Covid-19 help desk will support MSMEs through in-person and phone consultation. It will offer advisory services on scaling operations and bridging the skill gap. It will also facilitate linkages to financial institutions and government departments," stated CMAI.
- The helpdesk will facilitate the recruitment of skilled workforce requirements based on the demand of MSMEs in partnership with state skill development missions and other relevant government departments/support agencies.

- "The help desk will host regular webinars, consultation and interactive sessions for MSMEs to address and alleviate the Covid-19 related business challenges, clarify their queries, promotion of the business, financial guidance with necessary linkage to get support from the government and other stakeholders," the statement added.
- The help desk will be active till January 2021. MSMEs are requested to reach out to CMIA for their relevant jobs and apprenticeship opportunities available with the industries with skill requirements, location, qualification, experience etc and challenges faced by MSMEs.

Businesses with annual turnover of up to Rs 40 lakh are GST exempt: Finance Ministry

- The Ministry of Finance said that businesses with an annual turnover of up to Rs 40 lakhs are exempt from GST and those with a turnover up to Rs 1.5 crore can opt for the Composition Scheme and pay only one per cent tax.
- Earlier, the GST exemption limit was Rs 20 lakh.
- The Ministry also informed that significant relief has been extended to the construction sector, particularly the housing sector. It has now been placed at the 5% rate. GST on affordable housing has been reduced to 1%.
- Out of a total of about 230 items in the 28% slab, about 200 items have been shifted to lower slabs.

Ministry of Culture announces 7 new circles of Archaeological Survey of India

- The Ministry of Culture has announced 7 new circles of Archaeological Survey of India, ASI.
- New circles have been created in Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, West Bengal and Gujarat. Mr Patel stated, Trichy, Raiganj, Rajkot, Jabalpur, Jhansi and Meerut have been announced as new circles.
- The Minister stated, in a large state like Tamil Nadu which has thousands of temples and glorious memories of the Chola kings, Trichy has been made a new circle along with the circle of Chennai. He stated, Hampi city in Karnataka is a place of international importance from the point of view of archaeological heritage therefore the Hampi Sub-Circle now has been made a new full fledged circle.
- In West Bengal, Raiganj has been made as a new circle along with Kolkata, which will eliminate geographical inconvenience. In Gujarat, Rajkot has been announced as a new circle along with Vadodara. Mr Patel stated, Jabalpur has been announced as a new circle along with Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh.
- This will include the monuments from Jabalpur, Rewa, Shahdol and Sagar divisions. The Minister also informed that Jhansi in Bundelkhand and Meerut in western UP have been announced as two new circles along with Lucknow and Agra in Uttar Pradesh. The Minister stated, earlier there were 29 ASI circles across the country.

NHA releases Draft Health Data Management Policy of National Digital Health Mission

- The National Health Authority has released the Draft Health Data Management Policy of the National Digital Health Mission in the public domain.
- The draft of the policy has been released on the official website of National Digital Health Mission and will be available for public comments and feedback till 3rd of next month.
- The policy is in the draft stage and will be finalized after receiving suggestions from members of the general public.
- Dr. Indu Bhushan, Chief Executive Officer, National Health Authority stated, the Draft Health Data Management Policy is the maiden step in realizing NDHM's guiding principle of "Security and Privacy by Design" for the protection of individuals' data privacy.
- It encompasses various aspects pertaining to health data like data privacy, consent management, data sharing and protection.
- One of the main objectives of this draft policy is to provide adequate guidance and to set out a framework for the secure processing of personal and sensitive personal data of individuals who are a part of the national digital health ecosystem.

DoPPW to integrate e- Pension Payment Order with Digi Locker

- The Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare, DoPPW has decided to integrate the electronic Pension Payment Order, e-PPO generated through PFMS application of Controller General of Accounts, with Digi Locker, to enhance Ease of Living of Central Government Civil Pensioners.
- This system will enable any Pensioner to obtain an instant print-out of the latest copy of their PPO, from their Digi Locker account.
- This initiative will create a permanent record of their PPO in their Digi Locker and at the same time eliminate delays in reaching the PPO to new Pensioners, as well as the necessity of handing over a physical copy.
- This was a target set to be accomplished for Civil Ministries by 2021-22, which the Department completed ahead of time in view of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions stated, it has come to the notice of the Department of Pension and Pensioners' Welfare that several Pensioners, over a period of time, misplace the original copies of their PPO which is a very important original document.
- The facility has been created with Bhavishya' software, which is a single window platform for Pensioners, right from the start of their Pension processing, till the end of the process.
- Bhavishya will now provide an option to retiring employee, to link their Digi-locker account with their Bhavishya account and obtain their e-PPO in a seamless manner.

Mission COVID Suraksha': Govt mulls mission with Rs 3,000-crore corpus for development, manufacture of Covid-19 vaccine

- The government has proposed setting up a 'Mission COVID Suraksha' with a corpus of Rs 3,000 crore to accelerate the development and manufacture of safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines in the country. Another important aim of the mission will be to make the Covid-19 vaccine easily available to the public at affordable rates, the report added.
- The mission will aim to quicken the development of at least six Coronavirus vaccine candidates and ensure that they are licensed and introduced in the market for emergency use at the earliest.
- The proposed mission that will focus on end-to-end vaccine development from clinical trial stage to regulatory facilitation to manufacturing, will be piloted by the Department of Biotechnology.
- As per the draft proposal, the Mission COVID Suraksha is proposed to have a timeline of 12-18 months and a budget of approximately Rs 3,000 crore.
- Also, as per the approval of the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (NTAGI), the mission will focus on efficient ways to introduce the vaccine in public health systems of the Ministry of Health post to combat further spread of COVID-19 infection.

Social Justice Ministry to launch mental health rehabilitation helpline "Kiran"

- The Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry has launched a toll-free helpline to enable access to mental health resources.
- The "Kiran" mental health rehabilitation helpline number, 1800-599-0019, will provide callers "support for early screening, first-aid, psychological support, distress management, mental well-being, preventing deviant behaviours, psychological crisis management etc.,
- The helpline will offer services in 13 languages.

- It targets to resolve issues of people across the country experiencing stress, anxiety, depression, panic attack, adjustment disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse, suicidal thoughts, pandemic-induced psychological issues and mental health emergency.

IIT-Hyderabad start-up launches world's most affordable respirator mask

- With a vision to provide high-quality protection, especially in the healthcare industry and its frontline workers, USafe's US9 Respirator Mask has 98.03% PM0.3 filtration rate and 99.7% bacterial filtration rate (better than N95 standards).
- The home-grown innovation in tune with the 'Make in India' and 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' aspirations, US9 Respirator Mask, has been designed, developed and produced in collaboration with Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad under the mentorship of Prof Surya Kumar and Prof Renu John.

Govt approves 78 new routes under Udan scheme; focus on North East, islands

- Centre has approved 78 new additional routes to be awarded under the fourth round of the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS)- 'Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik' (UDAN) focusing on boosting connectivity in the North East, hilly states and islands.
- The Udan is a regional airport development scheme aimed at enhancing connectivity to remote and regional areas of the country and making air travel affordable.
- The scheme is a key component of Centre's National Civil Aviation Policy led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and launched in June 2016.
- "Special boost is being given to connectivity in North East with routes from Guwahati to Tezu, Rupsi, Tezpur, Passighat, Misa and Shillong. People will be able to fly from Hissar to Chandigarh, Dehradun and Dharmshala under these UDAN 4 routes.
- Routes from Varanasi to Chitrakoot and Shravasti have also been approved. Agatti, Kavaratti and Minicoy islands of Lakshadweep have also been connected by the new routes of UDAN 4.0," the ministry said in a statement.

Piyush Goyal launches GIS-enabled national land bank portal for details on industrial belts

- Commerce and Industry minister Piyush Goyal virtually launched a first-of-its kind GIS-enabled national land bank portal , which will help investors zero in on land located in various states for potential projects.
- Investors will also get access to details of logistics, land, rail & air connectivity, tax incentives, drainage system, power supply and raw material availability from the portal on various industrial belts.
- Extensive information about industrial belts in six states is available on the portal.
- The National GIS-enabled Land Bank System (https://iis.ncog.gov.in/parks) is being developed by integrating the Industrial Information System (IIS) with state GIS (Geographic Information System) to provide details about State Land banks.
- The information available on the portal includes forest, drainage; raw material heat maps (agricultural, horticulture, mineral layers); details of logistics, land, rail & air connectivity, tax incentives, drainage system, power supply and raw material availability on various industrial belts.

Government launches contest "Chunauti" to promote startups in small towns

- Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Ravi Shankar Prasad has launched "Chunauti"- Next Generation Startup Challenge Contest to further boost startups and software products with special focus on Tier-II towns of the country. The government has earmarked a budget of over 95 crore rupees over a period of three years for this programme. It aims at identifying around three hundred startups working in identified areas and providing them seed funds of upto 25 lakh rupees and other facilities.

- Under this challenge the Ministry of Electronics and IT will invite startups in the areas of work including Edu Tech, Agri Tech and FinTech solutions for masses, Supply Chain and Logistic management, Infrastructure, Medical Healthcare as well as jobs and skilling.

- The Ministry stated, the startups selected through Chunauti will be provided various support from the Government. Electronics and IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad urged the young, talented innovators of India to come forward and avail benefits of the Chunauti challenge of Government and create new software products and apps.

Indian Railways set to meet all it's energy needs of over 33 billion units by 2030

- Indian Railways is set to meet all it's energy needs of more than 33 billion units by 2030.

- The current annual requirement is about 21 billion units. Railways Minister Piyush Goyal stated, Railways have developed a mega plan for installing solar plants of 20 Gigawatt capacity by utilizing its vacant land by 2030.

- He stated, the use of solar power will accelerate the mission to achieve conversion of Indian Railways to Net Zero Carbon Emission Railway.

- He stated, Railway is committed to utilize solar energy for meeting its traction power requirement and become a complete Green mode of transportation.

- Railway has adopted a multi-pronged approach towards decarbonization which will be fulfilled by the solar projects, making it the first transport organization to be energy self-sufficient. This will help in making Indian Railways green as well as Atma-Nirbhar.

- The Minister pointed out that Indian Railways will extend all support to the developers for installing solar power plants on Railway's vacant un-encroached land.

Centre to develop three Bamboo Clusters in Jammu, Katra and Samba areas of J&K

- Minister of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), Dr Jitendra Singh has stated that three Bamboo Clusters will be developed in Jammu, Katra and Samba areas for making of Bamboo basketry, Agarbatti and Bamboo Charcoal. He stated it will provide direct employment to nearly 25 thousand people.

- Dr Singh stated, apart from this a Mega Bamboo Industrial Park at Ghati near Jammu and Bamboo Technology Training Centre will also come up in the region. The Minister stated this while addressing a review meeting of the Ministry of DoNER on further steps to be taken for augmenting infrastructure and promoting entrepreneurship in the Bamboo sector in the region after the signing of MoU.

- Dr Singh stated, a team from his Ministry will soon visit Jammu and explore a field training programme for Bamboo farming in the region. The Minister stated, of late Bamboo is being used in low cost housing and as construction material. Bamboo Awareness camps will be organized in different parts of the country in this regard.

UTIITSL ties up with NHA to provide print services for PMJAY e-cards

- State-owned UTI Infrastructure Technology and Services Ltd (UTIITSL) stated it has signed a pact with the National Health Authority (NHA) to provide the printing services of e-cards for the beneficiaries of the Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY). UTIITSL will provide printing services and support the beneficiary identification and verification process in the issuance of e-cards to beneficiaries of the AB-PMJAY scheme, the company stated in a statement.

- Around 53 crore beneficiaries under AB-PMJAY are eligible for an annual health cover of Rs 5 lakh to avail cashless secondary and tertiary healthcare anywhere in the country in its empanelled healthcare providers. "UTIITSL will leverage its existing pan-India network to reach at the ground level to identify beneficiaries under the AB-PMJAY scheme," UTIITSL MD and CEO Vijay Kumar Jain stated.

- He also added that it will also assist them in the filling up of online validation process for beneficiary identification system of AB-PMJAY through its centers across various locations in the country. As of now, there are 23,000 public and private hospitals for the AB-PMJAY scheme.

<p style="text-align:center; color:red">Revision Points</p>

Portfolio	Union Minister	Constituency
Ministry of personnel, public grievances and pensions	Narendra Modi	Varanasi
Ministry of Defence	Rajnath Singh	Lucknow
Ministry of Home Affairs	Amit Shah	Gandhinagar
Ministry of Road Transport and Highways & Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium enterprises	Nitin Gadkari	Nagpur
Ministry of Chemical and Fertilizers	DV Sadananda Gowda	Bangalore North
Ministry of Finance & Ministry of Corporate Affairs	Nirmala Sitharaman	Rajya Sabha
Ministry of Consumer affairs, food and public distribution	Ram Vilas Paswan	NA
Ministry of agriculture and farmers welfare, Ministry of Rural Development & Ministry of Panchayati Raj	Narendra Singh Tomar	Morena
Ministry of Law and Justice, Ministry of communications & Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology	Ravi Shankar Prasad	Patna Sahib
Ministry of Food Processing Industries	Harsimrat Kaur Badal	Bathinda
Ministry of Social justice and empowerment	Thaawar Chand Gehlot	RS
Ministry of External Affairs	Dr Subrahmanyam Jaishankar	RS (Gujarat)
Ministry of Human Resource Development	Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank'	Haridwar
Ministry of Tribal Affairs	Arjun Munda	Khunti
Ministry of Women and child Development & Ministry of Textiles	Smriti Zubin Irani	Amethi
Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Ministry of Science and Technology & Ministry of Earth Sciences	Dr Harsh Vardhan	Chandni Chowk
Ministry of environment, forest and climate change & Ministry of	Prakash Javadekar	Rajya Sabha

Information and Broadcasting Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprise		
Ministry of Railways & Ministry of Commerce and Industry	Piyush Goyal	Rajya Sabha
Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas & Ministry of Steel	Dharmendra Pradhan	Rajya Sabha
Ministry of Minority Affairs	Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi	Rajya Sabha
Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, Ministry of coal & Ministry of Mines	Pralhad Joshi	Dharwad, Karnataka
Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship	Dr Mahendra Nath Pandey	Chandauli
Ministry of Animal Husbandry, dairying and fisheries	Giriraj Singh	Begusarai

Important International News

ADB signs Dollar 200 million financing deal with Reliance for power plant in Bangladesh

- The **Asian Development Bank** (ADB) has signed a dollar 200 million financing deal with the Reliance **Bangladesh LNG and Power Limited** (RBLPL) to build and operate a **718 megawatt** combined-cycle gas-fired power plant in Bangladesh.
- A combined-cycle power plant is a relatively more efficient way of producing electricity. It uses both a gas and a steam turbine together to produce up to 50 percent more electricity from the same fuel than a traditional simple-cycle plant.
- The financing deal has two components of dollar 100 million each. While ADB will provide dollar 100 million, it will also administer the other part worth dollar 100 million from the Leading Asia's Private Infrastructure Fund (LEAP).
- LEAP was set up in 2016 with a dollar 1.5 billion capital commitment for the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).
- The plant is proposed to be located on land allotted by Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB), in Meghnaghat, Narayanganj District near Dhaka.

Bangladesh Receives $202 million from World Bank to Increase Food Security for 4.5 Million People

- The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors approved $202 million in additional financing for the Modern Food Storage Facilities Project to increase the storage capacity of Bangladesh's national strategic grain reserves by 535,500 tons for 4.5 million households.
- The project is helping Bangladesh address food insecurity in challenging times, such as frequent climate-induced disasters or crisis situations like the current COVID-19 pandemic.
- It is supporting the construction of eight public modern grain storage steel silo complexes for rice and wheat in eight different districts.
- On top of current construction work taking place in Ashuganj, Madhupur and Mymensingh, the additional financing will support the construction of rice silos in Dhaka, Narayanganj and Barishal, and wheat silos will be built in Chattogram and Maheshwarpasha.
- The additional financing will increase the grain reserve available to households to meet their post-disaster needs and improve the efficiency of grain storage management through an online Food Stock and Market Monitoring System

(FSMMS). The project will also create new job opportunities, especially for women, in the operation and management of silos.

- The project will reduce grain storage and handing losses in public storage facilities by at least 50 percent and extend the nutritional value of grain for up to 2 years, instead of the current 6 months.
- The credit from the World Bank's International Development Association (IDA), which provides concessional financing, has a 30-year term, including a five-year grace period.

UAE becomes first country in Arab World to produce nuclear energy

- As the Barakah Nuclear Plant's 1st Unit got operational, UAE became the first country in the Arab World to produce nuclear energy.
- The new plant is part of the UAE's graph to become less reliant on oil and gas, the current source of the vast majority of its energy. UAE is among the world's biggest fossil fuels producers.
- Barakah plant situated in the Al Dhafrah region of Abu Dhabi started producing heat, the Emirates Nuclear Energy Corporation stated. The plant, powered by South Korean technology , hopes to produce 5.6 gigawatts of electricity and supply up to 25% of the UAE's electricity needs, the corporation stated.

ISA amends framework agreement to enable UN member states to join grouping

- In a major development and push to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of achieving universalization of membership of the International Solar Alliance (ISA), the requisite number of member countries have given the go-ahead.
- After ratification to the amendment of the ISA framework, all the Member States of the United Nations will now be able to join the International Solar Alliance, including those countries which are beyond the Tropics.
- The International Solar Alliance was launched jointly by Prime Minister Modi and the President of France during COP21 in Paris. The alliance aims to contribute to the implementation of the Paris Climate Agreement through rapid and massive deployment of solar energy.
- It also brings together countries to provide a collective response to the main common obstacles to the massive deployment of solar energy in terms of technology, finance and capacity.

Global Economy Could Lose $108 Billion In Remittances: ADB

- Global remittances will fall by 108.6 billion dollars if the Covid-19 economic impact persists throughout the year, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) stated.
- This is equivalent to 18.3 per cent decline from what would have been expected without the impact of Covid-19, wrote economists James Villafuerte and Aiko Kikkawa Takenaka in a blogpost.
- Remittance receipts in Asia and the Pacific will fall by 54.3 billion dollars, equivalent to 19.8 per cent of remittances in 2018.
- By sub-region, remittances in South Asia are expected to fall furthest by 28.6 billion dollars (24.7 per cent of 2018 receipts) followed by remittances to Central Asia (3.4 billion dollars, 23.8 per cent), southeast Asia (11.7 billion dollars, 18.6 per cent) and east Asia ex-China and Japan (1.7 billion dollars, 16.2 per cent).
- Remittances to the Pacific will also fall (267 million dollars, 13.2 per cent), stated the ADB economists.
- The majority of the decline in remittance flows to the region is explained by a 22.5 billion dollars fall in remittances from the Middle East which accounts for 41.4 per cent of total remittance loss in Asia. This is followed by a 20.5 billion dollars slump in remittances from the United States (37.9 per cent of total).

- The fall in remittances from the European Union and the United Kingdom accounts for 6.3 per cent of the total or 3.4 billion dollars. The decline from Russian Federation amounts to 2.1 billion dollars of which 2 billion dollars reflects the decline in remittances going to Central Asia.
- By percentage, the Middle East and the Russian Federation experienced the sharpest decline -- over a third -- primarily reflecting the effects of low demand and oil prices on remittances.

U.K. to issue coin to honour Gandhiji

- Chancellor of the exchequer Rishi Sunak's office confirmed that Mahatma Gandhi's image on a coin is being considered as part of efforts to celebrate achievements of non-white individuals such as Indian-origin British spy Noor Inayat Khan and Jamaican British nurse Mary Seacole.
- Sunak has written to the Royal Mint Advisory Committee (RMAC) that recommends themes and designs of coins, supporting a campaign called "We Too Built Britain," which seeks representation of non-white icons on British currency.
- The proposal to put Gandhi's image on a British coin was made by former chancellor Sajid Javid in October 2019. If the proposal now becomes reality, it would make the Indian independence hero the first non-White person to feature on a British coin.
- The chancellor's office confirmed that the RMAC is currently considering a coin to commemorate Gandhi, adding that Sunak is keen that British coins commemorate the work of the previous generations who have served the UK and nations that form the Commonwealth.
- Campaigners previously sought Noor Inayat Khan's image on a new £50 note, but the Bank of England announced that the new series to enter circulation in 2021 will have the image of computer pioneer and code-breaker Alan Turing.

National Bank of Bahrain selects Infosys Finacle for transformation of transaction banking business

- National Bank of Bahrain and Infosys Finacle announced the bank's decision to adopt the Finacle Cash Management Suite to digitally transform its transaction banking business.
- NBB will be implementing the Finacle Liquidity Management Platform, and upgrading its existing Finacle Corporate Online Banking platform to a full-fledged Digital Engagement Suite - with the latest versions of the Finacle Corporate Online and Mobile Banking solutions, along with the Finacle Digital Engagement Hub.

India extends Line of Credit worth 18 million US dollars to Maldives for expansion of fishing facilities at MIFCO

- India has extended Line of Credit worth 18 million US dollars to the Government of Maldives for the expansion of fishing facilities at Maldives Industrial Fisheries Company (MIFCO).
- The project envisages investment in fish collection and storage facilities and the setting up of a tuna cooked plant and fishmeal plant. It is part of the 800 million US dollars line of credit offered by India with repayment tenor of 20 years and a 5-year moratorium.
- This project will benefit the Maldives in accessing new markets, increasing fish collection and storage capacity, along with creating greater value addition and additional sources of income.

UNESCO recognises two Odisha villages as Tsunami Ready

- In a first two coastal villages of Odisha have been recognised as being "Tsunami Ready" by UNESCO for their overall preparedness to face the calamity.
- Odisha became the first state in the country to have such villages and the country the first in the Indian Ocean region to achieve the honour from the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO.
- The two coastal are Venkatraipur (Boxipalli) village of Rangeilunda block in Ganjam district and Noliasahi village of Ersama block in Jagatsinghpur district.

- The certificate of recognition will be handed over to the communities of Venkatraipur and Noliasahi in a virtual event.
- Jena, who is also the managing director of Odisha State Disaster management Authority, will receive the certificate from UNESCO.
- It will make Odisha a role model for tsunami preparedness. With this award, the state is motivated to make the 326 villages and urban local bodies tsunami ready in one year's time.

Bangladesh to construct memorial for Indian soldiers martyred in 1971 liberation war

- Bangladesh will construct a memorial for the Indian soldiers martyred during the country's liberation war in 1971. The memorial will be constructed coinciding with the 50th anniversary of the liberation of Bangladesh, stated the Minister of Liberation War Affairs of Bangladesh AKM Muzammel Haq.
- Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Muzammel Haq recalled the support of the government and people of India during the Bangladesh liberation war against Pakistan in 1971.
- High Commissioner of India in Bangladesh Riva Ganguly Das had called on the Minister for Liberation War Affairs and discussed issues of mutual interest and the upcoming 50 year anniversary of Liberation War.
- She stated the two countries are working as development partners and a lot of work has been done in the last few years to resolve several long standing issues like land-border issue among others.

India, Maldives ink contract for development of five eco-tourism zones in Addu atoll of island nation

- India and Maldives signed a contract for development of five eco-tourism zones in Addu atoll of the island nation.
- Maldives foreign secretary Abdul Ghafoor, MPs representing Addu city and Indian high commissioner Sunjay Sudhir participated in the ceremony.
- These eco tourism zones are part of grant projects being implemented under the High-Impact Community Development project (HICDP) scheme which involves a total grant assistance of 5.5 million US dollars to the Maldives. Currently, there are 9 such high-impact projects being implemented in the Maldives.
- High Commissioner Sunjay Sudhir, in his remarks, highlighted that developing high-impact assets, building capacities within the local councils and supporting of the local island economy are most important objectives of these projects.
- He recalled that contracts for the other three HICDP projects in Addu, relating to setting up of fish-processing plants, were awarded last month.

Russian President Vladimir Putin announces world's first COVID-19 vaccine

- Russian President Vladimir Putin launched the country's first coronavirus vaccine, touted as the first in the world too. News agency Reuters reported that Putin's daughter received a shot of the vaccine. Earlier, it was reported that the country would register its vaccine candidate on , August 12.
- The country has registered the world's first coronavirus vaccine, amid widespread concerns about the rapidly developed vaccine's safety.
- The Health Ministry announced that it plans to begin mass production in September and launch a mass vaccination drive in October. The vaccine developed by the state-run Gamaleya research institute entered phase 3 clinical trials.

EU to give 1.65 million euro to flood hit people in South Asia

- The European Union stated it is providing 1.65 million euro in humanitarian aid in response to severe flooding that has affected South Asia-most notably Bangladesh, India and Nepal.
- The funding comes on top of the 1.8 million euro announced earlier this year to support families affected by a series of disasters, including Cyclone Amphan that ravaged India and Bangladesh in May.

- In a statement, EU's European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) stated, this brings the total EU support to victims of disasters in the region to 3.45 million euro.
- A further 5 lakh euro will be used in India to provide food and livelihood assistance, emergency relief supplies, and water and sanitation services.

Bangladesh to get largest ever dollar 3.1 billion loan package from Japan

- Japan has signed its largest ever loan package worth dollar 3.1 billion for Bangladesh. The embassy of Japan stated that the loan under its Official Development Assistance (ODA) will be given for seven projects of Bangladesh under concessional terms.
- The loan will cover the construction of Jamuna railway bridge in parallel to the existing Bangabandhu Bridge, expansion of the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Dhaka Mass Rapid Transit Development Projects and Chattogram-Cox's Bazar Highway improvement project among the seven projects.
- The loan carries an interest rate of 0.65 percent with a repayment period of 30 years including initial 10 years as grace period.
- Japan has been the single largest bilateral donor for Bangladesh since 2012. The total amount of its aid as Yen Loan has reached USD 22 billion (commitment base).

India extends USD 1 million assistance to Antigua, Barbuda to combat COVID-19

- India has extended an assistance of USD 1 million to Antigua and Barbuda to combat the COVID-19 outbreak.
- This assistance is aimed at improving health infrastructure and capacities in Antigua and Barbuda.
- The same level of assistance, i.e. USD 1 million, has been offered to each Caribbean Community (CARICOM) country. CARICOM is a group of twenty developing countries in the Caribbean.
- This assistance of USD 1 million from India will be used for improving health infrastructure in Antigua and Barbuda, for procurement of life-saving medical supplies and equipment like ventilators, etc, the Indian High Commission to Guyana stated.
- Under this assistance, ventilators, full cover goggles, disposable impervious gowns, face shields, examination gloves and disposable masks were facilitated and these medical supplies have arrived at St. John's.
- The Government of Antigua and Barbuda's proposal for assistance and collaboration named 'Strengthening national Health capacities and reducing socio-economic and human development negative impacts of COVID19 crisis in Antigua and Barbuda' was processed under India-UNDP Fund managed by United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) and the guidelines of the Sustainable Development Goals, the High Commission stated

Abu Dhabi's Crown Prince Commits USD 25mn To Expand Unified Champion Schools To 6 Countries Including India

- Special Olympics Bharat announced that Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan has committed USD 25 million to expand Unified Champion Schools (UCS) to six countries -- India, Argentina, Egypt, Pakistan, Romania and Rwanda.
- The four-year project will play a critical role in making the Indian education system more inclusive by creating 120 Unified Champion Schools across 12 states.
- The initiative that encourages activation and empowerment of the youth resonated with the theme of the International Youth Day 2020, "Youth Engagement for Global Action" by empowering young people with and without intellectual disabilities to create lasting social change through inclusion in education.
- Recently, under the directives of Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, the UAE pledged USD 25 million to help fund the global expansion of the

inclusive education project; Unified Champion Schools (UCS), an initiative undertaken by the Special Olympics that will root the values of tolerance and inclusion in educational systems around the world, the Ambassador of UAE, stated.

India Announces $500-Million Package For Connectivity Project, Creation Of Air Travel Bubble With Maldives

- India announced a USD 500 million-package to the Maldives for the largest connectivity project in the island nation to connect Male with three neighbouring islands.
- The interaction which took place through video conference was part of regular high-level exchanges between India and Maldives, according to a statement by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).
- Jaishankar made the five announcements including a start of a direct cargo ferry service between India and Maldives and India's decision to support the Greater Male Connectivity Project (GMCP) in the Maldives through a financial package consisting of a grant of USD 100 million and a new Line of Credit of USD 400 million.
- Jaishankar noted that this will be the largest civilian infrastructure project in the Maldives, connecting Male with three neighbouring islands - Villingili, Gulhifahu and Thilafushi (new industrial zone) - by the construction of a bridge-and-causeway link spanning 6.7 km.

Donald Trump announces 'historic' peace deal between Israel, UAE

- US President Donald Trump announced Israel and the United Arab Emirates have agreed to a "full normalization" of relations, including re—establishing diplomatic ties.
- This historic diplomatic breakthrough will advance peace in the Middle East region and is a testament to bold diplomacy and vision of the three leaders and the courage of the United Arab Emirates and Israel to chart a new path that will unlock the great potential of the region," stated a joint statement by the United States, the UAE and Israel released by the White House.
- The leaders referred in the statement are President Trump, Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and UAE's Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammad Bin Zayed.
- "This is a truly historic moment,," Trump stated in Oval office. "Not since the Jordan-Israel peace treaty was signed more than than 25 years ago that so much progress has been made towards peace in the Middle East".
- The UAE and Israel will sign an agreement at the White House some time in the future, and will follow that up with other agreements over the next few weeks setting up embassies reciprocally and on investments, tourism, direct flights, security, telecommunications, technology, healthcare and culture.
- As a result of the the joint statement stated Israel will "suspend declaring sovereignty over areas outlined" in the President's Vision for Peace unveiled earlier and focus its efforts now on expanding ties with other countries in the Arab and Muslim world.
- As the US president stated, the joint statement the three countries are "confident that additional diplomatic breakthroughs with other nations are possible, and will work together to achieve this goal."

EU launches 1-mn-euro project in Maharashtra, Odisha for skilling women in housing sector

- To help drive change towards sustainable housing through empowering women, the European Union has launched a 1-million-euro project in four districts of Maharashtra and Odisha under which it will train 3,000 women in masonry, plumbing and electrical fitting, among others.
- The project is being implemented in Beed and Osmanabad districts of Maharashtra and the Dhenkanal and Jajpur districts 0f Odisha and is aimed at positively impacting two lakh families over the next three years.
- The project aims at targeting 3,000 women-led households in these four districts and is being implemented with the housing-focussed not-for-profit Habitat for Humanity India.

- He stated that despite the construction sector being the second-largest employer and women constituting a significant part of the workforce in the housing sector, they mostly work as unskilled labourers and face discrimination. Magis added that this scheme, called Project Nirmanshree, aims at ending this and making them entrepreneurs and active stakeholders.
- The Union is investing close to 1 million euros in the first phase and will increase the spending depending on the success of this project.
- The overall cost of the project is Rs 7.4 crore, of which 90 per cent or 1 million euro will be funded by the European Union and the remaining 10 per cent will be funded by his agency, Samuel stated.
- The project will also set up 50 social enterprises by supporting women through entrepreneurial trainings and skills

One in two youths subject to depression, anxiety, says ILO survey on effects of Covid-19

- Half of the world's youth population are subject to anxiety or depression-causing circumstances and more than a third are uncertain of their future career prospects due to the Covid-19 pandemic, according to a survey by the International Labour Organization.
- The ILO's 'Youth and Covid-19: impacts on jobs, education, rights and mental well-being' survey found that if urgent action is not taken, youths are at the risk of suffering severe and long-lasting adverse impacts from the pandemic.
- The Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted every aspect of our lives. Even before the onset of the crisis, the social and economic integration of young people was an ongoing challenge. Now, unless urgent action is taken, young people are likely to suffer severe and long-lasting impacts from the pandemic, the report stated.

UK launches £3 million innovation challenge fund in India to tackle COVID-19 and threat to environment

- The UK Government has launched a £3 million Innovation Challenge Fund to support scientists in academia and industry to tackle the most acute global challenges of our time – COVID-19 and the threat to our environment.
- The Fund invites tech innovators with connections to the AI-Data cluster in Karnataka and the Future Mobility cluster in Maharashtra to submit research and development proposals for tackling Covid-19 or which promote a greener planet.
- At least 12 grants up to £250,000 are expected to be awarded. Applicants are required to submit bids as an academia-industry consortium, ideally with an international member. The deadline for submitting two-page concept notes is 31 August and further details are available on the website," it stated.
- It may be recalled that in April 2018, the Indian and British Prime Ministers announced the formal creation of the UK-India Tech Partnership. The programme aims to bring together the best minds working in tech to unlock its future potential and deliver high-skilled jobs and economic growth in both countries. This is part of the UK Industrial strategy.
- These grants are part of a wider initiative under the Tech Partnership known as 'Tech Clusters'. Tech Clusters will support the development of Indian Tech Clusters by breaking down barriers to growth, including building international links. The intent is to capitalise on regional and sectoral strengths in order to drive innovation-led inclusive growth.

India, UAE agree to integrate financial transactions

- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and UAE's Minister of State for Financial Affairs Obaid Al Tayer have agreed to cooperate in the area of FinTech especially UPI and RuPay card, thereby integrating financial transactions between two economies.
- "FM mentioned that with NIP (National Infrastructure Pipeline), there are greater avenues between India & UAE to collaborate in the field of infrastructure investment. The leaders agreed to cooperate in area of FinTech especially UPI & RuPay card, thereby integrating financial transactions between two economies," the Ministry of Finance tweeted.

- Both the leaders also agreed to work together in aligning the interests of India and UAE in various international forums including G-20 and ITU (International Telecommunication Union), for achieving common goals.
- Earlier, Minister of External Affairs S Jaishankar co-chaired the 13th India-UAE Joint Commission Meeting on Trade, Economic and Technical Cooperation along with Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs in which the two sides reviewed the continuing growth of their cooperation.
- Both sides agreed to hold the next Session of the India-UAE Joint Commission Meeting in Abu Dhabi in 2021.

UAE connects first Arab nuclear plant to power grid

- The oil-rich United Arab Emirates announced that it has connected its Barakah nuclear power plant to the national grid in a new first for the Arab world.
- The milestone follows the successful start-up of the plant's first reactor at the end of last month and launches the UAE on the road to meeting 25% of its electricity needs from nuclear power.
- Barakah, which means "blessing" in Arabic, is a regional first. Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil exporter, has stated it plans to build up to 16 nuclear reactors, but the project has yet to materialise.
- Barakah was built by a consortium led by the Korea Electric Power Corporation at a cost of some $24.4 billion.
- More than 950 kilometres (nearly 600 miles) of 400 kV overhead power lines had to be built to link the plant to the grid. Barakah's other three reactors are stated to be almost ready for operation.
- Construction work has already been completed on Unit 2, and Units 3 and 4 are respectively 93% and 86% complete.
- The UAE lies just across the Gulf from Iran which has a nuclear power plant of its own outside the coastal city of Bushehr, as well as a controversial uranium enrichment programme.

41 lakh youth lost jobs in India due to COVID-19 impact, says ILO-ADB Report

- At least 41 lakh youth in the country lost jobs due to the Covid-19 pandemic while construction and farm sector workers account for the majority of job losses, according to a joint report by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), released.
- According to the report, employment prospects for youth in Asia and the Pacific are severely challenged due to the pandemic. Youth (15-24 years) will be hit harder than adults (25 and older) in the immediate crisis and risk-bearing higher longer-term economic and social costs, the report added.
- It further noted that in India, two-thirds of firm-level apprenticeships and three quarters of internships were completely interrupted during the pandemic. The report calls on governments to adopt urgent and targeted measures to generate jobs for the youth, keeping education and training on track, and to minimise future scarring of more than 660 million young people.
- Even before the COVID-19 crisis, youth in Asia and the Pacific faced challenges in the labour market. In 2019, the regional youth unemployment rate was 13.8 per cent, compared to three per cent for adults; and more than 160 million youth (24 per cent of the population) were not in employment, or education.

Senator Kamala Harris becomes first Indian American to accept Democratic Party nomination for Vice President post in US

- US Senator Kamala Harris has accepted her nomination for the US Vice Presidential candidate for Democratic Party. In her acceptance speech she stated that she was honoured to accept the nomination for Vice President of the United States.
- Taking the names of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor Kamala stated they have got to do the work to fulfill that promise of equal justice under law adding that none of us are free until all of us are free.

MEA in partnership with Foreign Ministry of Thailand organize 6th Round Table of AINTT

- The Ministry of External Affairs in partnership with the Foreign Ministry of Thailand has organized the 6th Round Table of ASEAN-India Network of Think Tanks (AINTT). The theme of the two day Round Table which was conducted through video conferencing was 'ASEAN-India: Strengthening Partnership in the Post COVID Era'.
- It was jointly inaugurated by External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar and the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Thailand Mr. Don Pramudwinai. ASEAN Secretary General Mr. Lim Jock Hoi also addressed the inaugural session.
- More than 400 people from academia, industry, government and diplomatic community attended the Round Table.
- The ASEAN-India Round Table comprising think tanks, policy makers, scholars, media and business representatives was established at the 7th ASEAN-India Summit in Thailand in 2009 to provide policy inputs to Governments on future direction of cooperation.

Mahatma Gandhi's Iconic Glasses Sold For $340,000 In UK

- A pair of gold-plated glasses worn by Mahatma Gandhi has sold in Britain for 260,000 pounds (about 288,000 euros, $340,000) equivalent to 2.5 crores in Indian rupees.
- The non-violent protestor gave the glasses to the vendor's uncle while he was working for British Petroleum in South Africa during the 1920s or 30s.
- The sale price smashed the original estimate of around 15,000 pounds.

WHO blasts 'vaccine nationalism' in last-ditch push against hoarding

- The WHO has an Aug. 31 deadline for wealthier nations to join the "COVAX Global Vaccines Facility" for sharing vaccine hopefuls with developing countries. Tedros stated he sent a letter to the WHO's 194 member states, urging participation.
- Nations that hoard possible Covid-19 vaccines while excluding others will deepen the pandemic, World Health Organization (WHO) chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus stated, issuing a last-ditch call for countries to join a global vaccine pact.
- The global health agency also raised concerns that the pandemic's spread was being driven now by younger people, many of whom were unaware they were infected, posing a danger to vulnerable groups.
- Tedros' push for nations to join COVAX comes as the European Union, Britain, Switzerland and the United States strike deals with companies testing prospective vaccines. Russia and China are also working on vaccines, and the WHO fears national interests could impede global efforts.

India, Uzbekistan Co-Chair First National Coordination Committee Meet; Discuss Trade, Investment

- India and Uzbekistan co-chaired the first National Coordination Committee meeting, wherein they held "fruitful" discussions on issues of bilateral interests such as Line of Credit (LoC) projects, trade and investment.
- The meeting was co-chaired by Minister of State for External Affairs V Muraleedharan and Uzbekistan Deputy Prime Minister Sardor Umurzakov.
- India and Uzbekistan have a modest bilateral trade turnover of over USD 300 million. Pharmaceuticals is a major area of both trade and investment by India. Medical tourism to India has increased sharply in the recent past.
- Notable Indian investments in Uzbekistan have been made by Indian companies in the fields of pharmaceuticals, amusement parks, automobile components and hospitality industry. A Joint Centre for Information Technology was set up in 2006 and upgraded in 2014.
- An IT Park in Tashkent, established with Indian assistance, was inaugurated in July last year.

World Health Organization declares Africa free of polio

- World Health Organization has declared Africa free of polio, a landmark in a decades-long campaign to eradicate the notorious disease around the world. This was announced by WHO Regional Director of Africa, Dr Matshidiso Moeti. She described this as a historic day for Africa.
- A commission led by Prof. Rose Gana Fomban Leke, has certified that no cases had occurred on the continent for the past four years, the threshold for eradication of poliovirus. The WHO stated, polio virus now joins smallpox in the list of viruses that have been wiped out in Africa.

BRICS Industry Ministers attend video meeting to discuss ways to boost cooperation in 5G, AI

- Industry Ministers of BRICS countries have attended a video meeting to discuss ways to boost cooperation in areas including 5G and Artificial Intelligence (AI). As per Chinese state media, the meeting adopted a joint statement on cooperation in new industries such as 5G, AI and the industrial Internet, among the five members bloc which includes Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.
- The video meeting comes ahead of the proposed meeting of the BRICS foreign ministers in early next month, arranged by the current BRICS chair Russia. China's push for cooperation in 5G among BRICS countries may be seen in the backdrop of China's efforts to push Huawei internationally with regard to development of 5G infrastructure, despite the company being embroiled in controversies in many countries.
- India and China are currently seeing their bilateral relations undergoing a rough phase. This has also impacted the economic ties between the two countries with India taking the path of self-reliance depending on imports for necessary items only, under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision and strategy of 'Atma Nirbhar Bharat'. India has also banned some chinese apps and put tighter scrutiny for foreign investments from its neighbouring countries including China.

Germany to issue "green bonds" worth up to $13B this year

- The German government plans to generate up to 11 billion euros ($13 billion) for clean transportation and renewable energy projects this year by issuing so-called green bond, officials stated.
- The step is part of an effort to meet demand for environmentally friendly investments and follows the path already taken by other countries, including neighbouring France.
- Each green bond will mirror a regular debt issuance by the German government, known as "bunds", which are considered safe havens for investors.
- Germany''s deputy finance minister, Joerg Kukies, stated the first green bonds worth 4 billion euros will be issued next month, with the rest released in the fourth quarter.
- The government has identified spending of over 12.7 billion euros that would meet the criteria of green investment, Kukies stated.Germany''s state-owned KfW bank and several municipalities have already issued their own green bonds.

14th India-Singapore Defence Policy Dialogue via video conferencing

- The 14th India-Singapore Defence Policy Dialogue (DPD) was held via video conferencing. It was co-chaired by Defence Secretary Dr Ajay Kumar and Permanent Secretary (Defence), Singapore Mr Chan Heng Kee.
- Both sides held discussions on a number of issues of bilateral defence engagements between India and Singapore. Both sides committed to further enhance the security partnership between the two countries.
- At the end of the DPD, the Implementing Arrangement on Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief (HADR) between India and Singapore was also signed.

India co-sponsors UN security council resolution on women peacekeepers

- India has co-sponsored a security council resolution that calls for full, effective and meaningful participation of women personnel in peacekeeping operations. India's Permanent Mission to the UN stated that India is proud to co-sponsor the

resolution which was put forth by Indonesia. The mission stated UN Security Council Resolution on 'women in peacekeeping' calls for full, effective and meaningful participation of women in peacekeeping operations.

- India is one of the largest troop contributors to UN peacekeeping operations. The mission stated India has set for itself during its tenure in the Security Council beginning 2021 that India will continue to push for greater involvement of women in all areas.

- In June, India was elected non-permanent member of the Security Council for a two-year term beginning January 1, 2021.

- India has a long tradition of being associated with UN Peacekeeping since its inception. The country made history in 2007 when she deployed the first all-women Police Unit in the UN Mission in Liberia. India is the fifth largest contributor of uniformed personnel to the UN Peacekeeping Force

Global tourism lost USD 320 bn in 5 months due to coronavirus :UN

- The tourism global industry has been devastated by the coronavirus pandemic, with USD 320 billion lost in exports in the first five months of the year and more than 120 million jobs at risk, the UN chief stated.

- Secretary-General Antonio Guterres stated in a policy briefing and video address that tourism is the third-largest export sector of the global economy, behind fuels and chemicals, and in 2019 it accounted for 7 per cent of global trade.

- It employs one in every 10 people on Earth and provides livelihoods to hundreds of millions more, he stated.

- But the UN chief stated that in the first five months of 2020, because of the pandemic, international tourist arrivals decreased by more than half and earnings plummeted.

- Guterres stated this has been a "major shock" for richer developed nations "but for developing countries, it is an emergency, particularly for many small island developing states and African countries.Tourism for some of those countries represents more than 20% of their GDP, he explained.

- Sandra Carvao, the UN World Tourism Organisation's chief of market intelligence and competitiveness, stated the USD 320 billion in lost exports from January through May is three times what was lost during the year 2009 at the height of the last global financial crisis.

- In addition to tourism jobs that are at risk, the policy paper stated jobs in associated sectors, including food service, that provide employment for 144 million workers worldwide are also at risk.

Bangladesh's Beximco signs Covid-19 vaccine deal with India's Serum Institute

- Bangladesh's Beximco Pharmaceuticals is investing in the Serum Institute of India (SII) to ensure Dhaka gets priority access to COVID-19 vaccines being developed by the Indian drug manufacturer, the company stated.

- SII has partnered with AstraZeneca , the Gates Foundation and the Gavi vaccine alliance to produce more than a billion doses of a COVID-19 vaccine for global supply.

- "The investment amount will be treated as an advance and once the vaccine receives regulatory approvals, SII will include Bangladesh among the countries who will be the first to receive an agreed quantity of this vaccine from SII on a priority basis," Beximco stated.

- The Serum Institute is the world's largest manufacturer of vaccines by volume. It is holding trials for three potential coronavirus vaccines, including one licensed to AstraZeneca by Oxford University.

Revision Points

Country	Capital	Currency	Head
Bangladesh	Dhaka	Taka	Abdul Hamid
Germany	Berlin	Euro	Frank-Walter Steinmeier
Maldives	Male	Rufiyaa	Ibrahim Mohamed Solih

Sri Lanka	Colombo	Rupee	Gotabaya Rajapaksa
Thailand	Bangkok	Baht	Prayut Chan-o-cha
UK	London	Pound Sterling	Boris Johnson
UAE	Abu Dhabi	Dirham	Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan
USA	Washington D.C	Dollar	Donald Trump
Spain	Madrid	Euro	Pedro Sánchez
Switzerland	Bern	Swiss Franc	Simonetta Sommaruga
Denmark	Copenhagen	Krone	Mette Frederiksen
Trinidad and Tobago	Port of Spain	Dollar	Dr. Keith Rowley
China	Beijing	Renminbi	Xi Jinping
FAllAustralia	Canberra	Dollar	Scott Morrison
Russia	Moscow	Ruble	Vladimir Putin
Mauritius	Port Louis	Rupee	Pravind Jugnauth
Equatorial Guinea	Malabo	CFA franc	Dakar Francisco Asue
Israel	Jerusalem	Shekel	Reuven Rivlin
Ivory Coast	Yamoussoukro	CFA franc	Hamed Bakayoko
Singapore	Singapore City	Dollar	Halimah Yacob
Mali	Bamako	CFA franc	Assimi Goita (In charge)
Lebanon	Beirut	Pound	Michel Aoun
Bahrain	Manama	Dinar	Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa
Guyana	Georgetown	Dollar	Mohamed Irfaan Ali
Peru	Lima	Sol	Walter Roger Martos Ruiz
Belarus	Minsk	Rouble	Alexander Lukashenko
Dominican Republic	Santo Domingo	Peso	Luis Rodolfo
Antigua&Barbuda	Saint John's	Eastern Caribbean dollar	GastonBrowne
Uzbekistan	Tashkent	So'm	Shavkat Mirziyoyev
Nigeria	Abuja	Naira	Muhammadu Buhari

Important Appointments

National Appointments

Name of the Person	Designation	Predecessor/Others
Ketan Patel	Managing director - Greater India operations	Vinay Awasthi
Urjit Patel	Additional and independent director, Great Eastern Shipping Company	Appointed for 5 years

Navin Agarwal	MD & CEO, Motilal Oswal Asset Management Company	
Kiara Advani	Brand Ambassador of Myntra	
Aveek Sarkar	Chairman of PTI	
SN Rajeswari	Chairman & Managing Director, Oriental Insurance Company Limited	
Babita Phogat (Wrestler) &Kumari Kavita Devi (kabaddi player)	Deputy directors(sports)	Haryana Government
V. R. Chaudhari	Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Western Air Command	Air Marshal B Suresh
Sashidhar Jagdishan	Managing Director and CEO, HDFC Bank	Aditya Puri
Ajay Jain, Vivek Johri, Sungita Sharma	Members,Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs	
Jaideep Bhatnagar	Director General, News Services Division of All India Radio	
Ajay Tyagi	Sebi chairman	Extended for 18 months
Manoj Sinha	Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir	Girish Chandra Murmu
Parekh Ashvin	Independent Director, Nippon Life India Asset Management	Tenure of 5 years
Harmanpreet Kaur and Suresh Raina	Global Brand Ambassadors, Win Trade Fantasy	
Girish Chandra Murmu	Comptroller and Auditor General of India	
Hardayal Prasad	MD & CEO, PNB Housing Finance	Resigned as MD & CEO of SBI Card
Harsh Kumar Bhanwala	Executive Chairman, Capital India Finance Limited	Former Chairman – NABARD
Pradeep Kumar Joshi	Chairman of the Union Public Service Commission	Arvind Saxena
Praveen Pardeshi	Global programme coordinator, United Nations Institute for Training and Research	Former BMC Commissioner
Deepak Shetty	Deputy CEO and MD, JCB India	Subir Kumar Chowdhury
Soma Mondal	Chairman, Steel Authority of India Limited	Anil Chaudhary
Harbhajan Singh	Brand ambassador, eBikeGO	

Subhash Sheoratan Mundra	Non-executive chairman, Indiabulls Housing Finance Ltd	Sameer Gehlaut
Pramod Bhasin	Chairperson, Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER)	Isher Judge Ahluwalia
Suhail Sameer	Group President, BharatPe	
Kaushik Khona	CEO of GoAir	VinayDube
Dinesh K Tripathi	Director General Naval Operations	
G P Garg	Executive director, Securities and Exchange Board of India	
Rakesh Asthana	Director General of the Border Security Force (BSF)	Working as the Director General of Bureau of Civil Aviation Security
V S K Kaumudi	Special Secretary (Internal Security) in the Home Ministry	Working as DG, Bureau of Police research and Development
Satya Pal Malik	Governor of Meghalaya	
Bhagat Singh Koshyari	Additional Charge, Goa	
Prashant Joshi	Managing Director and Head of National Distribution, DBS Bank India	Report to Surojit Shome (Managing Director and CEO of DBS Bank India)
Rohit Sharma	Brand ambassador, Oakley	Period of two years
PK Vijayakumar and G Rajagopalan Nair	Directors, Dhanlaxmi Bank	
G Subramonia Iyer and Suseela Menon R	Additional Directors, Dhanlaxmi Bank	
Cyril C. George	Deputy Chairman, Cochin Port Trust	A.K. Mehera
A.K. Mehera	Transferred to Kolkata Dock System, Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port Trust, Kolkata	
Kishor Rungta	Chairman, Fertilisers Association of India, Southern Region	
Ashwani Bhatia	Managing Director, State Bank of India	
Justice AV Chandrashekar and Pradeep Kumar Panja	Additional Directors, Karnataka Bank	Pradeep Kumar Panja - Managing Director (Corporate Banking) of State Bank of India
Rajiv Kumar	New election commissioner	Ashok Lavasa
G Satheesh Reddy	Chairman, Defence Research and Development Organisation	Two-year extension

Vinay Tonse	Managing Director & CEO, SBI Funds Management Private Ltd	
Sanjiv Singh	Group President, Reliance Industries Ltd	Former Indian Oil Corp (IOC) chairman
Yatinder Prasad	Government nominee Director in CIL Board	

International Appointments

Name of the Person	Designation	Predeccesor/Others
Hamed Bakayoko	Prime minister, Ivory Coast	Amadou Gon Coulibaly
Mohamed Irfaan Ali	President elect of Guyana	David Arthur(A.) Granger
Mahinda Rajapaksa	Elected PM of Sri Lanka	
Walter Roger Martos Ruiz	Prime Minister of Peru	Pedro Cateriano
Mustapha Adib	Prime Minister of Lebanon	Hassan Diab
Alexander Lukashenko	Belarusan President	Sixth consecutive term
Patanjali Jha	Principal Chief Commissioner of Income Tax, Mumbai	
Vikram Kumar Doraiswami	High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh	Riva Ganguly Das
Shahzan Mujeeb (Indian Idol Season 11 Finalist and Oscar Nominated Playback Singer)	First Ever National Brand Ambassador for Swachh Bharat Abhiyan Campaign	Aligarh Municipal Corporation
Luis Rodolfo	President, Dominican Republic	
Assimi Goita	In charge of the West African country Mali.	
Dakar Francisco Asue	Prime minister, Equatorial Guinea	
Dr. Keith Rowley	Prime Minister, Trinidad and Tobago	
Akinwumi A. Adesina	President, African Development Bank Group	He was first elected as President of the Bank on May 28, 2015

Resignation/Retirement

Name of the Person	Designation
Hassan Diab	Prime Minister, Lebanon
Isher Judge Ahluwalia	Chairperson, Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER)
Vinay Dube	CEO, GoAir
Ashok Lavasa	Vice-president, Asian Development Bank
Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta	President, Mali

| Rajiv Srivastava | Managing Director and CEO,Indian Energy Exchange |
| Shinzo Abe | Prime Minister, Japan |

MHA Sends Senior and Mid-Level IPS Officers to Paramilitary Forces, Some Elevated

- The Ministry of Home Affairs in a series of orders sent several IPS officers to paramilitary forces and other organisations on deputation.
- CBI Joint Director Amrit Mohan Prasad has been appointed as Additional Director General (ADG) in ITBP; Arvind Deep a UT cadre officer has been appointed as ADG in Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) from Delhi Police.
- Ayush Mani Tiwari, a 1997 batch IPS officer, has been sent to Border Security Force (BSF) from Bureau of Civil Aviation Security.
- PS Ranpise, IPS of Odisha cadre, has been sent on deputation to the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).
- Some officers have been elevated to senior vacant posts. Sonal V Mishra working as Deputy Inspector General (DIG) in CRPF has been appointed as Inspector General (IG) in CRPF. Prateek Mohanty 2000 batch IPS officer has also elevated to IG in CISF.
- Dayal Gangwar, an Odisha cadre IPS officer, will hold the post of IG in CISF which is deployed on the Delhi Metro, almost all airports and other important establishments.
- Jitender Rana, a 2005 batch IPS officer, will join the CISF as DIG. He was working as senior-commandment in CISF.

Indian umpire KN Ananthapadmanabhan included in ICC's panel

- India's KN Ananthapadmanabhan has been included in ICC's international panel of umpires following compatriot Nitin Menon's promotion to the elite panel.
- The former Kerala spinner joins fellow Indians C Shamshuddin, Anil Chaudhary and Virender Sharma in the international panel and is now eligible to officiate in the ODI and T20 internationals apart from umpiring in the junior World Cup.
- Ananthapadmanabhan,50, has officiated in all major domestic events including the IPL. He also was the official in the Ranji Trophy final between Bengal and Saurashtra last year and even stood at both ends for a while after Shamshuddin got injured.

Former RBI governor Urjit Patel in search panel for Monetary Policy Committee members

- Urjit Patel, who in his recent book Overdraft, attributed his rift with the Modi government and resignation as RBI governor before the end of the term to the latter's soft pedaling on the insolvency code, has been co-opted as a member of the search-cum-selection committee to name the new three government nominees on the all-important Monetary Policy Committee (MPC).
- The panel, headed by Cabinet secretary Rajiv Gauba, also includes RBI governor Shaktikanta Das or a deputy governor representing him, Niti Aayog vice-chairman Rajiv Kumar and economic affairs secretary Tarun Bajaj.
- In September 22, 2016, the Centre had appointed the Indian Statistical Institute professor Chetan Ghate, Delhi School of Economics director Pami Dua and IIM-Ahmedabad professor Ravindra H Dholakia as external members of the MPC, heralding a historical change in monetary policy-making in India. These three will complete their terms in September. The members of the MPC appointed by the Centre can hold office for a period of four years and won't be eligible for re-appointment.
- The MPC with three members from RBI, including governor, who has a casting vote to break a tie, and three external members appointed by the government, decides on interest rates. The flexible inflation targeting is based on the report of

a panel headed by (the then deputy governor) Patel. Patel, who was later appointed as RBI governor in August 2016, prematurely quit from the post on December 10, 2018.

<p align="center">Important Awards and Honours</p>

Winner	Prize	Awarded By/Theme/Purpose
Dalmia Bharat Group	18thFICCI CSR award	Environment Sustainability
Dipankar Ghose	Prem Bhatia awards	People's Archive of Rural India (PARI)
Satyendra Singh	First Divyang sportsperson of country to get prestigious Adventure Award	
Hyderabad International Airport	CII-GBC 'National Energy Leader' award	
Dutch author Marieke Lucas Rijneveld	Youngest to win International Booker Prize 2020	
Chingari (Indian Short video platform)	Winner of the government's Aatma Nirbhar App Innovation challenge	
Nitin Sethi of The Huffington Post India	Asian College of Journalism's Award for Investigative Journalism	
Shiv Sahay Singh of The Hindu	P. Narayana Kumar Memorial Award for Social Impact Journalism	
Hyderabad -based Naandi Foundation	Top 10 'Visionaries' in the world for the Food Vision 2050 Prize	US-based Rockefeller Foundation
RS Paroda (Founder Chairman of the Trust for Advancement of Agricultural Sciences)	MS Swaminathan Award for Environment Protection 2019	Rotary Club of Madras East
Akshat Malik (ClickOnCare Founder & CEO)	Indian Achievers Award 2020 for Healthcare Excellence	
Cristiano Ronaldo	Juventus' 'Most Valuable Player of the Year'	
Sudha Murty (Chairperson, Infosys Foundation) and Sivakumar Surampudi (Group	Gramodaya Bandhu Mitra Puraskaras	Gramodaya Chamber of Commerce and Technology (GCOT)

Head of Agri and IT Businesses of ITC Ltd)		
P Priyankarani Patra of Digapahandi in Ganjam district, Suchitra Das of Bhubaneswar and Rajalakshmi Das of Delang in Puri district	Suraj Samman	Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Organ donation
Gagan Arora	CEO of the Year - 2020	IAF India
Soumya Swaminathan (Chief Scientist of World Health Organisation)	Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's special award	Advisory role in combating the COVID-19 pandemic
Department of treasuries	Chief Minister's Best Practices award	Tamil Nadu
Tamil Nadu Medical Services Corporation	Certificate of appreciation	Tamil Nadu
Greater Chennai Corporation	Second prize - Best Practices award	Tamil Nadu
Poet Tirunagari Ramanujam	Dasaradhi Award for 2020	Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao
St Christopher School, Chessore Village, Nagaland	First-ever Pallikkutam National Award for Innovation in Education	Instituted by Rajagiri Media
DAV Public School, Haryana	Silver award (Pallikkutam National Award)	Instituted by Rajagiri Media
CMI Christ School, Iritty in Kerala	Bronze award (Pallikkutam National Award)	Instituted by Rajagiri Media
Ganesh Vilas Lengare (Solapur)	Star 2020 Certificate	World Book of Records, London
UST Global	PMI-Kerala Community Project of the Year Awardfor 2020	'Adopt a School' initiative
Global Gene Corp	Roddenberry Prize	Designed to advance the vision of 'Star Trek'
Reshma Mohandas (Ernakulam district)	Tomyas Award	best nurse in the State Kerala
'Am I?' directed by Abhijit Paul	1st Prize in the Online Patriotic Short Film Contest	Ministry Of Information and Broadcasting & National Film Development Corporation.
'Ab India Banega Bharat' directed by Debojo Sanjiv	2nd Prize in the Online Patriotic Short Film	Ministry Of Information and Broadcasting & National Film

	Contest	Development Corporation.
'10 Rupees' directed by Yuvraj Gokul	3rd Prize in the Online Patriotic Short Film Contest	Ministry Of Information and Broadcasting & National Film Development Corporation.
Mahindra group Chairman Anand Mahindra and Adobe Chairman and CEO Shantanu Narayen	2020 Leadership Awards	US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF)
NLCIL	Swachhta Hi Seva award	Transforming Neyveli Township into plastic-free, green campus
Sonam Gyaltsan	National award	Head Teacher of Middle School Taknak Sakti in Kharu block of Leh - Ladakh
Va Tech Wabag	Global Water Award	45 million litres a day tertiary treatment reverse osmosis (TTRO) plant at Koyambedu in Chennai
Neelakanta Bhanu Prakash of Hyderabad	Wo gold for India in Mental Calculation World Championship at Mind Sports Olympiadin London	Fastest human calculator in the world

Grievance System at West Bengal CMO Gets Award

- The public grievance system at the West Bengal Chief Minister's Office (CMO) has been conferred with the Digital India Platinum Award by Skoch Foundation.
- There were 4,800 nominations in the category and out of that, the state won the award.
- The award was a recognition to the West Bengal government's unique initiative of the public grievances management model - a comprehensive system for effective management, monitoring and redressal of all grievances addressed to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.
- The state was conferred with the award at the 66th Skoch Summit held in New Delhi.
- Skoch Foundation confers ten silver, three gold and one platinum award every year to outstanding projects or schemes selected from across the country through a competitive process.
- Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) has received SKOCH Gold Award for its "Empowerment of Tribals through IT enabled Scholarship Schemes" project of Scholarship Division of the Ministry.
- MoTA has integrated all 5 Scholarship Schemes with DBT Portal under the guidance of DBT Mission.
- Telangana State won a gold and a silver in Governance Category and another gold for a blockchain-based property registration project.
- T-Chits, a blockchain-based system to govern chit fund operations across the State, was awarded the silver award.

- Telangana won the gold medal in Emerging Technologies category for T-Chits at the 23rd National Awards for e-Governance in 2020, organised by DARP and MeitY.
- Telangana State Mineral Development Corporation Ltd received national level 'Gold Skoch award' under Digital India Category from the Skoch Group recognising the robust and transparent ICT solution — Sand Sale Management & Monitoring System.
- IT Minister KT Rama Rao launched two AI-based projects during the declaration of 2020 as Telangana's Year of AI. Both the projects have now received "Order of Merit" at the 66th SKOCH Summit.

Apple tops Saudi Aramco as most valuable publicly listed co

- Saudi Aramco had a market capitalisation of $1.760 trillion as of its last close
- Apple Inc's surged over 10 per cent to a record high after reporting blockbuster quarterly results, helping the iPhone maker eclipse Saudi Aramco to become the world's most valuable publicly listed company.
- It was Apple's largest one-day percentage gain since March 13, and it added $172 billion in market capitalisation during the session, greater than the entire stock market value of Oracle Corp.
- Saudi Aramco, which had been the most valuable publicly listed company since going public last year, had a market capitalisation of $1.760 trillion as of its last close, according to Refinitiv data.
- Apple's has surged about 45 per cent year to date, with investors betting that it and other major United States (US) technology companies will emerge from the coronavirus pandemic stronger than smaller rivals.
- In its quarterly report, Apple announced a four-for-one stock split, with trading on a split-adjusted basis starting on Aug. 31. It will be Apple's first share split since 2014.

11 women entrepreneurs chosen for Women Entrepreneurship and Empowerment award

- Eleven women entrepreneurs have been shortlisted for cash awards amounting to Rs 25 lakh under 'Women Entrepreneurship and Empowerment' initiative supported by the Department of Science and Technology.
- Among the winners are Priyanka Prabhakar who has created STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics based) toys and board games to engage young minds during the coronavirus-induced lockdown, and clocked a sale of Rs 40 lakh.
- Another winner, Meghna Gandhi, worked with underprivileged women in Vadodara during the same period and created natural textiles and COVID-19 related accessories, touching a sale of Rs 25 lakh for her venture.
- Similarly, Snehal Verma, worked with fishermen of Chhattisgarh, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, and helped them improve their yield during the pandemic outbreak.
- Kalpana Arora, who has done a Doctorate in wastewater management from IIT Delhi, has been awarded for her products like sanitizers from wastewater. She is a social entrepreneur and works for tribal women and farmers in the hilly region of Uttarakhand through Self Help Groups.
- The second silver winner was Ms. Shivani Gupta (Ph.D.), who has developed a patent applied wound healing technology that is now under clinical trial at AIIMS (New Delhi).
- The bronze award winners were Ms. Neeta Doshi (Ph.D.) for creating a machine to convert air particles to rain, Ms. Rashi Verma who is working in the field of AR for farmers, Ms. MomySaikia working in field of domestic waste management, Ms. Abhishree Arora (the youngest entrepreneur from IIT Delhi) who is working on simplifying mathematics for kids.
- Two promising star awards were also given to Ms. Nitika Sonkhiya and Ms. Ritika Amit Kumar for demonstrating extraordinary entrepreneurial skills and creating business models that generated revenues even during the COVID 19 lockdown period.

- The Women Entrepreneurship and Empowerment (WEE) cohort initiative aims at helping women ranging from college going students to middle-aged housewives to embrace entrepreneurship as a viable and fulfilling career option.
- It is the country's first-of-its kind initiative to strengthen women's ecosystem at the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi, supported and sponsored by the Department of Science and Technology.
- The cash awards, in the form of a grant totalling Rs 25 lakh, will be presented to the 11 women entrepreneurs.

IIT Kharagpur researchers awarded for generating power from wet clothes

- A group of researchers from IIT Kharagpur has conferred the 'Gandhian Young Technological Innovation Awards 2020' for developing a mechanism for generating electricity from wet clothes left under sunlight to dry.
- Prof Suman Chakraborty, Prof Partha Saha and Dr Aditya Bandopadhyay from the Department of Mechanical Engineering have been awarded for their work - "Electrical power generation from wet textile".
- Prof Sunando Dasgupta and his team from the Department of Chemical Engineering have also been awarded for their work--- 'Smart, flexible, and multi-functional thermal and energy management systems for next-generation electronic devices'.
- The device has been tested in a remote village where around 50 wet clothes were left for drying by washermen. These clothes were connected to a commercial supercapacitor which discharged electricity of around 10 volt. This stored energy is enough to glow a white LED bulb for more than an hour.
- Other Team achieved this by leveraging the unique properties of 'smart materials' materials that sense and react to environmental conditions or stimuli such as mechanical, chemical, electrical, or magnetic signals - infused with graphene, a form of carbon.

Moothon, Run Kalyani win big at 20th New York Indian Film Festival

- Malayalam films Moothon and Run Kalyani have won big at the 20th edition of New York Indian Film Festival, which went virtual this year due to the coronavirus pandemic.
- Run Kalyani, directed by debutant Geetha J, is about a young woman cook, who is trapped in the cycle of mundane routine while taking care of her bed-ridden aunty. Garggi Ananthan, who played Kalyani in Run Kalyani, bagged the Best Actress award at the festival.
- Geetu Mohandas directorial Moothon, which was the closing film of the 20th New York Indian Film Festival, won multiple awards, including Best Film, Best Actor (Nivin Pauly) and Best Child Actor (Sanjana Dipu).

The other winners of the 20th New York Indian Film Festival are

- Best Documentary: Tailing Pond
- Best Feature Documentary: Son Rise
- Best Short (Narrative): Arabian Nights
- Best Screenplay: Knock Knock Knock
- Best Director: Achal Mishra, Gamak Ghar

CSIR announces Young Scientist Award 2020

- Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) has announced Young Scientist Award for the year 2020. The award will be given to seven scientists working in different institutions of CSIR for their achievements in biological sciences, chemical sciences, earth, atmosphere, ocean and planetary sciences, engineering sciences and physical sciences.
- For biological sciences, Debojyoti Chakraborty, senior scientist from Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (IGIB) and Vandana Jaiswal, scientist, Division of Biotechnology from Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology (IHBT)

have been honoured. In the chemical sciences field, Suraj Soman, scientist, Chemical Sciences and Technology Division, National Institute for Interdisciplinary Science and Technology (NIIST) will receive the award.

- In the area of earth, atmosphere, ocean and planetary sciences, Jagadeesan Loganathan, scientist, NIO Regional Centre (Vishakhapatnam), National Institute of Oceanography (NIO) will receive the honour.
- For engineering sciences, Indu Elizabeth, scientist, Physico-Mechanical Division, National Physical Laboratory (NPL) and Manoj Kumar Patel, senior scientist, Agrionics (V-1), Central Scientific Instruments Organisation (CSIO) will be receiving the award.
- Manoj Kr Gupta, scientist, Advanced Construction Materials Division, Advanced Materials and Processes Research Institute (AMPRI) will receive the award for physical sciences (including instrumentation).
- The award comprises a citation, a cash award of Rs 50,000, and a plaque. CSIR confers YS Award every year in the five disciplines.

IICT Scientist to be awarded CRSI Bronze Medal

- Srihari Pabbaraja, senior principal scientist working in the Department of Organic Synthesis and Process Chemistry, CSIR-Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (IICT), Hyderabad, has been selected for the Chemical Research Society of India (CRSI) Bronze medal 2021 for his contributions on the total synthesis of natural products and method development for new chemical entities.
- The coveted Bronze Medal conferred by CRSI, will be presented to him during the 27th CRSI-RSC joint symposium to be held at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati.
- Pabbaraja is associated with the backward integration of hydroxychloroquine, a repurposed drug for novel corona virus (COVID-19) and synthesis of its key intermediates from indigenously available raw materials. He is also involved in the application of flow chemistry technology for the synthesis of active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs).
- Pabbaraja is a recipient of several prestigious awards including CSIR Young Scientist Award-2009. He also received OPPI Young Scientist Award-2009, AVRA Young Scientist Award-2014, Dr AK Singh Memorial Young Scientist Award-2016 and CDRI Award for Excellence in Drug Research-2018, among many others. He is also an Associate Fellow of Andhra Pradesh Akademi of Sciences (FAPAS).

Pune Institute Wins Smart India Hackathon 2020

- Pune-based Defence Institute of Advanced Technology (DIAT) has won the first prize in the Smart India Hackathon (SIH) 2020, a national-level digital product building competition.
- DIAT's team of six members provided a solution titled "DRISHTI" to recognise face, expression and gesture using artificial intelligence (AI).
- The team, led by Dr Sunita Dhavale, won the first prize of Rs 1 lakh "for solving problem statement MS331 in the category of software posed by the Madhya Pradesh government"
- It was organised between August 1 and 3 at Noida Institute of Engineering and Technology in Greater Noida.

Jamia students' crop prediction software wins Rs 1 lakh at Smart India Hackathon 2020

- A team of six students from Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) under the name 'Monks' won Software Edition in problem statement NS275.
- The students from the faculty of engineering and technology won a cash prize of Rs 1 lakh as well.
- The team had built a software system that could predict crop production for the next year and could help the government to plan their policies by anticipating problems of low rainfall and flood, even before they happen.

- The team was given a problem statement by the Bihar government as it faces flood problem almost every year and the students solved it within 36 hours.
- The team from Jamia was working under the guidance of Prof Tanvir Ahmad. The students were Gaurav Chaudhary (team leader), Pranav Gautam, Neetesh Kaushik, Lakshya Chaudhary, Ashish Singh, and Nashrah Naseem.

Medal For Excellence in Investigation 2020: List of 121 Police Personnel Receiving Award This Year

- Union Home Minister's Medals for Excellence in Investigation for 2020 have been awarded to 121 Police personnel, including 21 women police officers.
- Among the personnel receiving these awards, 15 are from the Central Bureau of Investigation, 10 each are from Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra Police, eight are from Uttar Pradesh Police and seven each are from Kerala and West Bengal Police. The remaining are from the other States and UTs.
- This medal was constituted in 2018 with the objective to promote high professional standards of investigation of crime and to recognise such Excellence in an investigation by investigating officers.

'Khaje', 'Harmal Chilli' and 'Moira banana' get GI tag

- Goa's traditional festive sweet dish 'Khaje', spicy Harmal Chilli and Myndoli Banana (Moira Banana) has obtained Geographical Indication (GI) tag in last three months, thus giving the local producers exclusive brand protection rights.
- Earlier, the State's popular 'Cashew Feni' and 'Khola Red Chilli', had obtained GI tag.
- The State government is now in the process of filing applications with GI Registry, Chennai to obtain GI tags for more products like famous fish curry rice, cashew nuts, 'Mankurad Mango', Goan 'Bebinca'- a sweet dish with several layers, 'Khatkhatem'- dish made up of various local veggies and the 'Taleigao Brinjal'.
- Khaje, the State's traditional festive sweet treat at temple zatras and church feasts, received the GI notification, under food stuff falling in Class-30
- The Myndoli Banana, also known as Moira Banana, an important fruit crop, grown in the villages of Pernem, Bicholim and Bardez taluka, obtained GI tag on June 30 under Class-31.

Govt announces Police Medals, J&K tops gallantry list

- Jammu and Kashmir Police has topped the list of Police Medals for Gallantry (PMG) with total 81 medals, followed by 51 medals that have gone to the CRPF this Independence Day.
- Ahead of the Independence Day, the Ministry of Home Affairs announced the list of gallantry medal awardees to police personnel across the country. The awards include Police Medals for Gallantry (PMG), President's Police Medal (PPM) and Police Medal (PM) for meritorious services.
- Inspector Mohan Chand Sharma of Delhi Police Special Cell, who died in Batla House encounter in 2008, has been awarded gallantry medal posthumously. Sharma has received 6th bar to Police Medal for Gallantry.
- Three IPS officers from Jammu and Kashmir Police - including Sandeep (SSP Anantnag), Gurinderpal Singh (SP Kulgam) and Atul Kumar Goel (DIG South Kashmir) - have been awarded the PMG. Two more J&K Police IPS officers, DIG Vidhi Kumar Birdi (currently on deputation in the NIA) and Tejinder Singh (SSP), have received 1st and 2nd bar to PMG respectively.
- DIG Atul Kumar Goel was the one to catch Jammu and Kashmir DSP Davinder Singh at a check post while he was ferrying two Hizb-ul-Mujahideen terrorists in a vehicle on the Srinagar-Jammu Highway in January this year.
- As many as 80 officers from across the country have been awarded the President's Police Medal (PPM) for distinguished services while 631 officers have received the Police Medal (PM) for meritorious services.

Dwijing Festival Wins 5 Awards At WOW Awards Asia – 2020

- The successful fourth edition of the Dwijing Festival with over 15 lakh tourists attending the 12-day event has emerged as the winner in five categories at the prestigious WOW Awards Asia, 2020.The awards were won in the below-mentioned categories
- Rural Activation of the year.
- Special Event of the Year for Government/Federation/Association.
- Rural Engagement Property of the Year.
- Business/B-2-B/Knowledge-Exchange Property of the Year.
- Special Event of the Decade.
- The Dwijing Festival is an annual river festival celebrated in the BTAD region with various colourful events viz. ethnic trade and food festivals, exhibitions, games & sports, river campaign & adventure activities, and various cultural programs that make it a center of attraction and the New Year Festival.
- The festival is organized with the vision to encourage tourism, boost the will of the promising indigenous talent, and promote local products. The festival was also meant to provide help to the flood victim families through charity generation and distribution.
- The Assam Tourism had worked closely with the Dwijing Festival Organising Committee and Bodoland Tourism to make the fourth edition of the Dwijing Festival a great success.

NLCIL bags "Swachhta Hi Seva award" for transforming Neyveli Township into plastic-free, green campus

- NLCIL, the Navratna CPSE, has bagged the award for making extremely valuable contribution in the implementation of the "Swachhta Hi Seva Programme" from the Government of India.
- Shri Rakesh Kumar, CMD of NLCIL hailing the efforts of NLCIL in transforming the entire Neyveli into a plastic-free, clean and green campus, and announcing the "Swachhta Hi Seva 2019" Award.
- The Swachhta Hi Seva Award was conferred to the following three units of NLCIL :
- Township Administration Office – First rank
- Thermal Power Station-1 – Second rank
- Mines Sub-Stores—Third rank
- The Swachhta Hi Seva programme, an initiative of the Swachch Bharat Mission, was launched by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in September 2019. NLCIL Implemented the programme in two phases: first phase from September 11, 2019 to November 2, 2019; and the second phase from October 3 to October 27, 2019.

SBI bags three Brandon Hall Excellence Awards for 'Nayi Disha'

- The country's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI) has won three Brandon Hall Excellence Awards for rolling out 'Nayi Disha' over the course of 1.5 years touching more than 2.40 lakh employees.
- SBI has won these awards in three categories viz. Best Learning Program supporting a Change Transformation Business Strategy, Best Use of Blended Learning and Best Unique or Innovative Learning and Development Program.
- The Brandon Hall Excellence Awards, also known as the Academy Awards of Learning & Development, recognize the best organizations that have successfully deployed programs, strategies, modalities, processes, systems, and tools to achieve measurable results.

'Vattatha Uravakkayi Jalasamrudhi' wins award for excellence at the National Water Innovation Summit

- The 'Vattatha Uravakkayi Jalasamrudhi' project for water conservation in the Kattakada constituency has won the award for excellence at the National Water Innovation Summit organised by Elets Technomedia Pvt. Ltd. in association with the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti. The award was presented for innovation in rainwater harvesting.
- The project had earlier received the Chief Minister's award for innovative projects.

<p align="center" style="color:red">**Important MOU's**</p>

IIT Kanpur partners with MoD for using AI, ML to redress grievances

- Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kanpur signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Defence (MoD) for developing a prompt and predictive grievance redress mechanism using artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning tools.
- A tripartite MoU was signed between IIT Kanpur, MoD (Department of Defence) and Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances (DAR&PG).
- The partnership pertains to conducting and developing exploratory and predictive analysis of public grievances received in the portal of Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) using AI, machine learning and statistics.
- Earlier, IIT Kanpur had signed a MoU with defence public sector undertaking (PSU) Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) for manufacturing affordable ventilators to treat covid-19 patients.

Andhra Pradesh government signs MoUs for women's empowerment

- The state government signed MoUs with ITC Ltd, Hindustan Unilever Ltd (HUL) and Proctor and Gamble (P&G), which will lend a helping hand in empowering women of the State.
- The government will launch YSR Cheyutha on August 12 under which SC, ST, BC and minority women aged between 45 and 60 will be given financial assistance of Rs 75,000 (each will get Rs 15,000 per year) in four years, which will help them become self-reliant and bring about a change in their economic status.
- The tie-ups with the major companies are for hand-holding to bring about a change in their lives, the Chief Minister explained.
- Under YSR Cheyutha, Rs 4,500 crore will be distributed, and under YSR Asara, to be launched in September, 90 lakh women of nine lakh self-help groups will be benefited.
- Eligible women can avail both the schemes, he stated. While Rs 6,700 crore would be distributed under YSR Asara, under the two schemes, the state will distribute Rs 11,000 crore per year which works out to Rs 44,000 crore in four years benefiting over one crore women.

Flipkart signs MoU with UP government's one District, One Product scheme

- E-commerce marketplace Flipkart has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the One District, One Product (ODOP) scheme of the Uttar Pradesh government to bring artisans, weavers and craftsmen into mainstream business.
- The partnership will enable these under-served communities to showcase their specialised products and crafts to millions of customers across the country.
- The initiative called `Flipkart Samarth` will enable them to break entry barriers by extending time-bound incubation support which includes benefits in the form of on-boarding, free cataloguing, marketing, account management, business insights and warehousing support.
- Flipkart has previously signed an MoU with the Uttar Pradesh Khadi and Village Industries Board to benefit weavers and artisans by introducing khadi fabrics and village industry products on the Flipkart marketplace.

NHAI inks pact with IIT-Delhi to set up centre of excellence for use of AI in decision making

- The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has signed a pact with IIT-Delhi to set up a centre of excellence for the use of artificial intelligence in decision making, the government stated.
- The memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed in the presence of NHAI Chairman Sukhbir Singh Sandhu, IIT-Delhi Director V Ram Gopal Rao and other senior officials.
- NHAI signed an MoU with the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, to set up a centre of excellence for use of artificial intelligence (AI) in data-driven decision making and the advance data management system for highways,the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways stated.
- Under the partnership, IIT-Delhi will work with the NHAI to develop advance analytics based on AI, prepare simulation models, enhance data storage and retrieval capacities to further strengthen the NHAI"s capabilities in data-driven decision making.
- The collaboration will be undertaken on the identified thrust areas, such as project management and data management, highway network traffic demand and incident management, highway safety, highway work zone management, and highway pavement management system, the statement stated.
- IIT-Delhi will also give inputs for the NHAI"s data management policy.
- As part of the arrangement, IIT-Delhi will provide space and infrastructural support to house the centre of excellence (CoE), the statement stated.
- It added that an advisory board will be the highest-level committee that will monitor the activities of the collaborative platform, including initiation, continuation of work and approval of joint collaborative projects, and will also suggest mechanisms to achieve the desired objectives.

CSIR, FSSAI sign MoU for collaborative research on food and nutrition

- An agreement was signed between CSIR and FSSAI for collaborative research and information dissemination in the area of food and nutrition, the Health Ministry stated.
- Health Minister Harsh Vardhan presided a ceremony for the signing of MoU between the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) under the Ministry of Science and Technology, according to an official statement.
- The two organisations will collaborate towards strengthening the quality assurance of laboratory networks across the country aimed at development and validation of methods for reliable reporting on quality and safety of food products, he stated.
- Vardhan highlighted that the country will see a surge in demand for healthy, nutritious, plant-based, local, seasonal and indigenous foods, produced organically.
- He stated the New Food System 2050 will also see an enhanced focus on climate-friendly food production systems, conservation of land and water resources, reduction in food loss and food wastage across the value chain, increase in small scale production units for self-sustaining local economies, use of environment-friendly packaging alternatives, and repurposing of waste, according to the statement issued by the Health Ministry.

Andhra Govt Signs MoU With US Based IT Firm To Setup Centre At Visakhapatnam

- The three capital formula for Andhra Pradesh seems to be helping Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy government in gaining investment not just for Amaravati, but also for Visakhapatnam, among other regions in the State.
- The Andhra government signed an MoU with The Boston Group to set up a facility devoted to research and development (R&D) in the Information Technology sector with focus on learning platforms and leveraging advanced technologies like artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML) and cybersecurity.

- The MoU was signed in the presence of Rathnakar Pandugayala, Special Representative to AP Government for North America and Subu Kota, the chairman of The Boston Group and People Prime Worldwide. The move is expected to create over 250 jobs in the IT sector in Andhra.

Bihar Pollution Control Board signs MoA with IIT, Delhi for air quality management

- The Bihar State Pollution Control Board has signed a 'Memorandum of Agreement' (MoA) with IIT, Delhi for setting up of geographical information system (GIS) based platform for air quality management in the state.
- The agreement, which was signed, will help in identifying sources and transport of PM 2.5 at a "very high resolution" and help the board to identify "effective mitigation measures", a Bihar State Pollution Control Board release stated.
- This study will prove to be a crucial step in identifying sources and transport of PM 2.5 at a very high resolution which will help the board to identify effective mitigation measures. The mapping will be done at a "very high resolution" of one square km using satellite and ground-based measurement systems.
- "These maps will help in developing a strategy to minimise exposure with the help of modelling and survey," the pollution control board stated. Further, using satellite data the study will identify the districts and villages where open burning is prevalent. Additionally, a detailed air mass trajectory analysis will be carried out to identify the transport path of air pollution to the non-attainment cities.

Rajasthan government, SIDBI to ink MoU for cluster-based development of MSMEs

- The Rajasthan government and the Small Industrial Development Bank of India (SIDBI) will soon ink an agreement to create newer avenues and growth opportunities for MSME units in the State.
- For upcoming and existing MSME units in the State, SIDBI will identify clusters and create a plan to reach out to small entrepreneurs and provide consultation, business solutions and guidance for availing benefits under current schemes.
- A project management unit (PMU) will be set up by SIDBI in Rajasthan to provide assistance to certain sectors which are cluster-based such as textiles in Bhilwara and handicrafts in Jodhpur. The initiative is aimed at creating a bridge between MSMEs and the Central/State government for understanding ground-level challenges that MSMEs are facing and creating an ideal ecosystem for ease of doing business.

PFC signs MoA for construction of Modular Operation Theatres in Siddharthnagar

- Government-owned Power Finance Corporation Ltd (PFC), India's leading NBFC, signed an MoA with District Administration of Siddharthnagar in Uttar Pradesh for construction of two Modular Operation Theatre Rooms in the District Hospital, Siddharthnagar. Under the MoA, PFC will provide financial assistance of close to Rupees Ninety Four Lakhs for the execution of the Project to the District Administration, Siddharthnagar under its CSR initiative.
- The pact is intended to provide the necessary support to the Siddharthnagar District Administration to develop the necessary infrastructure in order to reduce Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) and Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) in the catchment area. The infrastructural development would also help in reducing the Neonatal Mortality Rate (NMR) in the adjoining areas of the district.

BSE signs MoU with Akola-based bullion associations

- The Bombay Stock Exchange has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Akola, Maharashtra-based bullion trade and industry associations, Akola Sarafa Association and Akola Sarafa Va Suvarnakar Yuva Sangh.
- The associations represent members engaged in the retail sale and trade of bullion. The MoU aims to facilitate cooperation between the BSE and physical markets represented by the two trade bodies in areas such as knowledge sharing, education and training, events and explore areas of mutual interests.

- The BSE aims to organise seminars and awareness programmes on price-risk management for bullion traders and jewellers, and help them move to more organised forms of trading. Awareness about effective hedging tools such as derivatives contracts, especially 'options in goods' to enable jewellers to face a volatile market, would also be provided.
- The 'options in goods' contract offered by the BSE is beneficial for jewellers and bullion dealers, who can now not only hedge their price risk but also avail the delivery of gold on expiry of the contract.

Delhi MoU signed with IIT-B for smog tower at CP

- The Delhi government has signed an MoU with IIT-Bombay and Tata Projects Limited to construct a smog tower in Connaught Place.
- The smog tower is a 20-metre-high structure fitted with several air purifiers to clean the air.
- The Supreme Court had last month hit out at the Centre and State governments for missing the deadline of April 13 for completing the construction of two smog towers in the city.
- IIT-Bombay will be the technical consultant, NBCC will be the project management consultant and IIT-Delhi will also assist in the project. Drawings will be provided by the University of Minnesota.
- The MoU signed by the Delhi government is similar to the one done by the Central government and the project is expected to cost around Rs.19 crore.

Goa Government Signs Pact For German Vocational Training In IITs

- The Goa government has signed a tri-partite agreement to carry out world-class German dual vocational education and training in the Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) of the state.
- This will "ensure optimal up-skilling of ITI graduates, including green skilling at par with the latest technological developments in the industry, thereby remarkably enhancing the employability of graduates from these IITs.
- The MoU was signed between the Directorate of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Siemens Limited and the German-headquartered GIZ.
- Siemens and GIZ India will undertake intensive coaching of instructors of ITIs.

Delhi govt inked MoU with Bloomberg Philanthropies to enhance road safety

- The Delhi government, in a bid to enhance road safety in the national capital, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Bloomberg Philanthropies, joining 30 world cities in the initiative for global road safety.
- Under this initiative the Delhi government will be supported by the world's leading experts in road safety and will receive technical assistance to conduct various periodic road user behaviour surveys and training for staff, it stated.
- The initiative will cover various aspects of road safety including enforcing laws on speeding, drunken driving, wearing helmets and seat belts, and designing and building safer roads and transportation systems.
- Promoting safe driving and building public support for road safety via communication campaigns and using data from high-quality monitoring and evaluation systems for policy and planning, will be other strategies of the initiative, the statement stated.
- The 30 cities including Delhi will participate in the 2020-2025 phase of the Bloomberg Philanthropies Initiative for Global Road Safety. "The cities will receive resources and support to enable them to implement bold, ambitious road safety activities that will save lives and decrease injuries from road traffic crashes," it stated.
- The participating cities will work in collaboration with Bloomberg Philanthropies' partner organisations and road safety experts, who will provide technical assistance on all aspects of planning, implementation and enforcement, it added.

India-Nigeria signed MoU on space cooperation

- India and Nigeria signed an agreement on space cooperation, Minister of State for External Affairs V Muraleedharan stated.
- The MoU envisages India-Nigeria collaboration in space science, planetary exploration, ground stations, development of micro and mini satellites and joint space research and development, the statement stated.
- It provides for capacity building assistance by ISRO, exchange of scientific know-how, exchanges between academic institutes and joint symposiums/conferences. Cooperation in remote sensing, communications and navigation will benefit Nigeria in the fields of forestry, environment, agriculture, mining, watershed development and connectivity, it added.
- The above MoU will further enhance India''s capacity building assistance to Nigeria, it stated.
- On the occasion, both sides also agreed to sign a subsidiary MoU between New Space India Limited (NSIL), under ISRO, and Nigeria Erosion and Watershed Management Project (NEWMAP), under the Federal Ministry of Environment of Nigeria, on cooperation in use of geospatial technologies, the statement stated.

Flipkart forges academic collaboration with IIT Patna

- Leading e-commerce player Flipkart has entered into Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Indian Institute of Technology Patna (IIT Patna) to jointly create industry focused applied research in the areas of Artificial Intelligence (AI), Natural Language Processing (NLP) and Machine Learning (ML).
- As a part of the MoU, IIT Patna will undertake a number of programmes like joint research activities, writing research papers, organising seminars, internship and mentorship opportunities.
- The academic collaboration is expected to bring real-world industry exposure to students and scholars of IIT Patna and provide an opportunity for faculty members to work closely with Flipkart on research projects, stated the e-commerce marketplace in a statement.
- The company works closely with academia through some of the leading institutes including Indian Institute of Science (IISC), IIT (Kharagpur, Bombay and Kanpur), IIM (Ahmedabad and Kolkata) and foreign universities like Carnegie Mellon University and the University of California at San Diego.
- It has resulted in several research papers at world-class conferences in areas like information retrieval and knowledge discovery.

IIM Kozhikode ties up with Swiss firm to support humanitarian work

- The Indian Institute of Management Kozhikode and Switzerland based HELP Logistics have inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to engage in a collaborative partnership and provide consulting services and logistics training. The MoU will be in force for a year, and will endeavour to carry out the activities that integrate efforts to shape supply chains that benefit humanity, amidst prevailing worldwide uncertainty as a result of natural as well as man-made turmoil.
- The partnership between IIMK and HELP Logistics, a registered non-profit organisation and a subsidiary company of the Kühne Foundation, Schindellegi, Switzerland, aims to develop humanitarian logistics in India and the region by providing consulting services and logistics training to prominent actors during a humanitarian crisis — United Nations bodies, Government institutions and non-Governmental organisations.
- The partnership, which also includes financial support, aims to enhance regional knowledge on humanitarian logistics matters and advance awareness on the subject among humanitarian agencies, government bodies, academia and private sectors.
- The expertise of IIMK and the experience of HELP Logistics would be used to develop new products, such as, learning programmes, games, optimisation models, and so on, in the domain of Humanitarian Supply Chain (HSC) to assist the clients of HELP Logistics to improve their processes and make their humanitarian operations more efficient and effective.

JCI & NSC inks MoU to provide certified good quality seeds to jute farmers in year 2021-22

- A Memorandum of Understanding, MoU to provide certified good quality seeds to jute farmers in the year 2021-22 was signed between Jute Corporation of India and National Seeds Corporation.
- Minister of Textiles Smriti Irani and Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar witnessed the MoU signing ceremony through virtual mode.
- As an outcome of the MoU, Jute Corporation of India will distribute 10 thousand Quintals of certified jute seeds of JRO-204 variety in the 2021-22 crop year. Certified seeds from National Seeds Corporation will be purchased by Jute Corporation of India for this first ever commercial distribution operation.
- Five to six lakh farm families will be benefited and the spurious seed market will be reduced drastically.
- The increase in productivity will enhance the income of the farmers and will go a long way in reaching the target of doubling the farmers' income by 2022.

AIFF signs MoU with IPSO to conduct online scouting workshops in India

- All India Football Federation (AIFF) has signed a two-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the International Professional Scouting Organisation (IPSO) to deliver a number of courses and webinars with regards to scouting in India.
- As per the agreement, information required for scouting and analysis will be provided to the attendees and arrangements of high-quality courses and webinars will be made.
- AIFF Head of Coach Education Savio Medeira believes that the scouting courses will eventually go on to help Indian football in the long run.

IPSO Director Colin Chambers who has already conducted two scouting courses in India (in December 2019 and March 2020), believes that the course will help the attendees to get a better understanding of the foundations of talent identification.

India, Israel sign cultural agreement to further boost people-to-people ties

- India and Israel signed a cultural agreement that outlines a three-year programme of cooperation to further strengthen their strategic bilateral relations today. It aims to promote greater people-to-people exchanges.
- The agreement states that it shall contribute to the development of their relations and to raising awareness, particularly among youth, of the history and culture of the people of both countries.
- The programme of cooperation between the two countries for the years 2020-23 is based on the cultural agreement signed between them on May 18, 1993, a little more than a year after they established full-fledged diplomatic relations.
- The major areas of cooperation identified to promote cultural ties include the exchange of culture and art experts, encouraging cooperation in the protection of cultural heritage and archaeology with the help of Israel Antiquities Authority (IIA) and Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and organising literary fests and book fairs while promoting the translation of famous works in each other's languages.
- It also includes student exchanges through scholarships, encouraging the participation of films and film-makers in each other's international film festivals, devising youth exchange programmes and encouraging sports-related interaction among youth.

Ministry of Skill Development, Ministry of Shipping ink MoU for skill development in port & maritime sector

- A Memorandum of Understanding, MoU was signed between Ministry of Skill Development and Ministry of Shipping for skill development in port and maritime sector.
- The MoU is aimed at skilling, re-skilling and up-skilling manpower for the growing maritime industry and development of coastal community.

- This MoU will reinforce the commitment of Coastal Community Development under Sagar Mala programme of Ministry of Shipping and nurture the skilled manpower for the development of ports and maritime sector of India and globally.

AIM, NITI Aayog, Business Sweden collaborate to promote disruptive potential of Indian entrepreneurs

- Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog and Business Sweden on behalf of India Sweden Healthcare Innovation Centre are collaborating to promote the disruptive potential of Indian entrepreneurs.
- This will boost the vibrant start-up ecosystem across the country. A virtual Statement of Intent was signed between AIM and India-Sweden Healthcare Innovation Centre in New Delhi.
- Under AIM, various programmes or initiatives are being run such as Atal New India Challenge, Atal Incubation Centre, Atal Community Innovation Centers, Atal Tinkering Lab and Atal Research and Innovation for Small Enterprises.
- Through this collaboration, these initiatives are set to receive support by the means of conducting programmes, awareness campaigns, various activities and events that would promote the overall innovation grid of both the countries.
- India-Sweden Healthcare Innovation Centre is a collaboration between AIIMS Delhi, AIIMS Jodhpur and Business Sweden.

IIT Roorkee signs MoU with BIS to work on standardisation and conformity assessment activities

- The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee has inked a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) to carry out activities in the field of standardisation and conformity assessment.
- As part of the collaboration, both bodies will work on civil, electrical, mechanical, chemical, earthquake engineering, development and management of water resources and renewable energy projects, infrastructure development, medical biotechnology and nanotechnology, and biomaterials, among others.
- Students in various engineering disciplines will be able to explore the national and international standards through this collaboration, he added.
- The entities will participate in the standardisation activity through the technical committees of the Bureau, which will also extend financial aid to set up a chair in the field of standardisation and conformity assessment at IIT Roorkee, reported Business World.

L&T arm signs MoU with NTPC to build CO2-to-methanol demonstration plant

- L&T Hydrocarbon Engineering (LTHE), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Larsen & Toubro (L&T), has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with NTPC to build a CO2-to-methanol demonstration plant in an NTPC power station.
- LTHE will be the engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) partner to build a plant that will comprise three sub-units, namely CO2 capture from Flue Gas, H2 production by electrolysis of water, and catalytic conversion of CO2 & H2 to methanol, the company stated.
- As per this MOU, LTHE and NTPC will further collaborate to accelerate the development and subsequently commercialise CO2 to methanol plants. In Q1 FY21, the hydrocarbon segment bagged orders worth Rs.1,220 crore, a decline of 64 per cent year-on-year. The total order book of the segment stood at Rs.42,094 crore, with the international order book constituting 49 per cent of the total order book.

Andhra Pradesh inks pact with Reliance, Allana group for empowering women

- Andhra Pradesh government has signed MoUs with Reliance Retail, Jio and Allana group to collaborate in the YSR Cheyutha, a scheme for empowering women.
- The objective of partnerships is to provide more business opportunities for women.
- Reliance Retail will help women in running groceries retail shops and train them besides providing them provisions at competitive prices. Jio will provide a platform to connect the customer base with the women entrepreneurs.

- Allana group, which has expertise in food processing, will help in the dairy and animal husbandry. The State has already signed MoUs with Amul, HUL, Proctor & Gamble and ITC.
- YSR Cheyutha has been taken up to empower women and to provide a stable livelihood for the SC, ST, BC, minorities in the age group of 45 to 60 years.
- Under YSR Cheyutha scheme, Rs.18,750 would be given per annum for four years aggregating to Rs.75,000 benefiting about 23 lakh women and this year Rs.4.300 crore was disbursed.
- YSR Asara, to be launched next month, will benefit 9 lakh women self-help groups and Rs.6,700 crore will be disbursed.
- The two schemes will bring self-reliance among the women, and Rs.11,000 crore would be spent for their economic empowerment and about one crore women will be benefited, according to a release.

Ministry of Tourism virtually signs an MoU with Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) & FICCI Ladies Organisation(FLO) to promote tourism as sustainable livelihood model for women's economic empowerment

- The tourism ministry has virtually signed an MoU with the Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) and the FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO) to promote tourism as a sustainable livelihood model for the economic empowerment of women, a statement issued by the ministry stated.
- Tourism Minister Prahlad Singh Patel stated the memorandum of understanding (MoU) will provide an opportunity to increase the participation of women in the tourism sector and make them an integral part of the tourism workforce in the country.
- The main components proposed under the initiative are to encourage travel to at least 15 destinations within the country under the "Dekho Apna Desh" initiative. This will be a mandate for the membership base of over 8,000 women of the FLO and TAAI and their family support systems.
- They will also conduct community-based tourism activities around an iconic monument or tourist landmark in each state. Women will be tour guides, they will run food stalls, souvenir stalls with their own arts and crafts, handle the overall accounts and running of the landmark.
- The FLO and TAAI chapters will raise awareness on sustainable tourism practices and focus on tourism as a vital sustainable livelihood tool for women empowerment by way of advocacy and awareness, educational workshops, seminars and panel discussions.
- They will also tie up with training agencies for tourism workshops for training women about concepts on food safety, health and hygiene, sanitation, environment, culinary and entrepreneurship skills.

APEDA signs MoUs with AFC India Ltd and NCUI, Delhi to utilise their expertise in agri sector

- Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) is engaged with State governments for the implementation of agri export policy. Several States, including Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and Kerala have also finalised the action plan for the implementation of policy.
- APEDA signed MoUs with AFC India Ltd, and National Cooperative Union of India (NCUI), Delhi to utilise their expertise in the agri sector. The agriculture export policy was framed with a focus on agriculture export oriented production, promotion of outbound shipments, better price realisation to farmers and synchronisation within policies and programmes of the central government.
- AFC, wholly-owned by commercial banks, NABARD and EXIM Bank, provides consulting and policy advisory and implementation support for agriculture, rural development and other strategic socio-economic sectors. NCUI objective is to educate, guide and assist people in their efforts to build up and expand the cooperative sector.

HDFC Bank partners with Adobe to enhance digital customer experiences

- HDFC Bank announced a strategic partnership with Adobe to enhance the digital experience journey of its customers.
- Powered by Adobe Experience Cloud solutions, this partnership will enable HDFC Bank to deliver personalised digital experiences to existing as well as new customers, at anytime and anywhere.
- It will allow HDFC Bank to provide personalised online experiences to its existing and new customers.
- Further, existing solutions such as Adobe Analytics and Adobe Target, will help the bank derive insights and deepen personalised services to customers.
- Platforms like Data Management Platform in Adobe Audience Manger will help HDFC Bank develop a deeper understanding of customers.
- The rich data will enable the bank to deliver focussed campaigns and communication to customer — through email, mobile, off-line channels and more.

Innoviti partners with Visa to develop installments platform for face-to-face transactions

- Innoviti had entered a partnership with Visa, the leader in payments technology to develop a platform that will enable issuers to extend credit to their cardholders at face-to-face point-of-sale (In India).
- It provides shoppers the ability to choose how they pay during the purchase with the introduction of a suite of platform capabilities leveraging Innoviti's uniPAYNEXT platform and Visa's APIs.
- Innoviti and Visa plan to collaborate and pilot a variety of installment use cases as part of this partnership going forward.
- The installments platform will help merchants leverage cardholders' existing relationships with financial institutions to provide installment solutions at the point of sale - through a single API-based integration.
- This will ultimately help merchants enhance sales, improve customer loyalty and overall cash flow, while offering their shoppers a friction-free payment experience at checkout.
- The platform will initially be piloted with one bank and enabled for key electronic merchant chains on Innoviti's platform. It will subsequently be extended to other banks, merchants, and payment service providers through easy to use APIs using which they more use cases can be developed.

Ericsson and UNICEF launch global partnership to map school internet connectivity

- Ericsson and UNICEF announced a global partnership to help map school connectivity in 35 countries by the end of 2023.
- Mapping the internet connectivity landscape for schools and their surrounding communities is a critical first step towards providing every child with access to digital learning opportunities.
- This joint effort is part of the Giga initiative. Launched last year and led by UNICEF and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).
- Giga aims to connect every school to the internet. Ericsson is the first private sector partner to make a multimillion-dollar commitment to the initiative and does so as a Global UNICEF Partner for School Connectivity Mapping.
- The UNICEF-Ericsson partnership also contributes to the Generation Unlimited Global Breakthrough on Digital Connectivity that aims to give young people digital skills so they can fully and meaningfully participate in the digital economy.

Revision Points

Organizations	Purpose
IITKanpur&Ministry of Defence	Predictive grievance redress mechanism using AI
Andhra Pradesh&ITC Ltd, Hindustan Unilever	Women's empowerment

Ltd (HUL) and Proctor and Gamble	
Flipkart&Uttar Pradesh's One District, One Product (ODOP) scheme	bring artisans, weavers and craftsmen into mainstream business.
NHAI &IIT-Delhi	Setting up centre of excellence for use of AI in decision making
CSIR and FSSAI	Research on food and nutrition
Andhra Pradesh&Boston Group	Setting Centre At Visakhapatnam
Bihar State Pollution Control Board&IIT, Delhi	Setting up of geographical information system (GIS) based platform for air quality management
Rajasthan&SIDBI	Cluster-based development of MSMEs
Power Finance Corporation&District Administration of Siddharthnagar in Uttar Pradesh	Modular Operation Theatre Rooms in the District Hospital, Siddharthnagar
Delhi government&IIT-Bombay and Tata Projects Limited	Construct a smog tower in Connaught Place
Delhi government&Bloomberg Philanthropies	Enhance road safety
Flipkart& IIT Patna	Applied research in the areas of AI, NLP, ML
IIM Kozhikode&HELP Logistics	Support humanitarian work
JCI & NSC	Provide certified good quality seeds to jute farmers
All India Football Federation&International Professional Scouting	Conduct online scouting workshops in India
Ministry of Skill Development, Ministry of Shipping	Skill development in port & maritime sector
AIM, NITI Aayog, Business Sweden	Promote the disruptive potential of Indian entrepreneurs.
Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee&BIS	Standardisation and conformity assessment activities
L&T Hydrocarbon Engineering&NTPC	To build CO2-to-methanol demonstration plant
APEDA, AFC India Ltd and NCUI, Delhi	Implementation of agri export policy
HDFC Bank&Adobe	To enhance digital customer experiences
Innoviti& Visa	Installments platform for face-to-face transactions
Ericsson and UNICEF	To map school connectivity in 35 countries by the end of 2023

Important Summit & Conference

Dr Harsh Vardhan Chairs Session of Bureau of WHO Executive Board

- Dr Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare presided over a meeting of the Bureau of the Executive Board as Chairman of the Executive Board of the World Health Organization (WHO), virtually. The Bureau also includes the Vice Chairs of the Executive Board and the Director General of WHO.
- The agenda of the meet included finalization of dates of 32nd session of Program, Budget and Administration Committee (PBAC), and resumed sessions of 73rdWorld Health Assembly (WHA 73) and 147th Executive Board 147 (EB 147).
- Recollecting the global crisis COVID 19 has unleashed, he stated; "It is about four months ago that the WHO declared the COVID-19 as pandemic. About 17 million people have been infected by COVID-19 and more than 662 thousand precious lives have been lost world wide due to this pandemic.

India calls for real-time information sharing among BRICS nations to tackle drug menace

- The fourth meeting of the BRICS anti drug working group was held recently. The meeting focused on misuse of darknet and other advanced technologies for drug trafficking. The Working Group comprising Brazil, Russia, China, South Africa and India held fruitful discussions.
- The Indian delegation was led by Rakesh Asthana, Director General, Narcotics Control Bureau. The common points emerged during the discussions include need for real time information sharing among the member states and need to curb increased drug trafficking through maritime routes.
- The growing economic might of BRICS countries, their significance as one of the main driving forces of global economic development, their substantial population and abundant natural resources form the foundation of their influence on the international scene. Among other areas of collaboration, matters pertaining to drug trafficking is an important area of cooperation among the BRICS member states.

Indian Solar Alliance to hold World Solar Technology Summit on September 8

- The Indian Solar Alliance which India initiated with France in 2015 will hold the World Solar Technology Summit for the first time on September 8.
- The World Solar Technology Summit is an attempt to bring together scientists, engineers and member states to sit down together and think about what the challenges are in realising the dream of making energy affordable and abundant.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Ministers from ISA member countries, dignitaries and nobel laureates are expected to participate in the virtual summit.
- The International Solar Alliance is an alliance of sunshine rich countries set up by India and France on the sidelines of the Paris meeting on climate change in November 2015.

First Meeting of the National Coordination Committees of India and Uzbekistan on implementation of joint projects

- The first meeting of the National Coordination Committees for monitoring implementation of mutually agreed projects between India and Uzbekistan, constituted under the directions of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and President Mr. Shavkat Mirziyoyev, was held on 24 August, 2020 under Co-chairmanship of Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri V. Muraleedharan and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade of Uzbekistan, Mr. Sardor Umurzakov.
- Both sides comprehensively reviewed the ongoing and planned activities of bilateral economic and trade cooperation, including the status of negotiations for concluding a Bilateral Investment Treaty, Preferential Trade Agreement, mutual market access for agricultural produce of both countries, implementation of identified projects under India's Lines of Credit, cooperation between the state of Gujarat and the Andijan region of Uzbekistan, and the India-Uzbekistan Entrepreneurship Development Centre at Tashkent.

MEA in partnership with Foreign Ministry of Thailand organize 6th Round Table of AINTT

- The Ministry of External Affairs in partnership with the Foreign Ministry of Thailand has organized the 6th Round Table of ASEAN-India Network of Think Tanks (AINTT) which culminated today.
- The theme of the two day Round Table which was conducted through video conferencing was 'ASEAN-India: Strengthening Partnership in the Post COVID Era'.
- It was jointly inaugurated by External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar and the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Thailand Mr. Don Pramudwinai yesterday. ASEAN Secretary General Mr. Lim Jock Hoi also addressed the inaugural session.

India holds joint commission meeting with UAE on trade, discuss regional, international developments

- External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar on Monday co-chaired the 13th India-UAE Joint Commission Meeting on Trade, Economic and Technical Cooperation along with Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs in which the two sides reviewed the continuing growth of their cooperation.

Piyush Goyal Attends 8th East Asia Summit (Economic Ministers' Meeting)

- The 8th East Asia Summit (Economic Ministers' Meeting) was held virtually on 28 August 2020, to strengthen the regional supply chains, become resilient during this challenging time of Covid-19 pandemic, and to spur economic growth.
- The meeting was attended by the Economic ministers from the 10 ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) members and eight other nations, including India, the US, China, Japan, South Korea, Russia, Australia and New Zealand.
- The East Asia Summit 2020 was chaired by Vietnam's Industry and Trade Minister Tran Tuan Anh.

Som Parkash addresses 5th virtual BRICS Industry Minister's Meeting

- The Industry Ministers of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) countries held a meeting through video mode on 24 August 2020 to discuss ways to boost cooperation in areas including 5G and Artificial Intelligence.
- From India, the Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, Shri Som Parkash, participated in the meeting.
- The meeting adopted a joint statement on cooperation in new industries, such as 5G, AI and the industrial Internet, among BRICS countries.

NCPUL organises "World Urdu Conference" in New Delhi

- National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language (NCPUL) has organised the "World Urdu Conference" in New Delhi.
- The inaugural session of the two days long conference was virtually addressed by Union Education Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank'.
- During the conference, the minister added that Government of India will honor Urdu writers and literators with awards and honours in the name of important personalities of Urdu in order to encourage Urdu writers for literary and creative services.

LS Speaker Om Birla attends inaugural ceremony of 5th World Conference of Speakers of Parliament

- Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla attended the inaugural ceremony of the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament (5WCSP).
- The two day Conference is being organized jointly by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), Geneva and the Parliament of Austria with the support of the United Nations (UN).
- Members of Parliament Rajiv Pratap Rudy and Meenakashi Lekhi, both will also be attending the Conference.
- The theme of the Conference is Parliamentary leadership for more effective multilateralism that delivers peace and sustainable development for the people and planet.

- The Conference is being held in the backdrop of the current crisis of COVID-19 pandemic is expected to strengthen multilateralism and international cooperation in order to rebuild a better world.

International Conference on Climate Change and Its Impact on Himalayan Region From September 14 to 16

- A three-day online international conference on Aerosol air quality, climate change and its impact on water resources and livelihoods in the Greater Himalayas will be held from September 14 to 16.
- The Aryabhatta Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES), Nainital and Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna Garhwal University will jointly organise the conference.
- This is the first online international conference to be held at ARIES during this pandemic.
- The conference will deliberate on rapid increase in the air pollution associated with industrialisation, urbanisation and its resultant impact on regional and global air quality, visibility degradation, cloud formation, and atmospheric chemistry, radiation budget, ecosystem, Himalayan climate, and glaciology, cryosphere, monsoon patterns, water availability, and human health.
- The reviewed presentations will be published on a thematic issue, titled "Aerosols-Climate interaction and water resources over the Himalayas".

17th meeting of India-Vietnam Joint Commission held via video-conference

- The 17th meeting of the India-Vietnam Joint Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation was held via video-conference.
- It was co-chaired by External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar and his Vietnamese counterpart Pham Binh Minh. During the meeting, both sides reviewed the recent developments in India-Vietnam Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and discussed the future trajectory of their wide-ranging engagement. They agreed to add new momentum to the economic and defence engagement between the two countries and to explore closer cooperation in emerging areas such as civil nuclear energy, space, marine sciences and new technologies.
- The Minister reaffirmed India's development and capacity building assistance to Vietnam through initiatives such as Quick Impact Projects, ITEC and e-ITEC initiatives, PhD fellowships, as well as projects in water resource management in Vietnam's Mekong Delta region, SDGs, digital connectivity and heritage conservation.
- Two MoUs were also signed on the margins of the Joint Commission Meeting. Both sides agreed to coordinate closely at multilateral forums, including at the UN Security Council, where both India and Vietnam will serve concurrently as non-permanent members in 2021. They also agreed to step up cooperation and coordination at important regional forums under the ASEAN framework.

<p align="center">Revision Points</p>

Conference/Summits	Chaired By/Theme/Addressed By
Session Of Bureau Of WHO Executive Board	Dr Harsh Vardhan
5th World Conference of Speakers of Parliament	Om Birla
International Conference on Climate Change and Its Impact on HimalayanRegion	Aryabhatta Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES), Nainital and Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna Garhwal University
7th meeting of India-Vietnam Joint	Dr. S. Jaishankar and his Vietnamese

Commission	counterpart Pham Binh Minh

Important Defence News

Indian Army begins process to grant Permanent Commission to eligible women officers

- Indian Army has kickstarted the process to grant Permanent Commission to eligible women officers, nearly two weeks after the defence ministry approved the proposal.
- It has asked women officers to apply for permanent commission by 31st August this year.
- Detailed administrative instructions have been issued to all affected women officers giving out guidelines for submission of applications for consideration by the Board.
- Women Officers who have joined the Indian Army through the Women Special Entry Scheme and Short Service Commission Women are being considered and all of them have been instructed to submit their application forms, option certificate and other related documents to Army.
- The Defence Ministry stated, due to the prevailing restrictions imposed by the COVID situation, multiple means of dissemination of instructions have been adopted to ensure that these documents reach all affected women officers on priority.
- The Selection Board will be scheduled immediately after receipt and verification of applications.

Govt working on setting up a new air defence command by October

- The defence ministry is likely to make an announcement in October on setting up of a new air defence command under the broad principle of convergence among the three services, people familiar with the development.
- The new air defence command will handle certain air assets like missiles of the Indian Army
- A high-level committee was appointed earlier this year to frame contours of the new air defence command with a focus on ensuring jointness among the three services.
- The initiative was part of Chief of Defence Staff Gen Bipin Rawat's mandate to redesign all existing military commands to help them effectively deal with all future security challenges.

Indian Armed Forces to revive "Project Cheetah

- The Indian Armed Forces have decided to resuscitate "Project Cheetah" in the midst of pressures with China.
- The venture was pending for quite a while and the tri-administrations have now chosen to restore the undertaking under Rs 3,500 crores.
- The proposition of restoring "Project Cheetah" has been sent to newly formed high-level defence ministry committee under Ajay Kumar.
- Under Ajay Kumar. Ajay Kumar is the Defence secretary. He is in charge of all capital procurements of Indian Army, Navy and Air Force.

First S-400 unit to be delivered by end of 2021

- Russia has stated that the first regiment of S-400 anti-air system will be delivered to India by the end of 2021 and that the delivery period of further batches could be compressed if required. India has ordered five regiments of the cutting edge system that is designed to take down targets at a range of over 400 km.
- "The schedule of fulfilling the contract has been discussed in detail with Indian partners and the delivery of the first regiment is expected by the end of 2021.

Indian Armed Forces contingent heads to Russia for war games next month

- India gets ready to participate in the Russian Kavkaz 2020 strategic command-post exercise. All the bilateral and multilateral military exercises had been put on hold due to the global pandemic of COVID-19 and now their resumption is starting gradually.
- The exercise comes at a time when the tensions between India and China are growing along the Line of Actual Control in Eastern Ladakh. China and Pakistan are also invited to participate in KavKaz 2020 as both countries are members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).
- According to sources, "a tri-service contingent with 150 Army personnel and from Air Force and Navy will be heading to Astrakhan in Southern Russia for the exercise."
- The exercise is scheduled for September 15-26 and there will be participation from atleast 18 countries in KavKaz 2020 including countries from Central Asian Republics who are part of SCO as well as China, Iran, Pakistan and Turkey.

Two light combat helicopters developed by HAL deployed in Ladakh for high altitude IAF operations

- Amid the prevailing border tension with China in Eastern Ladakh, two Light Combat Helicopters (LCH) developed by the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) have been deployed for operations at high altitude in Leh.
- The two HAL choppers will support the Indian Air Force (IAF) in its high altitude missions.
- Light Combat Helicopters is a potent weapon platform because of its state-of-the-art systems and highly accurate weapons that are capable of hitting any type of target by day or night.
- The other features of Light Combat Helicopters include its ability to operate in the complete `Area of Responsibility` (AOR) and altitudes. It has capability to carry adequate weapon load at high altitudes under varied conditions. All these characteristics make it most suitable for hot and high altitude operations.
- The IAF and the Indian Army together need around 160 Light Combat Helicopters. The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) had approved the proposal for an initial batch of 15 Light Combat Helicopters. The IAF had issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for 15 Limited Series Production (LSP) helicopters (10 for IAF and 5 for Army) and HAL had submitted its response.

DAC approves procurement proposals worth Rs 8,722.38 crore

- To take forward the initiative on 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) in its meeting held under the Chairmanship of Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh accorded approval for capital acquisitions of various platforms and equipment required by the Indian Armed Forces. Proposals for an approximate cost of Rs 8,722.38 crore were approved.
- Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) having successfully developed Basic Trainer Aircraft (HTT-40) Prototypes and certification process underway, the DAC approved procurement of 106 Basic Trainer Aircraft from HAL to address the basic training requirements of the Indian Air Force (IAF).
- Post Certification 70 Basic Trainer Aircraft will be initially procured from HAL and balance 36 after operationalisation of HTT-40 fleet in IAF.
- To improve the fire power of Indian Navy, the DAC approved procurement of an upgraded version of Super Rapid Gun Mount (SRGM) which is fitted as the main gun onboard Navy and Indian Coast Guard (ICG) warships from Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL).
- The upgraded version of SRGM has enhanced capability to perform against fast manoeuvring targets like missiles and Fast Attack Crafts and increase the maximum engagement range.
- The DAC approved procurement of 125 mm APFSDS (Armour Piercing Fin Stabilized Discarding Sabot) ammunition for Indian Army as a 'Design and Development Case'. The ammunition being procured will have a 70 per cent indigenous content.

- The DAC also gave approvals that are likely to speed up the procurement of AK 203 and Unmanned Aerial Vehicle upgrades.

Anti-drone system developed by DRDO deployed near Red Fort on Independence Day

- An anti-drone system developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) was deployed near the Red Fort on the occasion of the 74th Independence Day.
- The DRDO-developed system can detect and jam micro drones up to 3 kilometres and use laser to bring down a target up to 1-2.5 kilometres depending on the wattage of laser weapon.
- It can be an effective counter to increased drone-based activity in the western and northern sectors of the country.

Indian Coast Guard Launches 27-Meter-Long Interceptor Boat In Surat

- A newly-built "Interceptor" boat of the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) was launched in Surat.
- Interceptor Boat 'ICGS C-454', built by Larsen and Toubro, was launched into the service of the Coast Guard.
- The 27-meter-long boat has a maximum speed of 45 nautical miles or 83 kilometers per hour, and has excellent seakeeping, maneuverability and endurance range of 500 nautical miles.

First rockets produced by private sector successfully test fired

- The first ever rockets fully manufactured by the private sector have been successfully test fired by the army.
- The Pinaka rockets were tested at a firing range in Pokharan and achieved the desired results by accurately hitting targets.
- The rockets have been manufactured by the private sector after a technology transfer agreement with the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- Six Pinaka rockets were test fired as part of the final developmental trials. The rockets have been manufactured by Economic Explosives Ltd (EEL) and are the first munition of its kind made by the private sector in India.
- As part of the Make in India drive and push for the private sector in defence manufacturing, the Pinaka technology was transferred five years ago, with a decision taken to split further orders evenly with OFB.
- The army has a large requirement for rockets of this class, which is pegged at over 1,000 units annually. The Pinaka is a home developed multi barrel rocket launcher system that is already in service with the Indian Army.
- An order for two additional Pinaka regiments has been under process since 2017, which will be made by L&T and Tata Aerospace and Defence for an estimated Rs 4,500 cr.

Iran unveils locally made ballistic and cruise missiles amid US tensions

- Iran inaugurated a surface-to-surface ballistic missile with a range of 1,400 km and a new cruise missile.
- The surface-to-surface missile, called martyr Qassem Soleimani, has a range of 1,400 km and the cruise missile, called martyr Abu Mahdi, has a range of over 1000 kilometers, Hatami stated.
- Soleimani, head of Iran's elite Quds Force, and Iraqi militia commander Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis were killed in January in a U.S. strike on their convoy in Baghdad airport.

India Pavilion At Army-2020 Forum Inaugurated In Russia

- The India Pavilion at the Army-2020 International Military and Technical Forum was inaugurated by Secretary (Defence Production) Raj Kumar and Indian Ambassador DB Venkatesh Verma outside Moscow.
- The forum, organised by the Russian Defence Ministry, will be held from August 23-29 at the Patriot Park near Moscow, which has been the venue since 2015.
- Delegations from at least 70 nations have confirmed their participation in the high-profile event.

- Meanwhile, Belarus, Brazil, India, Kazakhstan, and Pakistan will present the national expositions at the Patriot Congress and Exhibition Centre.
- The forum will also host discussions among global military officials, researchers and defence industry experts about the application of 3D technologies in designing, manufacturing and operating weapons and military equipment.

DRDO expert panel to review charter of labs to cut overlap

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has set up an expert panel to review the charter of its laboratories and minimise the overlap of technologies they are working on at a time when self-reliance in the defence sector is a top priority for the government.
- DRDO chief G Satheesh Reddy has constituted the five-member committee under the chairmanship of Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi director V Ramagopal Rao and asked the panel to submit its report within 45 days.
- The other members of the committee are Indian Air Force deputy chief Air Marshal Sandeep Singh, Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre director S Somanath, Instruments Research & Development Establishment (a Dehradun-based DRDO lab) director Benjamin Lionel and Director General-Naval Systems and Materials, Samir V Kamath.

INS Viraat to Be Dismantled at Alang in Gujarat

- INS Viraat, the aircraft carrier that served the Indian Navy for 30 years before being decommissioned three years ago, is likely to be towed from Mumbai to Alang in Gujarat's Bhavnagar district next month to be dismantled and sold as scrap.
- The longest serving warship, inducted into the IndianNavy in 1987, was bought by Shree Ram Group for Rs 38.54 crore at an auction conducted by the Metal Scrap Trade Corporation Limited last month.
- It will take around three days for the ship to betowed from Mumbai to Alang. It will be scrapped at thecountry's first certified eco-friendly ship recycling yard in nine to 12 months.
- INS Viraat, the second Centaur-class aircraft carrier,was in service for 30 years before being decommissioned in March 2017.

India withdraws from multilateral war game in Russia's Kavkaz

- India has decided to withdraw from a multilateral war game in Russia's Kavkaz exercise next month.
- India had conveyed to Russia that it will participate in the strategic command-post exercise to be held in the Astrakhan region in southern Russia from 15 to 26 September.
- Around 20 countries including all member-nations of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) including China and Pakistan are expected to participate in the Kavkaz exercise.
- India's reconsideration on its participation in the military drill comes ahead of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's scheduled visit to Russia next week to attend a crucial meeting of the SCO.

Important Science and Technology

Central Railway designs robot 'Rakshak' for health assistant

- The Mumbai Division of Central Railway (CR) has designed a health assistant robot 'Rakshak' who can remotely communicate between doctor and patient.
- This medical aid robot was developed in-house at EMU car shed, Kurla in the Mumbai section of the Central Railway and handed over to Bharat Ratna Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Memorial Hospital, Byculla, Mumbai.
- This medical aid robot is able to measure health parameters such as temperature, pulse, oxygen percentage and dispenser sanitizer automatic, infrared sensors. It can also provide medicines, food to the patients and make a two-way video communication between the doctor and the patient.
- It can move in all directions at all levels with a range of remote operations up to 150 meters.

- With a full charge battery, the Rakshak robot can work continuously for 6 hours and can carry up to 10 kg of weight in its tray. It is based on Wi-Fi and therefore does not require any mobile data. It also operates with Android mobile application. Videos and snapshots of patients can also be downloaded through the robot

Scientists discover active volcanoes on Venus

- A recent study has identified 37 recently active volcanic structures on Venus, the second planet from the Sun. The study provides some of the best evidence yet that Venus is still a geologically active planet.
- The study was conducted by researchers at the University of Maryland and the Institute of Geophysics at ETH Zurich, Switzerland.
- Scientists have known for some time that Venus has a younger surface than planets like Mars and Mercury, which have cold interiors. Evidence of a warm interior and geologic activity dots the surface of the planet in the form of ring-like structures known as coronae, which form when plumes of hot material deep inside the planet rise through the mantle layer and crust. This is similar to the way mantle plumes formed the volcanic Hawaiian Islands.
- But it was thought that the coronae on Venus were probably signs of ancient activity, and that Venus had cooled enough to slow geological activity in the planet's interior and harden the crust so much that any warm material from deep inside would not be able to puncture through.
- The active coronae on Venus are clustered in a handful of locations, which suggests areas where the planet is most active, providing clues to the workings of the planet's interior. These results may help identify target areas where geologic instruments should be placed on future orbiter missions to Venus, such as Europe's EnVision that is scheduled to launch in 2032, reachingVenus after a five month cruise.
- EnVision aims at determining the level and nature of the geological activity and the sequence of events that generated the surface features of Venus.

INST scientists develop economical nonsurgical prevention of cataract

- A team of scientists from the Institute of Nano Science & Technology (INST) an autonomous institute under the Department of Science & Technology, Government of India has developed nanorods from the nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) Aspirin, a popular medication used to reduce pain, fever, or inflammation and found it to be an effective non–invasive small molecule-based nanotherapeutics against cataract.
- Cataract a major form of blindness that occurs when the structure of crystallin proteins that make up the lens in our eyes deteriorates, causing damaged or disorganized proteins to aggregate and form a milky blue or brown layer, which ultimately affects lens transparency.
- Aspirin nanorods prevent the aggregation of crystallin protein and various peptides derived from its fragmentation, which play a crucial role in cataract formation. They prevent the protein/peptide aggregation through biomolecular interactions, which convert beta-turn like the structure of the crystallin peptides, responsible for amyloid formation into coils and helices, those fail to aggregate. These were found to prevent cataract formation by inhibiting aggregation of crystallin, and crystallin derived peptide aggregates. As with aging and under various conditions, the lens protein crystallin aggregates to form opaque structures in the eye lens, which impairs vision and cause cataract.

IIT Madras and Helyxon developmonitoring solutions for COVID-19

- IIT Madras' Healthcare Technology Innovation Centre (HTIC) and Helyxon, a healthcare startup in IIT Madras Research Park have announced successful deployment of remote patient monitoring solutions for COVID-19 that they have jointly developed.

- The device is a first-of-its-kind in the market that does clinically accurate continuous monitoring of four critical parameters – temperature, oxygen saturation, respiratory rate and heart rate.
- The device has already reached over 2,000 patients in public and private hospitals, and at homes, with another 5,000 devices in the pipeline. Production is being scaled up to meet the growing demand.
- The cost of the device ranges from Rs 2,500 to 10,000 depending on the configuration and parameters. The device is completely self-contained, portable, wireless and can be clipped on to patient's finger and data is streamed to a mobile phone or central monitoring system.

SpaceX capsule and NASA crew make first splashdown in 45 years

- Two NASA astronauts returned to Earth in a dramatic, retro-style splashdown, their capsule parachuting into the Gulf of Mexico to close out an unprecedented test flight by Elon Musk's SpaceX company.
- It was the first splashdown by U.S. astronauts in 45 years, with the first commercially built and operated spacecraft to carry people to and from orbit. The return clears the way for another SpaceX crew launch as early as next month and possible tourist flights next year.
- Test pilots Doug Hurley and Bob Behnken arrived back on Earth in their SpaceX Dragon capsule named Endeavour, less than a day after departing the International Space Station and two months after blasting off from Florida. The capsule parachuted into the calm gulf waters about 40 miles off the coast of Pensacola, hundreds of miles from Tropical Storm Isaias pounding Florida's Atlantic coast.
- The astronauts' ride back to Earth was fast, bumpy and hot, at least on the outside.
- The spacecraft went from a screaming orbital speed of 28,000 kmph to 560 kmph during atmospheric re-entry, and finally to 24 kmph at splashdown. Peak heating during descent was 1,900 degrees Celsius. The anticipated top G forces felt by the crew- four to five times the force of Earth's gravity.
- The last time NASA astronauts returned from space to water was on July 24, 1975, in the Pacific, the scene of most splashdowns, to end a joint U.S.-Soviet mission known as Apollo-Soyuz. The Mercury and Gemini crews in the early to mid-1960s parachuted into the Atlantic, while most of the later Apollo capsules hit the Pacific. The lone Russian "splashdown" was in 1976 on a partially frozen lake amid a blizzard following an aborted mission; the harrowing recovery took hours.

SWR Installs 'UV Bag Bath' At Bengaluru Railway Station

- A unique COVID prevention kiosk was inaugurated at KSR Bengaluru Railway Station by Bengaluru Division as a part of its continued fight against COVID-19 pandemic.
- The kiosk is in the form of a luggage disinfecting tunnel named 'UV Baggage Bath'. It has been set up to ensure that passenger luggage will be completely sanitized before the passengers board the trains.
- UV Baggage Bath is an enclosed chamber beamed by Ultra Violet (UV) light from all directions, through which passenger luggage will be passed through, to effectively disinfect all types of contaminations including virus, bacteria & other germs / pathogens that reside on all the outer surface of the baggage.
- The luggage shall then be handed back to the passenger with a sticker certifying it as disinfected. Extra care has been taken to ensure the safety of the passengers with an extended tunnel on both ends and UV resistant flaps for the sides of the tunnel. The option can be exercised by passengers disembarking at the stations too.
- This proposal is being implemented at KSR Bengaluru and Yesvantpur Railway stations by M/s Optimurz Bio and IT Solutions, a Chennai Based new generation start-up, delivering Information Technology and Integrated Biotech solutions using cutting edge technologies, under NINFRIS (New & Innovative Non-Fare Revenue Ideas Scheme) by Railways.

US conducts test flight of unarmed Minuteman 3 missile

- An unarmed Minuteman 3 intercontinental ballistic missile was launched from California on a test flight to a target in the Pacific Ocean from Vandenberg Air Force Base .
- Missile's three reentry vehicles travelled 4,200 miles (6,759 kilometers) to the Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands as part of a developmental test.

Godrej Appliances launches Godrej Viroshield, UV-C tech based sanitisation device in Kerala

- Godrej Appliances has launched a UV-C technology-based disinfecting device Godrej Viroshield in the Kerala.
- The product has been tested and certified by ICMR empanelled lab for its UVC Irradiance.

About Godrej Viroshield

- Godrej VIROSHIELD is a UV-C technology-based disinfecting device that kills more than 99% COVID 19 Virus in 2-6 minutes.
- It operates at ~254nm UV wavelength which is optimal for neutralizing COVID – 19, other viruses and bacteria.
- Godrej VIROSHIELD with UV surround technology uses 4 UV-C tubes & 6 Side Reflective Interiors, which is the highest in the market, for 360° exposure.
- It is well placed to disinfect anything - from grocery packs to leafy vegetables, mobile phones and masks to gold ornaments, headphones to car keys, toys to currency notes, wallets to spectacles, etc.

IISC Bengaluru develops mobile RT-PCR covid-19 testing lab

- Karnataka inaugurated a mobile RT-PCR covid- 19 testing lab which was the first in the country and would help ramp up testing in the state.
- The Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru, has developed the MITR (Mobile Infection Testing and Reporting) lab, which is capable of conducting 9,000 tests per month.
- The mobile lab can also be utilized for molecular diagnostic testing and can be deployed in Corona hot spots quickly. Apart from Covid, the lab can be utilized for testing H1N1, HCV, TB, HPV, HIV etc.,

Duke University Scientists develop low-cost method to test mask effectiveness against viral droplets

- Duke University in the US, have developed a simple method to visualise how effectively different types of masks prevent the spread of droplets that could contain novel coronavirus particles, an advance which could aid small scale mask producers to optimise designs, and help community outreach organisations demonstrate proper mask fitting procedures.
- A cell phone camera recorded the droplets and a simple computer algorithm counted them.
- They suggested based on the findings that N95 masks without valves blocked droplet spread best, and surgical or polypropylene masks and handmade cotton face coverings were also effective.

IIT Kanpur develops indigenous seed balls BEEG for farmers

- In Uttar Pradesh, IIT Kanpur has developed indigenous seed balls named BEEG (Bio -compost Enriched Eco-friendly Globule) which will help people and farmers in plantation with safety in Corona times and will also provide employment to people. The BEEG is developed in collaboration with Agnys Waste Management Private Limited (start-up at IIT Kanpur).
- The Seed Balls are comprised of indigenous variety of seeds, compost, and clay. There is no need for digging pits for planting saplings . These seed walls are to be thrown at aimed places and they will germinate when come into contact with water.
- IIT Prof J . Rajkumar stated BEEG is enriched with the right ingredients and seeds to germinate early, and are the best way to utilise Monsoon and plant as many trees as possible without risking lives by social gathering during Covid 19.

Indian Spacetech Startup Skyroot Aerospace Successfully Test-Fires Rocket Engine

- Aerospace startup Skyroot Aerospace has successfully test fired an upper-stage rocket engine, becoming the first Indian private company to demonstrate the capability to build a homegrown rocket engine.
- The 3-D printed rocket engine – Raman, named after Nobel laureate CV Raman – has fewer moving parts and weighs less than half of conventional rocket engines with a similar capacity.
- The Hyderabad-headquartered firm and Solar Industries, claimed that the engine was capable of multiple restarts, enabling the launch vehicle to insert various satellites into multiple orbits in a single mission. It will conduct more tests of the Raman engine over the next six months.
- Skyroot plans to build a family of rockets. The first rocket, which can hurl satellites of 250-700 kgs into a lower earth orbit, is expected to be launched by end-2021.
- The company has designed in-house software for launch vehicle guidance, navigation, and control functions, and is testing onboard its avionics modules.

Microwave device 'Atulya' to disintegrate novel Coronavirus unveiled by Nitin Gadkari

- A microwave device named 'Atulya' that can disinfect any premises in just 30 seconds, disintegrating COVID-19 virus was unveiled by Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Nitin Gadkari in Nagpur.
- Certified by the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) and based on French and American standards, the device is 100 per cent Made in India and has been manufactured under the aegis of the MSME.
- The 'Atulya' microwave like device can be used to disinfect any premises up to five metres area, besides surface areas, home and office furniture, beds, new boxes and even the contents of the boxes. This equipment can be hand handled as its weight is mere three kilograms.
- The device disintegrates the COVID-19 virus with the help of differential heating in the range of 56 to 60 degrees Celsius temperatures. The positive thing about this device is it is 100 per cent safe for humans and does not emit Ultraviolet rays for disinfection, that could be harmful to the human body. Depending upon the size and shape of objects, the disinfection time is 30 seconds to one minute.

Israel, US successfully test Arrow-2 ballistic missile defense system

- Israel successfully tested its Arrow-2 ballistic missile interceptor.
- The Missile test was conducted in the test site in Central Israel over the Mediterranean Sea.
- The Missile Defense Agency (MDA) of the United States of America along with Israeli Air Force and Israel Aerospace Industries conducted the testing.
- The Arrow-2 interceptor successfully performed its planned trajectory and destroyed the target.
- During the test, the Arrow intercepted an Israeli Sparrow-class medium-range target missile.
- Arrow-2 is part of the multi-layered system Israel has developed to defend against both short- and mid-range rockets fired from Gaza and Lebanon, as well as Iran's long-range missiles.
- It includes Iron Dome, David's Sling and the Arrow-3 system – capable of defending against threats from outside the atmosphere.
- The joint test with the US is an expression of the friendship and partnership between the countries and United States' deep commitment to the security of the citizens of Israel.

Israel shares AI-based technology, high-end equipment with AIIMS to help combat COVID-19

- Israel has given state-of-the-art Artificial Intelligence-based technologies and high-end equipment to AIIMS, Delhi as part of Israel-India cooperation to fight the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

- Israeli Ambassador to India Dr Ron Malka formally handed over the high-end equipment and technology solutions to Director of AIIMS, Dr Randeep Guleria in the presence of Chief Guest Sanjay Bhattacharya, Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs.
- It also includes a 12-hour disinfection product called CPD that stays active to protect the surface against new attacks of contamination, a non-invasive remote patient monitoring system which aids as a preliminary screening tool of respiratory indicators of suspected COVID-19 patients and recovering patients and AI-based software for Ultrasound use and designed especially for fighting COVID-19.
- Dr Guleria stated India-Israel relations are strong. Earlier, India helped Israel with medicines and safety gear. Now Israel has sent equipment including robotic teleconsultation and telemonitoring equipment.

NASA satellite finds 66 new exoplanets, 2,100 more 'candidates'

- During its two-year-long primary mission, NASA's planet hunter TESS has found 66 new exoplanets, or worlds beyond our solar system, as well as nearly 2,100 candidates astronomers are working to confirm, the US space agency has stated.
- TESS, short for Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite, scanned about 75 per cent of the starry sky during its primary mission that ended on July 4, NASA stated.
- TESS monitors 24-by-96-degree strips of the sky called sectors for about a month using its four cameras.
- The mission spent its first year observing 13 sectors comprising the southern sky and then spent another year imaging the northern sky.
- Now in its extended mission, TESS has turned around to resume surveying the south, NASA stated. The extended mission for TESS will be completed in September 2022.
- Among the mission's newest planetary discoveries are its first Earth-size world, named TOI 700 d, which is located in the habitable zone of its star, the range of distances where conditions could be just right to allow liquid water on the surface.
- TESS revealed a newly minted planet around the young star AU Microscopii and found a Neptune-size world orbiting two suns.In addition to its planetary discoveries, TESS has observed the outburst of a comet in our solar system, as well as numerous exploding stars.
- Even more remarkable, TESS watched as a black hole in a distant galaxy shredded a Sun-like star, NASA stated.

AFK hands over first consignment of grenade launcher ammunition to BSF

- The Ammunition Factory, Khadki (AFK) handed over the first consignment of the indigenously-designed and manufactured 40-millimetre Under Barrel Grenade Launcher (UBGL) ammunition to the Border Security Force (BSF).
- The trigger system of the launcher is fitted to the rifle in such a way that the soldier can fire both the rifle bullet and the grenade from the same posture. The launcher can fire the grenade up to a range of 400 metres.
- The 40 mm UBGL, whose ammunition was handed over, is one of the 101 items on the import embargo list of defence systems or platforms, announced by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.
- The Department of Military Affairs (DMA) of the Union Defence Ministry has prepared a list of 101 items, for which there would be an embargo on import beyond a certain time in the future.

Goa Shipyard made Offshore Patrol Vessel 'Sarthak' launched

- An Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) for the Indian Coast Guard was launched and re-christened as Indian Coast Guard Ship 'Sarthak' .
- The launching ceremony at Goa Shipyard Limited, GSL, Yard 1236, was conducted through video conferencing from Coast Guard headquarters at New Delhi .

- OPV Sarthak is the 4th in the series of five OPVs. It has been designed & built indigenously by Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) in line with the PM's vision of 'Make in India'.
- The ship is designed to embark and carry a twin-engine helicopter, four high-speed boats and one inflatable boat for swift boarding and Search & Rescue operations. The ship is also capable of carrying limited pollution response equipment to undertake oil spill pollution response at sea.
- The ship will be deployed extensively for EEZ surveillance, Coastal Security and other duties as enshrined in the Coast Guard charter of duties, to safeguard the maritime interests of the Nation.

Defence Minister launches BDL's indigenised Konkurs missile test equipment

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has launched Konkurs Missile Test Equipment and Konkurs Launcher Test Equipment, which have been indigenously designed and developed by Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL). Earlier, these products were imported from Russia.
- The Defence Minister launched these two indigenised products virtually from New Delhi in the presence of the Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat, and Chairman and Managing Director of BDL Commodore Siddharth Mishra (Retd), among others present at Hyderabad.
- The two products have been launched as part of the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' week being celebrated during August 7-14, 2020.
- The Konkurs Missile Test Equipment is designed for checking the serviceability of Konkurs-M anti-tank guided missiles. Konkurs Launcher Test Equipment is designed and developed for checking the serviceability of Konkurs-M missile launchers.

Rajnath Singh launches online portal 'SRIJAN' to promote indigenisation in defence production

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched an online portal that provides information about defence equipment and items that can be taken up for indigenisation by private sector companies. Ministry of Defence is observing 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Week' from 7 Aug to 14 Aug 2020.
- Two memorandum of understandings (MoUs) were signed between Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and the defence public sector undertakings (DPSUs).
- The aforementioned online portal that will promote indigenisation of defence items' production is called "SRIJAN".
- The DPSUs, Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) and headquarters of the armed forces (SHQs) can display on SRIJAN those items that are being imported currently so that the Indian industry can design, develop and manufacture them domestically as per its capability.

IIT Ropar develops UVGI-based room disinfection device 'UVSAFE'

- IIT Ropar claims to have developed India's first-of-its-kind UVGI-based room disinfectant device 'UVSAFE'.
- It harnesses the germicidal effects of UV-C radiations to inactivate all bacteria and viruses.
- The device ensures zero shadow, provides 360° disinfection and has foldable wings.
- It has been tested and accredited by FICCI and NABL.

"Pavitrapati" Biodegradable Face Mask, Anti-Microbial Body Suit "Aushada Tara" from DIAT

- Pune based Defence Institute of Advanced Technology, DIAT (DU) developed Nanofibres of Ayurvedic based Biodegradable Face Mask which acts as a virus neutralizer to resist against the bacteria/virus, and has named "Pavitrapati".
- Another ToT has been transferred to M/s. Siddheshwar Techtessile Pvt. Ltd., Maharashtra by DIAT for development of anti-microbial bodysuit in the name of "Aushada tara".

- This suit has superhydrophobic, breathing, anti-microbial, comfort feeling properties. The fabric material of the suit has the approval for fighting against the COVID-19.
- The suit had cleared the splash resistant tests and it has got the good repellent property of any fluids. The demand for this suit will be for medical hospitals, private companies, airlines and Govt agencies. The production of the Aushada Tara has started and the initial order is already placed and executed.

Indian scientists develop sustainable process for making brick-like structures on the moon

- A team of researchers from the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has developed a sustainable process for making brick-like structures on the moon.
- It exploits lunar soil, and uses bacteria and guar beans to consolidate the soil into possible load-bearing structures.
- These space bricks could eventually be used to assemble structures for habitation on the moons surface.
- The cost of sending one pound of material to outer space is aboutRs 7.5 lakh.
- The process developed by the IISc and ISRO team uses urea which can be sourced from human urine and lunar soil as raw materials for construction on the moon's surface

The process also has a lower carbon footprint because it uses guar gum instead of cement for support.

- The guar gum was added to increase the strength of the material by serving as a scaffold for carbonate precipitation.
- The final product obtained after a few days of incubation was found to possess significant strength and machinability.

TERI launches flood and heavy rain warning system for Guwahati, in collaboration with NDMA

- The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) have launched a Flood Early Warning System (FEWS) for Guwahati to alert local authorities about flash floods and/or heavy rainfall. The fully automated web-based tool will help them take timely and appropriate measures in event of a natural disaster heading toward the city.
- Developed under TERI's project supported by the NDMA in collaboration with the India Meteorological Department (IMD) and the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA), the tool can be replicated to predict urban floods in any part of the country.
- The FEWS pilot project was undertaken on an experimental basis, to enhance resilience for urban floods, in assistance with the Guwahati Municipal Corporation, North Eastern Space Applications Centre (NESAC) and TERI School of Advanced Studies (TERI SAS).
- FEWS uses IMD's weather research forecast (WRF) model results of precipitation at 3 km spatial resolution having hourly data set to simulate the hydrodynamic model for flood prediction and sends out early warning.
- The system is developed with an inbuilt urban drainage to predict flood at street-level accuracy. The flood level and hotspot areas can be visualised over Google Maps which will help in identifying flood-affected areas, disaster preparedness, and management of urban flooding related issues such as traffic disruption, providing relief and recovery, and managing storm water,"

Chandrayaan-2 captures image of crater on Moon; ISRO names it after Vikram Sarabhai

- Chandrayaan-2 has captured images of the Moon and one of the craters has been named after Vikram Sarabhai, the father of the Indian space programme.
- Vikram Ambalal Sarabhai's 100th birth century was observed on 12th of August, 2020.
- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has sought to pay tribute to him in a special way by announcing that Chandrayaan-2 Orbiter has captured the Moon images of 'Sarabhai Crater'.

- The Sarabhai Crater is around 250 to 300 kilometres east of the crater where the Apollo 17 and Luna 21 Missions had landed.
- The Sarabhai Crater, captured in 3D images, shows that it has a depth of around 1.7 kilometres taken from its raised rim and the slope of crater walls is between 25 to 35 degrees.
- These findings will help space scientists understand further the process on the lunar region filled with lava.

IIT Kharagpur Launches DEEKSHAK Platform for Organizations to Conduct Online Classes

- IIT Kharagpur has developed an e-classroom software called "DEEKSHAK" for organizations to conduct online classes.
- Researchers at IIT Kharagpur have come up with this software as users are frequently experiencing challenges and more importantly, the operational requirements of an electronic classroom.
- The DEEKSHAK platform by IIT Kharagpur utilizes one-way communication for bandwidth efficiency. Therefore, instead of all students participating in a class as in meeting software, the focus is only on the teacher and the learning materials.
- DEEKSHAK is a low bandwidth web-based software that can be accessed using any computer or even on mobile phones.
- Prof. Raja Datta, Department of Electronics and Electrical Communication, Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur with his postgraduate students developed the software.

Zydus Cadila launches India's cheapest remdesivir version Remdac

- Zydus Cadila launches the generic version of Remdesivir, under the brand name Remdac, for treating patients suffering from severe symptoms of Covid-19.
- Priced at Rs 2,800 per 100 mg vial, Remdac is the most economical Remdesivir brand as on date. Zydus is the fifth company to launch generic version of Remdesivir
- The company stated the drug will be made available across India through the group's strong distribution chain reaching out to government and private hospitals treating Covid-19 patients.

Astronomers find Milky Way look-alike galaxy 12 billion light-years away

- Astronomers at the Max Planck Institute for Astrophysics have found a look-alike of the Milky Way 12 billion light-years away with the help of the Atacama Large Millimetre/sub-millimetre Array (ALMA).
- "The galaxy is so far away its light has taken more than 12 billion years to reach us," the institute stated.
- This makes it an even more fascinating discovery as according to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) our universe is around 13 billion years, give or take a few billion.
- The galaxy, called SPT0418-47, does not appear to have spiral arms lie our Milky Way but has at least two features that are similar to our galaxy: a rotating disc and a bulge.
- This is the first time a bulge has been seen this early in the history of the Universe, making SPT0418-47 the most distant Milky Way look-alike, researchers stated.
- It is difficult for researchers to observe these galaxies even with the most powerful telescopes due to the distance. The team utilized a nearby galaxy as a powerful magnifying glass — an effect known as gravitational lensing to overcome this difficulty. This allowed ALMA "to see into the distant past in unprecedented detail. In this effect, the gravitational pull from the nearby galaxy distorts and bends the light from the distant galaxy, causing it to appear misshapen and magnified."
- Though the galaxy is quite similar to ours, astronomers expect it to evolve into a galaxy very different from the Milky Way. It is likely to evolve into an elliptical galaxy, rather than a spiral.
- Future studies will be conducted to further explore the evolution of these 'baby' disc galaxies including those with ESO's Extremely Large Telescope.

DRDO develops UV disinfection tower for sanitising coronavirus-prone areas

- Defence Research and Development Organisation, DRDO has developed an equipment named UV blaster which is a Ultra Violet based area sanitiser. Designed and developed by Laser Science and Technology Centre, LASTEC, the Delhi based premier laboratory of DRDO, the equipment is useful for high tech surfaces like electronic equipment, computers and other gadgets in laboratories and offices that are not suitable for disinfection with chemical methods.
- The product is also effective for areas with large flow of people such as airports, shopping malls, metros, hotels, factories, offices, etc. The UV based area sanitiser can be used by remote operation through laptop or mobile phone using wifi link. The equipment has six lamps each with 43 watts of UV-C power at 254 nm wavelength for 360 degree illumination.
- For a room of about 12 x 12 feet dimension, the disinfection time is about 10 minutes and 30 minutes for a 400 square feet area by positioning the equipment at different places within the room. The sanitiser switches off on accidental opening of room or human intervention.

SCTIMST & IIT Madras start-up set up portable hospital infrastructure for COVID -19

- Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology (SCTIMST), an autonomous institute under the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Govt. of India in collaboration with 'Modulus Housing' a start-up incubated by IIT Madras has come up with a solution using decentralised approach to detect, manage and treat COVID-19 patients in local communities through portable microstructures.
- A portable microstructure named as "MediCAB", which is modular, portable, durable, easy to set up and can be customised as per the requirements of the customer.
- It is foldable and is composed of four zones – a doctor's room, an isolation room, a medical room/ward, and a twin-bed ICU, maintained at negative pressure. It can be easily transported and installed anywhere in geographic locations and can be erected in just two hours with the help of four persons.
- The cabins in the MediCAB are tightly sealed and are dust-proof. It has in-built electricals, which are just plug-n-play. MediCAB can withstand harsh weather and heavy rains as well.

NASA observing 'dent' in magnetic field 'It is splitting'

- NASA Researchers Track Slowly Splitting 'Dent' in Earth's Magnetic Field
- A small but evolving dent in Earth's magnetic field can cause big headaches for satellites.
- Earth's magnetic field acts like a protective shield around the planet, repelling and trapping charged particles from the Sun. But over South America and the southern Atlantic Ocean, an unusually weak spot in the field – called the South Atlantic Anomaly, or SAA – allows these particles to dip closer to the surface than normal.
- Particle radiation in this region can knock out onboard computers and interfere with the data collection of satellites that pass through it – a key reason why NASA scientists want to track and study the anomaly.
- The South Atlantic Anomaly is also of interest to NASA's Earth scientists who monitor the changes in magnetic field strength there, both for how such changes affect Earth's atmosphere and as an indicator of what's happening to Earth's magnetic fields, deep inside the globe.
- Currently, the SAA creates no visible impacts on daily life on the surface. However, recent observations and forecasts show that the region is expanding westward and continuing to weaken in intensity. It is also splitting – recent data shows the anomaly's valley, or region of minimum field strength, has split into two lobes, creating additional challenges for satellite missions.
- A host of NASA scientists in geomagnetic, geophysics, and heliophysics research groups observe and model the SAA, to monitor and predict future changes – and help prepare for future challenges to satellites and humans in space.

ARCI scientists convert tamarind waste & cotton waste to supercapacitor electrodes

- Scientists at the International Advanced Research Centre for Powder Metallurgy & New Materials (ARCI), an autonomous institute of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Govt. of India, have developed a couple of cost-effective electrode material for making affordable supercapacitor devices, from waste biomass like tamarind seeds and industrial cotton waste.
- They have converted the waste materials into highly porous carbon fibres by activation process and then utilised the porous carbon fibres to make high-performance supercapacitor electrodes.
- The ARCI scientists used it to test the pore characteristics and stability of the activated carbon material prepared from tamarind seed and its suitability for supercapacitor application.

IIT Madras Researchers discover new component to effectively split Water into Hydrogen and Oxygen using Solar Power

- Indian Institute of Technology Madras Researchers have discovered a new material to effectively split Water into Hydrogen and Oxygen using Solar Power.
- This research is expected to create a renewed interest in solar fuels domain, which can potentially bring the conversion and storage part in a single system, thereby reducing the cost per kWh of solar energy.
- A material to be employed in solar fuel generation should be a good photovoltaic material and at the same time remain stable in water medium.
- It is specializing in the development of materials and devices architectures for solar cells, solar water splitting to hydrogen fuels, carbon dioxide recycling and metal-air batteries for electric vehicles.
- Solar energy conversion to electricity and its storage at low cost, is an integral part of renewable energy research. The research aims to reduce the world's reliance on fossil fuels and in turn move out of anthropogenic greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide.
- It is an immediate requirement to develop low-cost solar energy conversion and storage systems that can produce energy equal to, or lower than the cost of grid power. The cost of conventional silicon-based solar panels -- though excellent performers and stable -- is expensive.
- The research paper, authored by Mr. Chandiran and SERG research scholar Muhammed Hamdan, was published in the international edition of the peer-reviewed journal Angewandte Chemie.

IIT Bombay,Shiv Nadar researchers develop environment friendly lithium batteries

- Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay and Shiv Nadar University claim to have developed a technology for production of environment friendly Lithium-Sulfur (Li-S) batteries which will be three times more energy efficient and cost effective than Lithium-ion batteries commonly used at present.
- The Li-S battery technology leverages principles of green chemistry, incorporating usage of by-products from the petroleum industry (Sulfur), agro-waste elements and copolymers such as cardanol (a by-product of cashew nut processing) and eugenol (clove oil) as cathodic materials.
- The technology has the potential to aid multi-billion dollar industries including tech gadgets, drones, electric vehicles (EV) and several more that depend on such batteries.

China sends a new Earth observation satellite Gaofen-9 05 into space

- China successfully launched a new Earth observation satellite, Gaofen-9 05, from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China.
- The satellite, sent into orbit by a Long March-2D carrier rocket, is an optical remote-sensing satellite with a resolution up to the sub-meter level.

- The satellite will be mainly used for land surveying, city planning, road network design, crop yield estimation and disaster prevention and mitigation, as well as providing information for the construction of the Belt and Road.
- Other payloads carried on the rocket include a multi-functional experimental satellite and Tiantuo-5, a spacecraft developed by the National University of Defense Technology.
- The experimental satellite will have its communication to navigation technology being further tested, while Tiantuo-5 will be used to verify in-orbit information collection capabilities from ships, spacecraft and Internet of Things.
- This mission marks the 343rd flight of the Long March rocket family.

Start up RoDeSo develops gesture controlled robot Astra for remote use in Covid, hazardous environment

- A student start-up RoDeSo of the BITS Pilani Hyderabad Technology Business Incubator (TBI) has developed a voice and gesture controlled robot 'Astra' (Automated Solution for Transportation in Remote Area) which can be deployed in isolation wards for Covid-19 infected cases.
- This could be used for delivery of essentials to patients, collection of contagious waste and virtual visits to the patient by doctors.
- The rover is an AI-powered, compact, multi motor, gesture and voice controlled transportation solution.
- The start-up also has an IOT (internet of things) based application to control the bot remotely.
- RoDeSo has already developed the alpha version and plans to add more functionalities like screen for live video conference with doctors, infrared sensors for temperature recording, health management system and navigation control for zero human intervention.

Manipur student develops mobile game 'Coroboi' amid COVID-19

- A class 9 student from Imphal, Baldeep Ningthoujam has developed a mobile game 'Coroboi' amid COVID-19 pandemic.
- The game, based on COVID guidelines is now available for Android users.
- "Coroboi", a boy from India(Manipur) is stranded and wants to return home. Wearing Leirum Phee (Manipuri traditional cloth) and a Mask, he will run towards his goal. He will be earning points during his journey. If the police caught him, a fine of 5000 points will be deducted.

IIT Madras, Stuttgart University develop method to dispose pharma waste

- Indian Institute of Technology(IIT), Madras along with German researchers have developed 'co-composting' methods that can be used to safely dispose of toxic pharmaceutical wastewater and sludge.
- Their method converts the waste into compost of high quality and within just 20 days.
- A few composting facilities have already been set up in various villages across India based on these studies.
- The Research team is also in discussion with the Government of India for setting up more such facilities for septage management. While the initial objective of the study was to understand how pharmaceuticals and personal care products affect the composting process, the results obtained in the study have opened up the avenue of use of 'Co-composting' to treat toxic wastewater sludge.
- The Research team was led by Prof. Ligy Philip, Department of Civil Engineering, IIT Madras, and included Anu Rachel Thomas from IIT Madras and Prof. Martin Kranert from the Germany-based Institute for Sanitary Engineering, Water Quality and Solid Waste Management, Stuttgart University.
- For this study, the team decided to determine the degradation pattern of Triclosan and carbamazepine. While triclosan is a commonly used antimicrobial compound in toothpaste, detergents and soap, among other products. Carbamazepine is a widely used antiepileptic drug.

Indian Satellite AstroSat Detects Extreme UV Light Coming from Galaxy 9.3 Billion Light-years Away

- AstroSat, India's first multi-wavelength satellite, has detected an extreme ultraviolet (UV) light from a galaxy called AUDFs01 which is 9.3 billion light-years away from Earth.
- A global team led by Pune-based Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA) scientists have achieved the major breakthrough.
- This team comprised scientists from India, France, Switzerland, the USA, Japan and The Netherlands. Dr Saha and his team observed the galaxy, which is located in the Hubble Extreme Deep field, through AstroSat.
- AstroSat/UVIT was able to achieve this unique feat because the background noise in the UVITdetector is much less than the ones on HST.

ISRO Signs Agreement With Technical Institute In Odisha To Promote Space Research

- Veer Surendra Sai University of Technology (VSSUT), Odisha, signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). Under this agreement a Space innovation centre will be established in the university.
- VSSUT Odisha has become the first university in the country to pen down a MoU with the Indian space agency.
- ISRO will offer technical consultancy support and financial assistance of Rs 50 lakh to the VSSUT for development of infrastructure.
- There will be collaboration for the development of high end simulation tools, miniature test facilities - like static test facility, solid propulsion research lab - and establishment of testing facility for scaled down models.

Scientists Develop Technique To Produce Biofuel From Algae To Boost India's Clean Energy Efforts

- Indian scientists have developed low-cost biodiesel from microalgae under the INSPIRE programme of ministry of science and technology. The Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research (Inspire) is an innovative programme sponsored and managed by the ministry for attracting talents to research and innovation.
- Various biofuels that have been explored in India till now include molasses, agriculture residue, sugar-containing edible sources. The technique to use microalgae is developed by a team of scientists. It is led by T Mathimani from the National Institute of Technology (NIT), Tiruchirappalli.
- The ministry claimed in a statement that the "use of microalgae has been strongly considered for the production of biofuels since they present a series of advantages over other biofuel feedstock". The bio-fuel, the ministry stated Mathimani and his team have isolated predominant strains of marine microalgae species from the coastal regions of Tamil Nadu.
- Though algae are being exploited as a third-generation feedstock for the production of biofuels such as bioethanol, biodiesel, biogas, and biohydrogen in different countries, it does not reach a successful peak due to its higher cost issues involved in cultivation, harvesting and extraction process.

Astronomers trace mystery behind the formation of a star from dwarf galaxy

- Star formation at a high rate requires very high density of Hydrogen in the galaxies. According to the study conducted by the ARIES team, the 1420.40 MHz images of several intense star-forming dwarf galaxies indicated that hydrogen in these galaxies is very disturbed.
- While one expects a nearly symmetric distribution of hydrogen in well-defined orbits in galaxies, hydrogen in these dwarf galaxies is found to be irregular and sometimes not moving in well-defined orbits.
- Some hydrogen around these galaxies is also detected in forms of isolated clouds, plumes, and tails as if some other galaxy recently has collided or brushed away with these galaxies, and gas is scattered as debris around the galaxies.

- The optical morphologies sometimes revealed multiple nuclei and high concentration of ionized hydrogen in the central region. Although galaxy-galaxy collision was not directly detected, various signatures of it were revealed through radio, and optical imaging, and these are helping to build up a story. The research, therefore, suggests that recent collisions between two galaxies trigger intense star formation in these galaxies.
- The findings of this research with detailed images of 13 galaxies will be appearing in the forthcoming issue of Monthly Notices of Royal Astronomical Society (MNRAS) Journal published by the Royal Astronomical Society, the UK.

IIT Alumni Council to build world's largest, fastest hybrid quantum computer

- The Indian Institute of Technology's Alumni Council has signed an agreement with Lomonosov Moscow State University and Russoft to access and transfer key technologies from Russia to build the world's largest and fastest hybrid quantum computer in India.

- Under the agreement, the Russian state-owned companies will transfer critical modules in cryogenics, cryptography and modularised cloud management technology to IIT Alumni Council.
- These technologies will be used to support solutions for solving infrastructure challenges in areas such as healthcare, agriculture, transport and logistics, pollution and weather forecast.
- It will also collapse cost of genome testing from over ₹1 lakh per sample to under ₹1,000, facilitating genetics-based personalised medicines to avoid unnecessary universal vaccination which may have safety issues.

Tripura University scientist designs WARBOT to protect doctors

- In the war against Covid-19 pandemic, doctors and medical staff remained at the forefront of the fight and many doctors have sacrificed their lives while treating and saving the life of positive patients. In fact, the doctors and medical staff are at the most risk point to contract the virus as they directly come in contact with patients.
- To extend a big help to the doctors, attending the infected patients, a scientist at Tripura University has designed a robot which can prevent the doctors, nurses and health staff from getting infected while they come in contact with patients infected with the virus. The robot is named as Covid-19 WARBOT.

Atal Dulloo inaugurates NAT-PCR facility at Government Medical College Srinagar

- In the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, Financial Commissioner, Health and Medical Education Department, Atal Dulloo inaugurated State-of-Art Nucleic Acid Testing (NAT-PCR) facility at Government Medical College Srinagar. The NAT-PCR facility aimed at ensuring safer quality blood transfusion is funded under National Health Mission in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.
- Atal Dulloo stated that with the implementation of Nobel Prize winning NAT-PCR technology, the Blood Transfusion safety in Jammu and Kashmir will now be comparable to international standards. He further stated that this facility shall help in early detection of transfusion transmission infections like HIV, Hepatitis "B" & Hepatitis "C" Virus.
- He stated that, NAT testing facility has been funded by National Health Mission and all the blood donations in the three major tertiary care hospitals in Srinagar viz. SMHS, Lal Ded & 'Bone and Joint' Hospital shall be screened at this facility.
- Dr. Rubi Reshi, Head of Department, Blood & Transfusion Medicine GMC Srinagar stated that, "Blood donations screened with world class NAT PCR technology will reduce the risk of infection in 3 patients, as every unit of blood can be transfused to three people when separated into components.
- Besides, NAT-PCR, Plasma Bank was also inaugurated by the Financial Commissioner, H&ME on the occasion.

India, France in talks for Mission Alpha-like equipment for Gaganyaan astronauts

- Space agencies of India and France are in an advanced stage of discussions for providing necessary equipment to Gaganyaan' astronauts, similar to the one to be used by French astronaut Thomas Pesquet for Mission Alpha next year.
- India and France share a robust collaboration in the area of space. Space agencies of the two countries are also collaborating on nearly Rs 10,000 crore Gaganyaan mission that aims to send three Indians to space by 2022.

Revision Points

Institutions/Persons	Things to be Discovered/Developed
The Mumbai Division of Central Railway	Rakshak
Institute of Nano Science & Technology team	nanorods from the nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) Aspirin
IIT Madras and Helyxon	remote patient monitoring solutions for COVID-19
Godrej Appliances	Godrej Viroshield
IISC Bengaluru	RT-PCR covid- 19 testing lab
IIT Kanpur	BEEG (Bio -compost Enriched Eco-friendly Globule)
Nitin Gadkari	Atulya
Rajnath Singh	onkurs Missile Test Equipment and Konkurs Launcher Test Equipment
IIT Ropar	UVSAFE'
Defence Institute of Advanced Technology	Pavitrapati
IIT Kharagpur	DEEKSHAK Platform
Zydus Cadila	generic version of Remdesivir
DRDO	UV blaster
Tripura University scientists	WARBOT
IIT Madras, Stuttgart University	Method to dispose pharma waste
Manipur student	Coroboi
RoDeSo of the BITS Pilani Hyderabad Technology Business Incubator	Astra (Automated Solution for Transportation in Remote Area)
SCTIMST & IIT Madras	MediCAB

Important Environment News

New grasshopper species discovered after 116 years, named after kerala biologist

- A new species of pygmy grasshopper, discovered after 116 years by a group of foreign researchers in Sri Lanka, has been named after Indian orthopterist (one who studies grasshoppers) and conservation biologist Dhaneesh Bhaskar of Kerala.
- The new species, which was discovered by a group of Croatian and German researchers in Sinharaja rainforests of Sri Lanka, hails from Cladonotus genus and has been named as Cladonotus Bhaskari.
- The discovery is based on a single specimen of the species photographed in 2016 by Tom Kirschey in its natural rain forest habitat in Sri Lanka.

- The researchers then studied it and found it to be distinct from all the other discovered species of grasshoppers and then declared it as a new species in research journal Zootaxa in July this year.

77 New Butterfly Species Found In Matheran Hill Station Near Mumbai

- As many as 77 new species of butterflies have been found in the ecologically sensitive forest of Matheran hill station near Mumbai during a study conducted there over the last eight years, according to the Bombay Natural History Society.
- With this, the total number of butterfly species in the Matheran forest has now gone up to 140, city-based Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) scientist Mandar Sawant stated.
- Matheran is spread over an area of 214.73 sq km and is located about 80 km from the Maharashtra capital.
- Scientists from BNHS and Somaiya Vidyavihar University here have published a research paper, titled "Finding the forgotten gems: Revisiting the butterflies of Matheran after 125 years, with the introduction to the novel colour barcode for depicting seasons and activity of the Indian butterflies", in the community peer-reviewed Biodiversity Data Journal.
- A strong seasonal variation in butterfly diversity was observed. The maximum diversity of butterflies was recorded during winter, and the least during monsoon, BNHS stated in its statement.

Rare fish sighted by Andhra University scientists in Sileru

- A rare fish called Mahseer (scientific name Tor) was sighted and fished out from the upper part of Sileru river, by a team of researchers from the Department of Zoology, Andhra University.
- The specie of fish, which is called the Golden Mahseer is found in the Himalayan region, where the temperature around year does not exceed 20° Celsius.
- Since the Golden Mahseer is found in Sileru and the grey ones are found in the Godavari, the government should explore the possibility of conserving and rearing it for its commercial and medicinal values.

Important Rankings and Indexes

Index	India's Rank	Top	Released By
Digital Quality of Life (DQL) Index 2020	57th	Denmark	SurfShark
Average wages	72nd	Switzerland	Picodi.com.
Hurun Global Unicorn List 2020	21st	USA	

Amul becomes first Indian dairy company to be in Rabobank's Global Top 20 list; Nestle leads

- Amul, Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF), has become the first Indian dairy firm to make a place in the global top 20 list released by Rabobank, a Dutch multinational banking and financial services company.
- According to the list, Switzerland's Nestle topped the list with a turnover of US $22.1 billion, followed by France's Lactalis with US $ 21 billion turnover. Amul has achieved an annual turnover of $5.5 billion.
- "GCMMF (Amul) enters the Rabobank's Global Top 20 Dairy Companies list for the first time at No.16," Amul said in its tweet. It further added that this is a matter of pride for 36 lakh milk producers of Gujarat.

NITI Aayog releases Export Preparedness Index 2020

- NITI Aayog released the Export Preparedness Index (EPI) 2020. EPI intends to identify challenges and opportunities; enhance the effectiveness of government policies and encourage a facilitative regulatory framework.

- The structure of the EPI includes four pillars which are Policy, Business Ecosystem, Export Ecosystem and Export Performance.
- It also includes 11 sub-pillars like Export Promotion Policy, Institutional Framework, Business Environment, Infrastructure and Transport Connectivity.
- NITI Aayog, Chief Executive Officer Amitabh Kant stated that the Export Preparedness Index is a data-driven effort to identify the core areas which are crucial for export promotion at the sub-national level.
- This edition of EPI has shown that most Indian states performed well on average across the sub-pillars of Exports Diversification, Transport Connectivity and Infrastructure.
- It also says, overall, most of the Coastal States are the best performers. Gujarat, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu occupy the top three ranks.

Reliance Industries ranked second biggest brand globally after Apple

- Billionaire Mukesh Ambani's oil-to-telecom conglomerate Reliance Industries has been ranked second biggest brand after Apple on the FutureBrand Index 2020.
- FutureBrand, which is a global brand transformation company, stated part of Reliance's success could be attributed to Mukesh Ambani's recasting of the firm as a one-stop-shop for Indians.
- The FutureBrand Index is a global perception study that reorders PwC's Global Top 100 Companies by Market Cap on perception strength rather than financial strength, it stated. While the FutureBrand Index 2020 has uncovered a number of seismic shifts in the way companies work and how they present themselves to the outside world, one key theme has stood out: individuality.
- The 2020 list is topped by Apple, while Samsung is ranked third, followed by Nvidia, Moutai, Nike, Microsoft, ASML, PayPal and Netflix. Reliance ranks 91st on PWC 2020 list, it stated.
- A slew of new entrants to our Index include ASML Holdings, PayPal, Danaher, Saudi Aramco, and American Tower Corporation. In total, there are 15 new entrants this year, seven of which make it into the top 20, including Reliance Industries slotting in at number two, it stated.
- The FutureBrand Index 2020 examines the world's leading firms and determines how they have fared over the past year.

Mukesh Ambani Now World's 4th Richest Person: Report

- Reliance Industries' chairman, Mukesh Ambani, is now the fourth richest person in the world, according to news agency Bloomberg. With a total net worth of $80.6 billion, Mukesh Ambani was ranked fourth in the Bloomberg Billionaires Index. Mr Ambani was behind Amazon founder and CEO Jeff Bezos (whose net worth was at $187 billion), Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates ($121 billion) and Facebook co-founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg ($102 billion), according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, which is a daily ranking of the world's richest people.
- According to Bloomberg, Mr Ambani's net worth increased by $326 million to reach $80.6 billion as of August 8, and his total net worth was up $22 billion so far this year.
- The market capitalisation - or market value - of his Reliance Industries, the country's most valuable company, stood at Rs 13.61 lakh crore at the end of trade.(These Are India's Most Valuable Companies)

Karnataka tops list of states seeking skilled workforce to resume industrial activities

- Karnataka has topped the list of states seeking skilled workforce to resume industrial activities followed by Maharashtra, Delhi, Telangana and Haryana as India unlocks in varying degrees since June 1 with nearly 65,000 workers being offered jobs via the skills ministry's recently launched Assem portal.

- Data from the AtmaNirbhar Skilled Employee Employer Mapping (Aseem) portal of the skills ministry shows 64,689 candidates have been offered jobs in less than a month with highest demand for workers in logistics (44.3% of the posted vacancies), tourism and hospitality (18.1%), telecom (11.9%), construction (6.4%) and IT-ITes (4.6%), suggesting quick revival in these sectors post the lockdown.
- Majority of candidates registered on the portal are from Uttar Pradesh (13.7%), Haryana (7.1%), Tamil Nadu (6.6%), Maharashtra (6.2%) and West Bengal (4.7%).
- Maximum number of candidates registered under the programme are from Bihar (81.3%), Jharkhand (12.1%), Odisha (4.9%) and Madhya Pradesh (1.6%). Of the 97.8% candidates seeking jobs under the scheme are male while a miniscule 2.2% are female candidates.
- Under the scheme which largely caters to unskilled migrant workers, maximum demand is of construction work (16.5%), mason's helper (7.7%), mason (4.3%), labour (3.9%) and tailor (3.2%).

Akshay Kumar only Bollywood star among Forbes' highest-paid actors of 2020
- According to Forbes Magazine, Wrestler-turned-movie star Dwayne Johnson clung to the top slot on the list of the world's highest-paid male actors for a second straight year.
- The Rock, earned $87.5 million from June 1, 2019 to June 1, 2020, including $23.5 million from Netflix Inc to star in movie thriller Red Notice.
- Ryan Reynolds, who co-stars with Johnson in Red Notice, came in second in the Forbes ranking of male stars.
- Actor and producer Mark Wahlberg, star of Netflix action comedy Spenser Confidential, finished third with $58 million.
- Akshay Kumar, the only Bollywood star in the top 10, landed in sixth place with earnings of $48.5 million.

Punjab Gets First Rank In Health, Welfare Centre Operationalisation
- The Punjab Government announced that the state achieved first rank in operationalisation of Health and Welfare Centres (HWCs) as per the latest rankings released by the Centre.
- A total of 1,600 community health officers have been appointed at HWCs and 823 more candidates will be appointed as CHOs by the end of this year after the completion of the bridge course.
- Apart from this, in the last five months, 6.8 lakh individuals were screened at the HWCs for hypertension, 4 lakh for diabetes and 6 lakh for oral, breast or cervical cancer. Medicines were dispensed at the HWCs to about 2.4 lakh patients of hypertension and 1.4 lakh diabetes patients, despite the challenges posed by COVID-19.

Bengaluru ranks 26th in Knight Frank Prime Global Cities Index Q2
- Bengaluru and the national capital New Delhi ranked 26th and 27th, respectively, globally in 'Prime Global Cities Index Q2 2020' , according to Knight Frank report.
- Mumbai is at 32nd position.
- The Philippines capital Manila leads the index with prime home prices rising by 14.4 per cent over the 12 months to June 2020, followed by Japan's Tokyo (8.60 per cent) and Sweden's Stockholm (4.40 per cent).
- Thailand's capital Bangkok was the weakest-performing global city in the year to June 2020, with luxury home prices falling by 5.8 per cent.

About Prime Global Cities Index
- The Prime Global Cities Index is a valuation-based index tracking the movement in prime residential prices in local currency across 40+ cities worldwide using data from Knight Frank's global research network.

Mukesh Ambani slips two ranks, now seventh richest in the world

- Mukesh Ambani has dropped two positions to become the seventh-richest man in the world according to Forbes Real Time Billionaires List.
- Ambani's net worth is valued at $78.3 billion, while Elon Musk was sixth with a marginally high net worth of $78.6 billion. Warren Buffet climbed back the ranks and is currently the fifth-richest with a net worth of $79.5 billion.
- Ambani is the only Asian tycoon in the elite list of the top 10 richest people in the world.
- Jezz Bezos, founder and CEO of Amazon continues to rule to top spot, with a net worth of $190 billion, while Bill Gates, founder of Microsoft ranked second with a net worth of $114 billion.

Elon Musk gains $8 billion to become world's fourth-richest person

- Elon Musk's financial upswing shows no signs of slowing. The outspoken entrepreneur is now the world's fourth-richest person after Tesla Inc. shares surged 11 per cent, closing at a record high and boosting Musk's net worth by $7.8 billion.
- The rise vaulted the Tesla co-founder past French luxury tycoon Bernard Arnault, the wealthiest non-American on the Bloomberg Billionaires Index. Musk's $84.8 billion fortune puts him within $15 billion of Mark Zuckerberg, No. 3 on the ranking of the world's 500 richest people.
- Musk's fortune has grown by $57.2 billion this year, the second-biggest increase on the index after Amazon.com Inc. founder Jeff Bezos's. The world's richest man has accumulated $73 billion in 2020 and is now worth $188 billion.
- Facebook Inc's Mark Zuckerberg became a centibillionaire this month, joining Bezos and Bill Gates, the second-wealthiest person on earth.

India ranks first in number of organic farmers and ninth in terms of area under organic farming

- India ranks first in number of organic farmers and ninth in terms of area under organic farming.
- Sikkim became the first State in the world to become fully organic and other States including Tripura and Uttarakhand have set similar targets.
- The aim of assisting farmers to adopt organic farming and improve remunerations due to premium prices, two dedicated programs namely Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North East Region (MOVCD) and Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) were launched in 2015 to encourage chemical free farming.
- The major organic exports from India have been flax seeds, sesame, soybean, tea, medicinal plants, rice and pulses, which were instrumental in driving an increase of nearly 50% in organic exports in 2018-19, touching Rs 5151 crore.

IIT Madras bags 1st place in Atal Innovation ranking, 7 IITs among top 10

- The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) at Madras, Bombay and Delhi have bagged the top three positions in the Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovations Achievements (ARIIA).
- The ARIIA is an initiative of the Ministry of Education to systematically rank higher education institutions and universities on indicators related to innovation.
- The ranking is done in six categories -- centrally-funded institutes of national importance, state-funded universities, state-funded autonomous institutions, deemed universities, private institutions, and women-only higher educational institutions.
- The Institute of Chemical Technology, Maharashtra, has been ranked top among state-funded universities, followed by Panjab University and Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University.
- Among state-funded autonomous institutes, College of Engineering, Pune, has bagged the first rank followed by PES College of Engineering, Karnataka, and Coimbatore Institute of Technology, Tamil Nadu.
- The Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology, Odisha, has been ranked at the top among private universities, followed by SRM Institute of Science and Technology and Vellore Institute of Technology, both in Tamil Nadu.

- This year, the category of women-only higher educational institutions was introduced to encourage women and bringing gender parity in the areas of innovation and entrepreneurship.
- Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women bagged the top prize in the category.

Delhi, Chennai among cheapest cities to rent for couples and newly-weds

- Ho Chi Minh City is the cheapest in the world while New York is the most expensive
- According to a new report by Purely Diamonds, couples and newly-weds looking to save money on housing should put Ho Chi Minh City, Delhi, and Chennai at the top of their list. These are the cheapest cities for renting houses, says a report.

Indore in Madhya Pradesh declared as the cleanest city in national Swachh Survekshan 2020 awards

- Indore in Madhya Pradesh has been awarded as the cleanest city in the country in the Swachh Survekshan 2020 awards. The city bagged the position for the fourth consecutive time. The awards were presented by Union Urban Development Minister Hardeep Singh Puri in a function held virtually.
- Among the towns along the banks of river Ganga, Varanasi has been awarded the cleanest town award. New Delhi has been awarded as the cleanest capital city in the country. Chhattisgarh was awarded the first place in the states with over 100 cities while Jharkhand bagged it for being the state in the category of states with less than 100 cities. Jalandhar Cantonment Board was conferred the cleanest cantonment board in the country. Ahmedabad in Gujarat was awarded for being the cleanest city with over 40 lakh population.
- 129 awards were handed over to the top performing cities and States in Swachh Mahotsav event. Swachh Survekshan 2020', was completed in 28 days and witnessed registration of 1 crore 70 lakh citizens on Swachhata App.
- Swachh Survekshan was introduced by the government with the objective of generating large-scale citizen participation in the Mission, along with inculcating a spirit of healthy competition among cities towards becoming India's cleanest cities.
- The event also witnessed felicitation of Urban Development Ministry's partner organisations including the United States Agency for International Development, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Google. In the 'Swachh Survekshan 2020', Swachh Survekshan League, a quarterly cleanliness assessment of cities and towns was also introduced to ensure continuous assessment.

Digital Quality of Life Index 2020

- **Digital Quality of Life (DQL) Index 2020** has been released by **SurfShark**, an online privacy solutions provider.
- According to it, **India ranks** among the **lowest** in the world in terms of **Internet quality**.
- **Denmark taking the leading position globally. India ranked 57th.**

Parameters	India's Rank	Topped by
Internet affordability	9th	Israel
Time to work to afford the cheapest mobile internet (seconds)	5th	
Time to work to afford the cheapest broadband internet (minutes)	49th	
Internet quality	78th	Singapore
Electronic infrastructure	79th	UAE

Electronic security	57th	UK
Electronic government	15th	Singapore

TN women top the list of MUDRA loan scheme beneficiaries

- Over 15 crore loans amounting to Rs.4.78-lakh-crore have been disbursed to women borrowers since the inception of the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) with Tamil Nadu topping the list in availing the loan followed by women in West Bengal and Karnataka.
- As on March 31 women in Tamil Nadu had availedRs.58,227 crore loan from the scheme followed by West Bengal Rs.55,232 crore, Karnataka Rs.47,714 crore, BiharRs.44,879 crore and Maharashtra Rs.42,000 crore loan as per the data provided by the Ministry of Finance to the Rajya Sabha.
- Together women from these five States have got 52 per cent of the total MUDRA loan for women.
- Loans under this scheme are extended to eligible borrowers for manufacturing, processing, trading, services, and activities allied to agriculture, which help in creating income-generating activities and employment.

Gujarat tops Niti Aayog's Export Preparedness Index 2020

- Gujarat has topped the Niti Aayog's Export Preparedness Index 2020 followed by Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu.
- Six of eight coastal states feature in the top ten rankings, indicating the presence of strong enabling and facilitating factors to promote exports.
- Among the landlocked states, Rajasthan has performed the best, followed by Telangana and Haryana.
- Among the Himalayan states, Uttarakhand topped the chart, followed by Tripura and Himachal Pradesh, across Union Territories, Delhi has performed the best, followed by Goa and Chandigarh.

Niti Aayog in partnership with the Institute of Competitiveness released the first Export Preparedness Index (EPI) 2020.

- The index ranked states on four key parameter - Policy; Business Ecosystem; Export Ecosystem; Export Performance.
- The index also took into consideration 11 sub-pillars -- Export Promotion Policy; Institutional Framework; Business Environment; Infrastructure; Transport Connectivity; Access to Finance; Export Infrastructure; Trade Support; R&D Infrastructure; Export Diversification; and Growth Orientation.

World Bank pauses publication of Doing Business report

- The World Bank has decided to pause the publication of its Doing Business report following a number of irregularities regarding changes to data in previous reports.
- A number of irregularities have been reported regarding changes to the data in the Doing Business 2018 and Doing Business 2020 reports, published in October 2017 and 2019.
- The changes in the data were inconsistent with the Doing Business methodology.

India 72nd on global list with average monthly wage of Rs 32,800

- India has been ranked a lowly 72nd among 106 countries in terms of the average wage per month, while Switzerland topped the chart, according to a global ranking of average wages prepared by Picodi.com.
- Switzerland, where the average wage converted into rupees amounts to Rs 4,49,000 ($5,989), topped the ranking, while in Cuba the average wage is the lowest at Rs 2,700 ($36).
- Switzerland was followed by Luxembourg and the United States, whose citizens on an average earn Rs 3,00,900 ($4,014) and Rs 2,64,900 ($3,534), respectively.
- Picodi.com analysis team looked into earnings in countries around the world and created a global ranking of average wages.

- When it comes to Asian countries, India ended up in the second part of the ranking (10th out of 16). It was outrun by countries such as South Korea (Rs 1,72,900), China (Rs 72,100), Malaysia (Rs 62,700), or Thailand (Rs 46,400).

Important Books and Authors

Authors/ Released by	Books
Nitish Kumar (written byVinod Bandhu&compiled and edited by Arvind Sharma)	Siyasat Mein Sadasyata (life journey of Bihar Assembly Speaker Vijay Kumar Choudhary)
Edited by Parameswaran Iyer	The Swachh Bharat Revolution (launched by Gajendra Singh Shekhawat &Smriti Irani)
Released by Indian Army Chief, General Manoj Mukund Naravane	National Security Challenges: Young Scholars' Perspective
Jitendra Singh	Gastric Cancer
Neena Rai	Amazing Ayodhya
Nirupama Yadav (published byBluerose)	Vishesh: Code To Win
Yatish Yadav	RAW: A History of India's Covert Operations
PS Sreedharan Pillai (penned at least 13 books in English and Malayalam)	Corona Kavithakal (released by Zoramthanga)
Dalai Lama&Franz Alt	Our Only Home: A Climate Appeal to the World
Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh	'Connecting, Communicating, Changing
Published by Alfred A. Knopf in March 2021	The Beauty of Living Twice (Sharon Stone's memoir)
Michael Cohen's memoir	Disloyal: The True Story of the Former Personal Attorney to President Donald J. Trump
Air Vice Marshal Arjun Subramaniam (Rtd)	Full Spectrum: India's Wars, 1972-2020 (Published by HarperCollins India)
Rhonda Byrne	The Greatest Secret
Bijal Vachharajani	A Bend in Time: Writings by Children on the Covid-19 pandemic
Chetan Bhagat	One Arranged Murder
Sudha Murthy	Grandparents' Bag of Stories
Pradeep Chhibber and Harsh Shah (published by Oxford University Press)	India Tomorrow: Conversations with the Next Generation of Political Leaders
Sree Iyer (first book was "Who painted my money white?")	Who painted my lust red?
Monika Arora, Sonali Chitalkar and Prerna Malhotra	Delhi Riots 2020: The Untold Story (Publisher - Garuda Prakashan)
Tenzin Priyadarshi, Zara Houshmand	Running Toward Mystery: The Adventure of an Unconventional Life
Jatin along with cricket journalist Anand Vasu.	Cricket Drona (Published by Penguin)

29-year-old Marieke Lucas Rijneveld becomes youngest author to win International Booker Prize

• A 29-year-old Dutch writer Marieke Lucas Rijneveld has become the youngest author to win the International Booker Prize.

• Marieke Lucas Rijneveld's "The Discomfort of Evening," a dark story about a devout farming family in a strict Christian community in the rural Netherlands.

• Under the rules of the prize, the 50,000-pound ($66,000) award will be split between the author and translator Michele Hutchison, giving both equal recognition.

• Ted Hodgkinson, who chaired a panel of judges.

Important Peoples' in News

Germany's World Cup winner Benedikt Howedes announces retirement

• Benedikt Höwedes, a defender who helped Germany win the World Cup title in 2014, retired from football.

• Höwedes played 44 times for the German national team from 2011-17 and played every minute for his team at the 2014 World Cup in Brazil.

• Recently, 2014 World Cup-winning squad, Andre Schürrle, also announced retirement

Real Madrid legend Casillas announces retirement

• Spanish Iker Casillas has officially announced his retirement at the end of a 22-year playing career, with the legendary Real Madrid goalkeeper hanging up his gloves at the age of 39.

• The World Cup winner has not taken in a competitive appearance since suffering a serious health scare in May 2019.

• He also captained his country to World Cup glory in 2010 and sandwiched that success with European Championship wins in 2008 and 2012.

Madhya Pradesh Women Cricketer Anshula Rao Fails Dope Test

• Madhya Pradesh women cricket team's Anshula Rao has been provisionally suspended by National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) after failing a dope test.

• Rao, who is a senior member of the team, tested positive for a prohibited substance, 19 Norandrosterone.

• The report came last month and NADA served the Adverse Analytical Finding (AAF) notice of charge on the athlete, leading to her suspension.

England all-rounder Laura Marsh announces retirement from all forms of cricket

• Former England all-rounder Laura Marsh has announced her retirement from all forms of cricket.

• She was slated to represent Oval Invincibles in the tournament, but the competition has been pushed to 2021 due to the coronavirus pandemic.

• The 33-year-old had called time on her international career last year after she was left out of the England squad. In her international career, Marsh played 9 Tests, 103 ODIs and 67 T20Is. She managed to score 1,588 runs across all formats and also registered 217 wickets.

MS Dhoni announces retirement from international cricket

• Former India captain and two-time World Cup winner, Mahendra Singh Dhoni announced his retirement from international cricket.

• The Chennai Super Kings captain, though, is expected to feature in the upcoming IPL 2020 in the UAE.

• Dhoni had earlier quit Test cricket in 2014 after the Melbourne Test on the tour of Australia and had handed over ODI and T20I captaincy to Virat Kohli in January 2017.

- Dhoni led India through its most successful era and has the 2007 T20 WC, 2011 ODI World Cup, and the 2013 Champions Trophy in his cabinet.

Suresh Raina Announces Retirement From International Cricket

- Indian batsman Suresh Raina has announced his retirement from international cricket.
- The 33-year-old represented India in more than 300 internationals in a career that spanned over 13 years.
- Raina became the first India batsman to score a century in all three formats of the game.
- His final international appearance came in a T20I against England in 2018.

Australia all-rounder Cameron White announces retirement from professional cricket

- Former Australia captain and all-rounder Cameron White has announced his retirement from all forms of professional cricket.
- Cameron White also played for Royal Challengers Bangalore and the now-defunct Deccan Chargers in the Indian Premier League between 2007 and 2012. He was later bagged by the Sunrisers Hyderabad for the 2013 season.
- White won 10 domestic trophies - 6 Sheffield Shields, a domestic one-day crown, 2 wins in the old state-based T20 league and a Big Bash League trophy. He played 240 Twenty20 matches, scoring 5469 runs and 708 wickets at 27.23.

England pacer James Anderson becomes 1st fast bowler in history to take 600 Test wickets

- England pacer James Anderson became the first fast bowler in history to take 600 Test wickets. The 38-year-old was seven wickets away from the feat when he started playing the third Test against Pakistan at the Ageas Bowl. On Day 5 of the match, he dismissed Pakistan batsman Azhar Ali to claim his 600th wicket.
- Though the match ended in a draw, England won the series 1-0, with its three-wicket victory in the first test in Manchester followed by two drawn tests in Southampton. Muttiah Muralitharan with 800, Shane Warne with 708 and Anil Kumble with 619 wickets are the only other bowlers - all spinners - who remain ahead of Anderson on the all-time list of wicket-takers.

Poulomi Ghatak retires from Table Tennis, shifts her focus on coaching

- One of the most successful Indian table tennis players, Poulomi Ghatak,announced her retirement.
- A seven-time national champion, Ghatak was the most prominent name in women's table tennis in the last couple of decades.
- The Kolkata born athlete won both the senior national and junior national championships in 1998. She has represented India at the Commonwealth Games at Melbourne in 2006 and the Commonwealth Championships between 2000 and 2008. She made her debut Olympic appearance at the Sydney Olympics when she was just 16.

Japan's Olympic doubles champion Ayaka Takahashi announces retirement

- Japan's Olympic badminton champion Ayaka Takahashi will not defend her doubles crown with Misaki Matsutomo at next year's Tokyo Games after announcing she will retire at the end of the month.
- Takahashi and Matsutomo defeated Denmark's Christinna Pedersen and Kamilla Rytter Juhl in the Rio Olympics in 2016 to claim the women's doubles gold medal and secure their nation's first ever badminton title.
- Takahashi, 30, cited the postponement of the Tokyo Olympics due to the COVID-19 pandemic as one of the reasons for her decision to step away, saying her body might not hold up for another year.

Tennis legends Bob, Mike Bryan announce retirement

- Tennis legends Bob and Mike Bryan have decided to retire ahead of the 2020 US Open.
- The pair of 42-year-old identical twins are the most successful doubles duo in the history of the sport.

- They earned an Olympic gold medal together in 2012 to go along with winning a record 16 Grand Slam doubles titles from 2003 to 2014 and, altogether, 119 tour titles together. As a duo, the Bryan brothers were ranked No. 1 in the world for a total of 438 weeks.

Dwayne Bravo becomes first bowler to 500 wickets in T20s

- West Indies all rounder Dwayne Bravo became the first bowler to take 500 wickets in T20 cricket in his 459th match.
- The wicket also happened to be his 100th in the Caribbean Premier League, making him the first man to that mark.
- Bravo had also been the first to 300 and 400 T20 wickets as well.
- Sri Lanka's Lasith Malinga is second on the list of T20 wicket-takers, with 390 wickets from 295 matches.

Recent News

- James Anderson has become the first seamer - and the fourth bowler overall - to claim 600 Test wickets.

Tharanga Paranavitana Retires From International Cricket

- Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) announced that Tharanga Paranavitana has decided to retire from international cricket.
- Sri Lanka cricketer Tharanga Paranavitana has decided to retire from international cricket. He has officially informed his intention to Sri Lanka Cricket, SLC stated.
- The 38-year-old represented Sri Lanka in 32 Test matches, scoring 1,792 runs which include two tons and 11 half-centuries. Paranavitana played his last Test match in November 2012.

World War 2 spy Noor Inayat Khan first Indian origin woman to get UK memorial plaque

- Noor Inayat Khan, a World War 2 spy and descendant of ruler Tipu Sultan, became the first Indian origin woman to be honoured with the Blue Plaque in the UK.
- The Blue Plaque scheme run by the English Heritage charity honours notable people and organisations by installing a sign in a public place to commemorate the link between the place and the person.
- The plaque has been awarded to her for her service in the Special Operations Executive during World War 2.
- She was the first female radio operator be sent into Nazi-occupied France and is also remembered as Britain's first Muslim war heroine.

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Important Mergers and Acquisitions

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Tata Capital Growth Fund to invest USD 30 mn in Biocon Biologics

- Biotechnology major Biocon stated Tata Capital Growth Fund will invest USD 30 million (Rs 225 crore) in its subsidiary Biocon Biologics to acquire 0.85 per cent equity stake in the company.
- The firm stated this deal values Biocon Biologics at USD 3.5 billion.
- Biocon stated the board of its subsidiary Biocon Biologics India has approved a primary equity investment by Tata Capital Growth Fund.
- Post the completion of this transaction, Biocon will hold 95.25 per cent stake in Biocon Biologics, the biotechnology major added. The transaction is subject to standard condition precedents and approvals.

Oman India Joint Investment Fund II buys 1.63% in DCB Bank

- Oman India Joint Investment Fund II (OIJIF) has acquired 5.07 million shares or 1.63% stake in Mumbai based DCB Bank through a block trade on stock exchanges. The stake is valued at ₹42 crore.
- OIJIF is a private equity fund backed by State Bank of India (SBI) and State General Reserve Fund of Oman (SGRF), purchased 50,69,903 shares of DCB Bank through a bulk deal.
- The shares were purchased at an average price of ₹81.90 valuing the transaction at ₹41.52 crore

LIC acquires close to 5% stake in Yes Bank

• Yes Bank stated LIC had acquired close to 5 per cent shareholding in the bank by purchasing shares from the open market.

• With the fresh acquisition, the hold of LIC has increased from 0.75 per cent to 4.98 per cent, Yes Bank stated.

• LIC purchased 105.98 crore shares, reflecting 4.23 per cent stake, of the bank from the open market, the filing stated.

• Before this, LIC had 0.75 per cent stake in Yes Bank though 19 crore shares held. In all, it stated, LIC holding in the bank increased to 4.98 per cent through 125 crore shares held.

• The period of acquisition is between September 21, 2017, and July 31, 2020, it stated.

• Earlier this week, Moody's Investors Service upgraded Yes Bank's long-term foreign currency issuer rating by a notch to "B3" from "Caa1" after a Rs 15,000-crore capital raising. Despite the upgrade, Yes Bank still remains under non-investment grade.

• Obligations rated 'B' are considered speculative and are subject to high credit risk, while those rated 'CAA' are judged to be speculative of poor standing and are subject to very high credit risk.

IndusInd Bank acquires 7.82% stake in Eveready by invoking pledged shares

• Private sector IndusInd Bank has acquired 7.82 per cent stake in battery maker Eveready Industries by invoking pledged shares following loan default.

• The bank also informed about acquiring 7.5 per cent (78,32,253 shares) in tea firm McLeod Russel India Ltd by invoking pledged shares following default by the borrower.

• The equity shares of Eveready Industries India Ltd. held by Williamson Magor and Co. Ltd were pledged with the bank for securing the outstanding dues of Seajuli Developers & Finance Limited (Seajuli), the borrower company. The bank has invoked the pledge held on aforesaid shares for recovery of its dues from Seajuli.

CCI approves proposed deal pertaining to JV formation between Honda Motor, Hitachi

• CCI has approved a combination proposal filed jointly by Keihin Corporation, Nissin Kogyo Co. Ltd., Showa Corporation and Hitachi Automotive Systems Ltd to form a joint venture between Honda Motor Co Ltd (HAMCL) and Hitachi Ltd.

• The transaction entails HAMCL's acquisition of additional shares to convert its affiliates Keihin Corporation, Nissin Kogyo and Showa Corporation as its wholly-owned subsidiaries, following which the entities will amalgamate into HIAMS to form the integrated company.

• HIAMS is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Hitachi Ltd.

• The entities will integrate their complementary strengths to provide globally competitive solutions to the automotive and two-wheeled vehicle industry.

• The entities will combine resources and research efforts to create social, economic and environmental value, improve the safety and comfort of mobility, and advance the automotive and motorcycle industry towards the next generation.

CCI approves Siemens' acquisition of C&S Electric

• The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved proposed acquisition of C&S Electric Ltd by Siemens Ltd. The proposed combination envisages acquisition of 100 per cent of the share capital of C&S Electric Ltd (C&S) by Siemens Ltd (Siemens India).

• At the time of closing of the proposed combination, the scope of business of C&S shall include low-voltage (LV) switchgear components and panels, LV and medium voltage (MV) power busbars as well as protection and metering devices of C&S. Other businesses of C&S, such as MV switchgear and package sub-station, lighting, diesel generating sets, engineering, procurement and construction business and the "Etacom" busbars business will be retained by the existing promoters of C&S, an official release stated.

- Siemens India focuses on the areas of power generation and distribution, intelligent infrastructure for buildings and distributed energy systems, automation and digitalization in the process and manufacturing industries.
- It also supplies smart mobility solutions for rail and road transport and infrastructure solutions for Smart Cities.
- C&S manufactures a range of electrical switchgear, power protection and electrical distribution products. C&S also has an electrical contracting business which performs turnkey solutions for industrial and commercial electrification, sub-stations and power plants. In addition, C&S is also engaged in the design and execution of grid connected solar photo-voltaic power plants, the release added.

People's Bank of China picks up stake in ICICI Bank via QIP issue

- The Chinese central bank People's Bank of China has acquired a very small stake in ICICI Bank through the recently closed Rs 15,000 crore share sale by the country's second largest private sector lender.
- The Chinese central bank has picked up shares worth Rs 15 crore in Rs 15,000 crore qualified institutional placement (QIP) issue.
- The People's Bank of China was among 357 institutional investors which incl¬uded domestic mutual funds, insurance firms and global institutions that subscribed to the issue.
- The stake of People's Bank of China in ICICI Bank is about 0.0065 per cent.

Axis Bank to acquire 17% in Max Life Insurance instead of 29%

- Axis Bank has decided to cut down on its investments in Max Life Insurance. It now plans to acquire 17.002 per cent of the equity share capital of the life insurer.
- This will result in total ownership of 18 per cent post the transaction, Axis Bank stated
- The private sector lender had in April announced plans to acquire 29 per cent stake in Max Life Insurance. This would have taken its overall shareholding in the insurer to 30 per cent.
- The parties have executed the definitive agreements. Axis Bank and Max Life will shortly approach the respective regulatory authorities, with revised applications for their consideration and approval, Axis Bank further stated.
- The lender did not specify the reasons for this change in plans but it is understood that the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India had wanted some changes in the proposed agreement.

Cognizant to acquire Tin Roof Software to expand digital engineering services

- Cognizant Technology Solutions Corp. has entered into an agreement to acquire Tin Roof Software, an Atlanta-based custom software and digital product development services company, to expand its digital engineering services capabilities.
- The acquisition is expected to expand Cognizant's software product engineering footprint in the U.S. and connect Tin Roof's experts with Cognizant's broader global software development capabilities.
- Tin Roof works across a range of industries, including telecom, media and entertainment, financial services, retail, hospitality, consumer products, travel, logistics, and transportation.
- Tin Roof has operations in Atlanta and Dallas-Fort Worth in the US. Upon completion of the transaction, Tin Roof's experts will join Cognizant Softvision, a company Cognizant acquired in 2018. Cognizant Softvision has significant global presence across Argentina, Australia, Canada, India, Mexico, Romania, and the U.S.

Revision points

Company	Merging Company
Oman India Joint Investment Fund II	DCB Bank (1.63%)
LIC	Yes Bank(5%)

IndusInd Bank	Eveready Industries (7.82%)
Siemens Ltd	C&S Electric Ltd (100%)
People's Bank of China	ICICI Bank
Axis Bank	Max Life Insurance (17%)
Cognizant Technology	Tin Roof Software

Important Web Portals and Mobile Apps

Dodo Drop: The Indian 'SHAREit' developed by Kashmiri teenager

- Ashfaq Mehmood Choudhary, a 17-year-old boy from Chattyear of Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district, has developed a file-sharing app **'Dodo Drop'** which would enable users to share audios, videos, images, and texts between two devices without Internet access.
- The 'Dodo Drop' application has a transfer rate of up to 480 mbps, which is faster than the SHAREit app and is "quite easy" to use.
- The Indian government has banned several Chinese apps due to data breaching, and among those apps was SHAREit which was used for sharing files. Users faced a lot of problems due to the ban, and so he decided to make this file-sharing app.

DNHDD launches E-Gyan Mitra mobile app for online education

- Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu bordering Gujarat has launched **E-Gyan Mitra mobile app** for online education.
- The E-Gyan Mitra app launched by the **Education Department of Daman Administration** is becoming popular among the students and parents.

CPCB developed biomedical waste tracking app 'COVID19BWM APP'

- The Supreme Court has made it mandatory for all municipal corporations and state pollution control boards to use the '**COVID19BWM** APP' for tracking biomedical waste daily.
- This is to ensure that the waste is collected, transported and sent to a registered common biomedical waste treatment facility.
- The directions came on July 30, 2020, on recommendations made in a report by Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA).
- It had suggested that the application be made mandatory so that the **Central Pollution Control Board** (CPCB) can track biomedical waste and ensure it is sent for treatment.
- The CPCB had come up with the mobile application in May, following directions from the National Green Tribunal (NGT).

Web portal for management of development works in Haryana's urban local bodies

- **Haryana** minister Anil Vij launched a web portal to manage and monitor development works in all urban local bodies in the state.
- **"Works Management System"** will be completely paperless, centralised and web-based. It will help in bringing the working of all the ULBs on a single platform.
- This web portal will enable transparency in works being carried out in ULBs and will also help in curbing corruption.
- The directions have been issued for carrying out the allotment of development works in all the municipal bodies and further completing the entire process online through this portal only.

Indian Railways launches an OHE Inspection app

- **Indian Railways** launched an **OHE Inspection app** which monitors technical snags in real-time and sends alerts eliminating delays caused by such defects.
- The OHE Inspection app will capture in real-time OHE (Overhead Equipment) defects and send out quick alerts.
- It has been launched across the country and has features such as GPS tracking of patrolman, real-time capturing of OHE defects and clicking photographs.
- First time ever in the history of Indian Railways, 100% punctuality of trains achieved, with all trains on time.

Telangana launches GRID Policy for IT industry development

- **Telangana** Cabinet approved the **GRID (Growth in Dispersion) Policy** to give incentives to IT companies that will set up their units.
- Telangana's information technology industry, which notched up IT and BPO exports worth ₹1.2-lakh crore, is largely attributed to firms located in the Western and South-Western parts of Hyderabad.
- The State Government had earlier brought in the 'Look East' policy to encourage IT and BPO firms to set up their facilities in Uppal and Pocharam areas.
- The idea is to reduce pressure on traffic and residential infrastructure in one part of the city by distributing the offices in different parts of the city.

SAI launches Khelo India Mobile App online training program for principals, PE Teachers

- The **Sports Authority of India**, in association with Education Boards CISCE and CBSE, will host an online program for training of Physical Education (PE) Teachers from CISCE Schools on "Khelo India Fitness Assessment of School Going Children".
- Various School Principals or Head of Institutes will be encouraged and motivated and made aware about the need to empower their PE Teachers with knowledge, attitude and skills for undertaking the Khelo India Fitness Assessment through the Khelo India Mobile App (KIMA) besides giving them goals for 2020-21. This session is titled "Whole School Approach to Fitness".
- From August 11 to 14, Training and technical knowhow of the Assessor mobile app will be provided to the school PE teachers. They will be given sessions on the introduction to Khelo India Fitness for School Going Children and Fit India, how to undertake Khelo India battery of tests, the Khelo India Assessments protocols, Talent Identification roadmap, goals for 2020-21 and more.
- The training will be provided by selected Master Trainers who had conducted various National and Regional level TOTs, both offline and online, in 2019 and conducted Assessment of their schools

Union Textiles Minister Smriti Irani launches app for weavers on National Handloom Day

- On the occasion of the 6th National Handloom Day, the Minister of Textiles, **Smriti Zubin Irani**, announced the launch of a handloom portal.
- '**My Handloom Portal**' is the one-stop platform for information on everything related to handloom.
- This portal will allow weavers' and other stakeholders to track applications in real-time, thereby enhancing transparency & increasing efficiency. #Vocal4Handmade."

DC Rajouri launches 'Awaz-e Rajouri' mobile app

- **Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Mohammmad Nazir Sheikh** launched a mobile app **Awaz-e Rajouri** in presence of the district Officers and media persons.
- The app has been developed by a team of National Informatics Centre Rajouri.

- This is to improve the public Grievances redressal mechanism in the district and to make the district administration citizen centric, responsive, transparent and accountable.
- When a citizen lodges a grievance, the nodal officer will receive a message and after scrutiny, the complaint will be forwarded to the concerned department for the resolution.

Delhi Airport Develops Air Suvidha Online Portal For International Passengers

- The Delhi airport has developed an online portal Air Suvidha that will allow international passengers to fill a mandatory self-declaration form.
- Eligible passengers can apply for exemption from compulsory institutional quarantine for coronavirus.
- A total of five categories of passengers can get exemption from the mandatory seven-day institutional quarantine.
- These five categories include pregnant women, those who have had bereavement in their families, people suffering from serious illnesses, parents accompanying children below 10 and those who have COVID-negative certificate from test done 96 hours before the journey.
- Passengers seeking exemption under the five specific categories will need to fill the e-form available on www.newdelhiairport.in. They will have to submit it along with supporting documents, including a copy of their passports, at least 72 hours before boarding their flights.
- The online forms have been developed in collaboration with various state governments, Ministry of Civil Aviation, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Ministry of External Affairs.

5paisa launches free app to guide investors in stock market

- Discount broker has launched a free app to help investors in the stock market understand about safe investment and successful wealth creation.
- The app -- 5paisa school-- focuses on micro-learning and has many one-minute modules to meet expectations of young investors.
- 5paisa school has collaborated with industry experts for live webinars and host content created by influencers to help investors learn the advanced trading techniques.
- The content is available in both video and textual formats to make the whole process of learning simple and enjoyable. 5paisa school also provides certification on course completion.
- 5paisa school is a collection of modules catering to the different aspects of the market.

Govt launches e-portal on tribal health & nutrition

- Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda inaugurated the e-portal on tribal health and nutrition named **'Swasthya'**. The portal provides all health and nutrition related information of the tribal population of India on a single platform.
- Swasthya will also curate innovative practices, case studies, and best practices collected from different parts of India to facilitate the exchange of evidence, expertise and experiences.
- Mr Munda stated, the launch of the portal is a first step towards the much bigger goal of serving the tribal population of the nation. He informed about the initiatives of the Ministry in partnership with Facebook through the Going Online as Leaders (GOAL) Programme.
- Mr Munda stated, through the GOAL Programme, the Ministry aims to mentor five thousand tribal youth across India and enable them to become village-level digital young leaders for their communities.

MSDE to soon launch a demand-driven skill portal for workforce

- The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) will soon come up with a demand-driven skilling portal "I want to skill myself". The portal will provide an opportunity to the workforce to demand the kind of skilling, upskilling and re-skilling they need for themselves.
- The portal that is still in the testing stage will be launched in a month, official stated.This comes after MSDE last month announced the launch of portal 'Aatmanirbhar Skilled Employee Employer Mapping' (ASEEM) to help skilled people find sustainable livelihood opportunities.
- ASEEM refers to all the data, trends that describe the workforce market and map demand of skilled workforce to supply.
- The data further mentioned that the top five job giving sectors are logistics, tourism and hospitality, construction, IT-ITeS and telecom. The five major job demanding States are Karnataka, Maharashtra, Delhi, Telangana and Haryana.

Nitin Gadkari launches portal for you to buy groceries directly from farmers along with these benefits

- MSME Minister Nitin Gadkari launched an online farm-to-fork service VedKrishi.com promoted by farmers for selling non-toxic farm produce.
- The platform set-up by Nagpur-based farmer producer organization VedKrishi Farmer Producer Company will home deliver grocery products including dairy goods, vegetables, grains, and pulses, apart from pickles, juices, sauces, etc.
- The company will connect farmers directly with consumers through the platform. Registered consumers would be able to schedule their order in advance for one year.
- Vedkrishi will also support other farmers through consultation around best practices in organic farming. However, the online portal is not operational as of now and will take some time to launch services.
- The portal once operational will bear resemblance to other grocery portals like Grofers and BigBasket. Moreover, consumers would be able to know farmers they are buying goods from with details mentioned along with the product listed on the portal.

Tata Steel launches FerroHaat App for sourcing steel scrap

- Steel Recycling Business, a division of Tata Steel, has launched FerroHaat, a first-of-its-kind mobile application (App) in the world, to source steel scrap from the traders.
- The new App is a major step by the Company to organise India's scrap market while also providing a reliable source of scrap metal for the Steel Industry.
- The FerroHaat App is a LIVE 24x7 market place to sell scrap.
- It is user friendly and hosts different sections like Bazaar for business transactions, Khaata for a snapshot of the supplier's account, Samachaar for vital market information and Abhaar for recognition and appreciation initiatives.

Google launches Kormo app in India to help people find jobs

- Tech giant Google has expanded its employment application - Kormo Jobs - to India as it is looking forward for helping millions of Indians to land entry-level jobs.
- The company had launched the employment application in Bangladesh in 2018 and further expanded it to Indonesia.
- Google had also made Kormo Jobs available in India under the brand Jobs as a Spot on its payment application - Google Pay.
- The application will help users to identify entry-level job opportunities and also to learn new skills and create CVs.

Nitin Gadkari launches Harit Path app

- The road transport minister Nitin Gadkari also launched a mobile app 'Harit Path' to monitor the plantation along the national highways.

- The minister launched 'Harit Path', a mobile app to monitor the plantations through geo-tagging and web-based GIS enabled monitoring tools.
- The GPS-based app has been developed by NHAI to monitor location, growth, species details, maintenance activities, targets and achievements of each of its field units for each and every plant under all plantation projects.
- To commemorate 25 years of its service to the nation, the National Highways Authority of India has also recently undertaken 'Harit Bharat Sankalp', a nation-wide plantation drive which is in line with NHAI's commitment to promote environment protection and sustainability.
- Under this initiative, the NHAI planted over 25 lakh plants in 25 days along the stretches of the national highways between July 21 and August 15, 2020.

Tata Plans 'Super App' To Bring Together Its Consumer Services
- Tata Group is launching a new app purported to bring together the country's disparate sales sector to offer a range of consumer goods in a "super app".
- The app will offer food and grocery ordering, fashion and lifestyle, consumer electronics and consumer durables, insurance and financial services, education, healthcare and bill payments.
- The app will put the conglomerate in competition with giants of the region like Reliance Industries and global titans like Amazon.

IAF launches mobile app 'MY IAF' to provide career-related information to aspirants
- Indian Air Force (IAF) Chief Rakesh Kumar Singh Bhadauria launched a mobile application, "MY IAF", that will provide career-related information to those who want to join the Indian Air Force.
- The application, developed in association with Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), provides career-related information and details for those desirous of joining the IAF.
- The application is available on Google Play store for android phones and is linked to the IAF's social media platforms.

Uttar Pradesh: CM Yogi Adityanath launches NRI unified portal
- In Uttar Pradesh, the State Government will prepare a database of the migrant workers of the state working in different countries of the world. It will help in providing them assistance during any emergency. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath launched an ambitious NRI unified portal.
- The Chief Minister stated that the portal would also prove helpful to overseas Indians and NRIs to get their problems with the local administration or the State Government resolved. He stated that many people who are living abroad, but are in constant touch with their village and family. Sometimes, they could not find a platform to help their families resolve the problems related to their house and issues with local administration.
- The website - nri.up.gov.in - will also provide a platform for NRIs keen to know about their roots or those seeking help from the UP Government related to their homes or families in the state.
- The NRI department of state will use festivals to connect with Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) in other countries. The NRI department in the state will be live streaming the Deepotsav festival in Ayodhya during Diwali and then the Holi celebrations in Vrindavan too. Other Uttar Pradesh festivals and cultural events will also be a part of this initiative.

Government launches 'Open API Service' in Aarogya Setu app
- The Government has introduced 'Open API Service', a novel feature to help the people, businesses and the economy to return to normalcy.
- The Open API Service of Aarogya Setu, can be availed by organisations and business entities, who are registered in India with more than 50 employees, and they can use the Open API Service to query the Aarogya Setu Application in

real-time and get the health status of their employees or any other Aarogya Setu User, who have provided their consent for sharing their health status with the organization.

- The Open API shall only provide the Aarogya Setu status and name of the Aarogya Setu User (with User's consent). No other personal data shall be provided through the API, a government statement stated adding this service would enable organisations to get the health status of their employees or any other Aarogya Setu Users without violating their data privacy.

- The Aarogya Setu ITIHAS interface which uses location data and Aarogya Setu analytics to predict emerging hotspots at sub pincode levels, has been also effective in helping the health officials and administration to take necessary precautionary steps.

E-auction portal launched to promote trading of GI-tagged 'Kashmir Saffron'

- Jammu and Kashmir's agriculture department has created an e-auction portal to promote trading of GI-tagged 'Kashmir Saffron'. The Department, under the aegis of India International Kashmir Saffron Trading Centre (IIKSTC), has created the portal in collaboration with NSE-IT, with the sole motive to assure buyers to have access to quality 'Kashmir Saffron'.

- The Saffron growers of Kashmir valley and buyers across India have been requested to register themselves as sellers and buyers for E- trading on www.saffroneauctionindia.com, so that hassle free e-Trading between registered growers and buyers is ensured.

NHAI develops portal to track performance of developers, consultants

- The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has developed a portal to track the performance of its developers and consultants.

- The portal-based objective assessment has been initiated to track the performance of consultants, contractors and concessionaires for various NHAI projects.

- The portal is available on the NHAI website under Vendor Performance Evaluation System'.

- Under this portal, the vendors are required to conduct a self-assessment and upload the documents related to the project activities being executed by them, on the portal.

- The submissions are reviewed at multiple levels by NHAI, based on which a vendor rating is generated.

- The portal contains provisions for rating the projects according to the mode of implementation and status of completion under BOT(build-operate-transfer) toll , BOT (annuity) HAM (hybrid, annuity mode), EPC (engineering, procurement and construction) works.

Rajnath Singh launches mobile app for NCC training

- Shri Rajnath Singh launched the Directorate General National Cadet Corps (DGNCC) Mobile Training App.

- The app would be useful for digital learning and help overcome the difficulties posed by the pandemic.

About :

- This App will certainly be a positive step towards automation of NCC training, in line with Digital India vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and will go a long way in assisting the NCC cadets in easier access to training material in these testing times of pandemic.

- The App has been made interactive by including a query option. By using this option, a cadet can post his question related to the training syllabus and the same will be answered by a panel of qualified instructors.

- The DGNCC Mobile Training App aims at providing NCC cadets   entire training material (syllabus, précis, training videos and frequently asked questions) on one platform.

CISF launches 'Pension Corner' app for its retired personnel

- CISF has launched 'Pension Corner' app be in touch with all its retired personnel to cater to their needs.
- The pensioners corner app will be available in both web and Android platforms with the facility for pensioners to access their data on the move.
- The new app will also have an SMS invitation system for the pensioners on important events happening at their nearest CISF unit.
- Apart from an inbuilt grievance redressal mechanism, all important circulars like job opportunities and benefits relating to pensioners will be available on the app.

Revision Points

Applications/Web portals	Launched By/Developed By
'Dodo Drop'	Ashfaq Mehmood Choudhary
E-Gyan Mitra mobile app	Education Department of Daman Administration
COVID19BWM	Central Pollution Control Board
Works Management System	Haryana
OHE Inspection app	Indian Railways
GRID (Growth in Dispersion) Policy	Telangana
Khelo India Mobile App	Sports Authority of India
My Handloom Portal	Smriti Zubin Irani
Awaz-e Rajouri	Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Mohammmad Nazir Sheikh
Air Suvidha Online Portal	Delhi Airport
5paisa school	5paisa.com
Swasthya	Arjun Munda
I want to skill myself	Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
VedKrishi.com	Nitin Gadkari
FerroHaat	Tata Steel
Kormo Jobs	Google
Harit Path	Nitin Gadkari
'Super App'	Tata
'MY IAF'	Indian Air Force
'Open API Service' in Aarogya Setu app	Government
DGNCC App	Rajnath Singh
'Pension Corner'	CISF

Important Sports News

Cricket

BCCI suspends title sponsorship deal with Vivo for upcoming IPL

- The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has suspended the title sponsorship deal with Chinese mobile phone company Vivo for the upcoming edition of the Indian Premier League.

- The BCCI in a statement stated that Vivo will not be associated with the IPL this year. VIVO had won the IPL title sponsorship for five years from 2018 to 2022 for a reported sum of 2190 crore rupees.
- The IPL this year has been shifted to the UAE because of the prevailing COVID-19 situation in India. The tournament will be held from September 19 to November 10 amid COVID-19 protocols laid down by the ICC and BCCI.

India to host 2021 ICC Men's T20 World Cup; Women's ODI World Cup postponed to 2022

- India were retained as hosts for the ICC T20 World Cup 2021, while Australia will host the 2022 edition of the same event.
- Additionally, the Women's 50-over World Cup, which was scheduled to between 6 February and 7 March next year, has also been postponed to 2022.
- The decision was taken during the virtual ICC meeting which was attended by top officials from BCCI and Cricket Australia.
- ICC T20 World Cup 2020, which was to be hosted by Australia, was postponed amid the coronavirus pandemic.
- 13th edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL) from 19 September to 10 November in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) this year.
- Australia will now host the 2022 edition instead of this year. India, meanwhile, remain the host nation for 2023 men's ODI World Cup.

Sri Lanka Cricket Felicitates Two Veteran Umpires On Retirement

- Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) felicitated two renowned cricket umpires -- DN Pathirana and KRP Doolwala -- who retired from officiating duties after a service of over 20 years.
- Pathirana served as a leading umpire from 1982 to 2006 in the domestic circuit and has officiated 30 One Day International matches in addition to appearing in 8 Test matches as a reserve umpire.
- Doolwala was a former Sri Lanka women's player, who took up to umpiring after her playing days and served as an umpire for over two decades.
- At the time of her retirement, she was a Sara Trophy qualified umpire at SLC.
- Pathirana and Doolwala were presented with cash awards at the occasion organised by SLC Umpires' Committee Chairman, Deepal Madurapperuma and SLC Head of Domestic Cricket, Chinthaka Edirimanne.

Kallis, Sthalekar and Zaheer Abbas inducted into ICC Cricket Hall of Fame

- The International Cricket Council (ICC) inducted three retired greats of the game into the ICC Cricket Hall of Fame during an absorbing show broadcast around the world via ICC digital channels.
- South Africa's gritty all-rounder Jacques Kallis and talented Australian World Cup-winning all-rounder Lisa Sthalekar were joined by Zaheer Abbas of Pakistan, a stylish batsman of the 1970s and 80s who was also known as the Asian Bradman.
- Kallis is the fourth South African player inducted and Zaheer the sixth from Pakistan. Lisa is the 27th from Australia and the ninth woman player in the list, which includes five from Australia.

Football

AIFF & SAI join hands to launch E-Pathshala

- All India Football Federation (AIFF) and Sports Authority of India (SAI) joined hands to launch an E-Pathshala, the web platform to recognise the creativity and develop the interest in football.
- E-Pathshala is an Athlete Coaching Program in football for Grassroots and Intermediate. It has been divided into three parts: My Football Culture, My Skills and My Training.
- My Football culture is further divided into five different aspects namely -- My drawing, My goal, My Idol, My Creativity and My story. Participants are needed to upload their videos on the website in a particular section.

- My Skills, which is for U-12 age-group, is divided into three difficulty levels -- Golden bracket, Silver bracket and Bronze bracket. Participants are free to select a particular bracket and then upload the corresponding videos. which will be assessed by the panellists accordingly.
- Under the My training section, participants are encouraged to upload their individual or a group video shot along with family, friends or neighbours.

Football: Bayern Munich beat Paris Saint-Germain to win UEFA Champions League

- In Football, German giants Bayern Munich have won the European Champions League for the sixth time after beating French side Paris Saint-Germain 1-0 at the final in Portugal's capital, Lisbon.
- A goal by French winger Kingsley Coman at the 59th minute was enough for the Munich side to dash the Parisians' dream of winning for the first time the UEFA Champions League.
- A competition which started in June 2019 with the preliminary round comes to a climax between the best side in world football against one of the planet's finest forward lines.

AIFC and Football Coaches Australia sign MoU for development of game in India

- The Association of Indian Football Coaches (AIFC) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Football Coaches Australia (FCA) to assist each other in development of football in the two countries.
- The two bodies will look to encourage the involvement of more female coaches and increase access to football for all participants.
- The MoU is introduction of standard contracts for coaches within their country which set out the agreed minimum employment conditions and a structured and resourced process for termination of employment.

Others

Real Madrid and Barcelona Named World Most Valuable Brands in Football

- According to the 2020 Brand Finance Football report, the two most valuable clubs in the world football play are the top two heavyweights of La Liga
- For the second year in a row, Real Madrid lead the way as the most valuable football club brand in the world, closely followed by Barcelona, who have overtaken Manchester United to move from third in the 2019 edition to second in this year's rankings.
- Real Madrid's brand is valued at €1.419 billion, with FC Barcelona's just €6 million behind on €1.413 billion. There's then a sizeable drop-off to the rest of the top five, with third-placed Manchester United on €1.315 billion, fourth-placed Liverpool on €1.262 billion and fifth-placed Manchester City on €1.124 billion.
- In addition to calculating brand value, Brand Finance's report also assesses brand strength by attributing each football club a 'Brand Strength Index' score out of 100 based on metrics such as marketing investment, stakeholder equity and business performance. Real Madrid also lead this ranking with a score of 94.9, while FC Barcelona again come in a close second with a score of 93.6.

Lewis Hamilton wins his seventh British Grand Prix

- Lewis Hamilton claimed his seventh British Grand Prix victory in dramatic fashion, crossing the line on three wheels after a puncture in the final lap.
- Max Verstappen finished Second.
- Charles Leclerc finished third for Ferrari with Daniel Ricciardo fourth for improving Renault and British driver Lando Norris fifth for McLaren.

Sehwag, Sardar in 12-member selection panel for National Sports Awards

- Former India cricketer Virender Sehwag and hockey stalwart Sardar Singh were included in a 12-member committee constituted by the sports ministry to select this year's National Sports Awards winners.
- Just like last year, the ministry opted for a single selection committee to pick the awardees among both athletes and coaches and it will be headed by Retired Supreme Court Justice, Mukundakam Sharma.
- Also there in the panel is Paralympic silver-medallist Deepa Malik.
- The other members of the committee include former table tennis player Monalisa Baruah Mehta, boxer Venkatesan Devarajan as well as sports commentator Manish Batavia and journalists Alok Sinha and Neeru Bhatia.
- The national sports awards are given away every year on August 29, the birth anniversary of hockey icon Dhyan Chand.
- The panel will also have representation from the Sports Ministry, including Sports Authority of India Director General Sandip Pradhan, Joint Secretary (Sports Development) L S Singh and Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) CEO Rajesh Rajagopalan.
- Two additional members who have been Dronacharya Awardees may be invited by the Chairperson while considering the nomination for Dronacharya Award, a sports ministry release stated.

India withdraws from women's world team squash championship
- India has withdrawn from the women's world team championship scheduled in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from December 15 to 20.
- Squash Rackets Federation of India (SRFI) has decided to withdraw from the championship due to uncertainties regarding guidelines for the safe travel of athletes and staff for national and international tournaments coupled with lack of preparation time and match readiness of athletes.

HRD Minister, Sports Minister to launch 'Fit India Talks' to inspire school children
- The government's flagship program Fit India is launching a series of interactive sessions with some of the top sports persons of the country intended to inspire the school children.
- The sessions, titled Fit India Talks, will premiere in the presence of Human Resource Development Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank and Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju along with badminton star PV Sindhu and Indian football team skipper Sunil Chhetri.
- A host of leading sports celebrities will be sharing their experiences of childhood, stories on how they got inspired, their failures, struggles and their success. This will give the audience a very inspirational yet interesting account of their journeys - from common school students to world-class champions.
- There will be a total of six sessions which will go on till 14th of this month. The likes of badminton star Ashwini Ponnappa, Indian women's hockey team skipper Rani Rampal, table tennis star Manika Batra, shooter Apurvi Chandela and inspirational Paralympian Deepa Malik will join in at the sessions.

NSNIS Patiala and CSS-SRIHER, Chennai, launch courses in sports physiotherapy, sports nutrition
- Netaji Subhas National Institute of Sports (NSNIS) Patiala and CSS-SRIHER, Chennai, launched six-month online courses in sports physiotherapy and sports nutrition aimed at grassroot-level development in the country.
- It was a part of an MOU signed between the two institutes to launch these certificate courses in sports science which will give an opportunity to young qualified professionals to further specialise in their area of expertise.
- In the first leg, sports physiotherapy and sports nutrition courses have been launched online. Sports Authority of India also plans to introduce courses in physiology, sports biomechanics, strength and conditioning, sports psychology.
- These courses are aimed at training professionals who can work along with community coaches and development-level coaches to use sports science in grassroot-level training.

- A two-week physical workshop will also be held as part of the six-month course. It will be organised once the COVID-19 pandemic subsides.
- Assessment of attendees for final certification will be done on the basis of online quizzes and written examinations.
- "In the second phase SAI will also introduce courses in exercise physiology, sports biomechanics, strength and conditioning, sports psychology."
- The eligibility criteria to appear for the written entrance exam for the Sports Physiotherapy course is a Masters in Physiotherapy (Ortho/Sport).

Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju chairs 1st General Council meeting of Khelo India Scheme

- Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju chaired the 1st General Council meeting of the Khelo India Scheme.
- Mr Rijiju urged the states to organise State-level Khelo India Games annually with an effort to identify a larger number of grassroot-level talents.
- He stated, the annual competitions being organized at the national level under the Khelo India Scheme, like the Khelo India Youth Games and University Games, have helped to identify sporting talent from all states.
- The Minister stated, States that already conduct annual sporting competitions can align with the Khelo India Scheme and the Centre will support them in conducting these events.
- Mr Rijiju has asked the states to organise competitions at the district, block and panchayat-level to identify young talent.
- The Sports Minister spoke of the 5 zonal talent scouting committees that are being planned for east, west, north, south and north east India.
- He asked the states for active participation in assisting these committees in identifying grassroot-level talent in 24 sporting disciplines.

Max Verstappen wins 70th Anniversary Grand Prix

- Red Bull's Max Verstappen took a sensational surprise victory in the 70th Anniversary Grand Prix to bring Mercedes' domination to an end.
- Verstappen's win was founded on his car being kinder to its tyres than the Mercedes of Lewis Hamilton and Valtteri Bottas and the Dutchman capitalised brilliantly.
- Hamilton fought back from early struggles to catch and pass Bottas for second place with two laps to go.
- Ferrari's Charles Leclerc was outstanding in taking fourth on a one-stop strategy.
- It was an unexpectedly thrilling race, a fitting testament to the occasion as F1 celebrated 70 years since the F1 championship started at Silverstone in 1950.
- Verstappen's victory was a major upset and it was helped by a decision to use the hard tyres for the start of the race.

Sports Ministry to organise 'Fit India Freedom Run' from Aug 15- Oct 2

- The Sports Ministry will organise the largest country-wide run, the Fit India Freedom Run from august 15th till 2nd of October, which boasts of a unique concept. Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju will launch the mega-event. In keeping with the current pandemic situation and social distancing norms, the government has decided to encourage participants of the event to run at their own pace - anywhere and at any time of their convenience.
- Additionally, they can break up their runs over several days in this period. The total kilometers clocked can be tracked using a Global Positioning System (GPS) watch or manually. The event is targeted to encourage fitness among the masses while following Covid-19 protocols.

- Individuals and organizations can register for the event on the Fit India website. The event is being organised to mark the 74th Independence Day of India tomorrow and will continue till 151st birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi on 2nd of October.
- The motto of the 'Freedom Run' is to encourage fitness and help citizens to get freedom from obesity, laziness, stress, anxiety and other diseases. In the recent past as well, Fit India has organized numerous big scale events such as Fit India Plog Run and Fit India Cyclothon to take the message of fitness to the masses.

Lewis Hamilton Breaks Michael Schumacher's Record With Spanish Grand Prix Win

- Lewis Hamilton claimed his 88th Formula One career victory and, with it, an outright record 156th podium finish in the Spanish Grand Prix.
- It was the world championship leader and six-time champion's fifth win in Spain and his fourth in consecutive years, extending his record run of finishes in the points to 39.
- Hamilton had shared a record 155 podium finishes with Michael Schumacher whose other records for championships and wins are in the Briton's sights this year.
- Max Verstappen of Red Bull who finished second ahead of Valtteri Bottas.

Dream11 wins IPL title rights at 50 percent discount

- Dream11, a market leader in the fantasy gaming space, will be the title sponsor of the Indian Premier League (IPL) this season after it was awarded the sponsorship rights for Rs 222 crore nearly half the Rs 440 crore Vivo India.
- BCCI has roped in two more associate partners for the IPL in Unacademy and Cred, a credit card billing platform. Tata Altroz and Ceat Tyres remain the other associate sponsors while the Future Group has exited.
- IPL 2020 is to be held in UAE(United Arab Emirates) from September 19 to November 10, 2020.

INOX Group to sponsor Indian team for Tokyo Olympics: IOA

- The INOX group will be the official sponsor of the Indian team for the rescheduled Tokyo Olympics, the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) announced.
- The Tokyo Olympics was rescheduled to next year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It will be held from July 23 to August 8 in 2021.
- As part of the partnership the Group will also support team's promotions through its entertainment company -- INOX Leisure Limited, which owns a chain of multiplexes in the country.
- INOX Group has earlier supported various sporting events, teams and leagues in table Tennis, football, badminton, running, basketball and cricket, and building awareness among masses through effective promotional initiatives.

Rohit Sharma awarded Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award with four others

- Sports Ministry has confirmed 5 names for the prestigious Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award.
- 27 sportspersons will also get the Arjuna Award.
- India's vice-captain Rohit Sharma, who is one of the most established white-ball cricketers in world cricket, is all set to get India's highest sporting award - The Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award.
- The list was approved by the Sports Ministry, where Rohit, along with para-athlete Mariappan Thangavelu, table tennis champion Manika Batra, wrestler Vinesh Phogat and hockey player Rani Rampal were finalised to get the prestigious award.
- The five sportspersons will receive a medallion, a certificate, and a cash prize of Rs 7.5 lakh.

Complete list of Arjuna Awardees

- Atanu Das (Archery)

- Shiva Keshavan (Luge)
- Dutee Chand (Athletics)
- Satwiksairaj Rankireddy (Badminton)
- Chirag Shetty (Badminton)
- Vishesh Bhrighuvanshi (Basketball)
- Ishant Sharma (Cricket)
- Deepti Sharma (Cricket)
- Lovlina Borgohain (Boxing)
- Manish Kaushik (Boxing)
- Sawant Ajay Anant (Equestrian)
- Sandhesh Jhingan (Football)
- Aditi Ashok (Golf)
- Akashdeep Singh (Hockey)
- Deepika Thakur (Hockey)
- Deepak Niwas Hooda (Kabaddi)
- Sarika Kale (Kho-kho)
- Suyash Jadhav (Para-Swimming)
- Manish narwal (Para-Shooting)
- Sandeep Chaudhary (Para-Athletics)
- Saurabh Chaudhary (Shooting)
- Manu Bhaker (Shooting)
- Sanil Shetty (Table-Tennis)
- Divij Sharan (Tennis)
- Divya Kakran (Wrestling)
- Rahul Aware (Wrestling)
- Dattu Bhokanal (Rowing)
- All the sportspersons will receive the awards on August 29 - which is also celebrated as National Sports Day to commemorate the birth anniversary of hockey wizard Major Dhyan Chand.
- This year, due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the ceremony is likely to be held virtually.

Ronnie O'Sullivan wins sixth World Snooker Championship at Crucible

- Ronnie O'Sullivan won the World Snooker Championship to join Steve Davis and Ray Reardon as a six-time winner at the Crucible.
- After reeling off seven frames in succession to move one frame from victory, 'The Rocket' returned for the evening session to produce more magic and defeat Kyren Wilson 18-8 in the final.
- Only Stephen Hendry's seven crowns now stand between the 44-year-old and undisputed acclaim as the greatest player in the modern sport after he wrecked Wilson's hopes of a final debut win.

National Sports Awards 2020 announced: Dhronacharya and Dhyan Chand winners list

DRONACHARYA AWARD

A. Life- Time Category

S. No.	Name of the Coach	Discipline
1	Shri Dharmendra Tiwary	Archery
2	Shri Purushotham Rai	Athletics
3	Shri Shiv Singh	Boxing
4	Shri Romesh Pathania	Hockey
5	Shri Krishan Kumar Hooda	Kabaddi
6	Shri Vijay Bhalchandra Munishwar	Para Powerlifting
7	Shri Naresh Kumar	Tennis
8	Shri Om Parkash Dahiya	Wrestling

B. Regular Category

S. No.	Name of the Coach	Discipline
1	Shri Jude Felix Sebastian	Hockey
2	Shri Yogesh Malviya	Mallakhamb
3	Shri Jaspal Rana	Shooting
4	Shri Kuldeep Kumar Handoo	Wushu
5	Shri Gaurav Khanna	Para Badminton

DHYAN CHAND AWARD

S. No.	Name of the Sportsperson	Discipline
1	Shri Kuldip Singh Bhullar	Athletics
2	Ms. Jincy Philips	Athletics
3	Shri Pradeep Shrikrishna Gandhe	Badminton
4	Ms. Trupti Murgunde	Badminton
5	Ms. N. Usha	Boxing
6	Shri Lakha Singh	Boxing
7	Shri Sukhvinder Singh Sandhu	Football
8	Shri Ajit Singh	Hockey
9	Shri Manpreet Singh	Kabaddi
10	Shri J. Ranjith Kumar	Para Athletics
11	Shri Satyaprakash Tiwari	Para Badminton
12	Shri Manjeet Singh	Rowing
13	Late Shri Sachin Nag	Swimming
14	Shri Nandan P Bal	Tennis
15	Shri Netarpal Hooda	Wrestling

TENZING NORGAY NATIONAL ADVENTURE AWARDS 2019

S. No.	Name of the Sportsperson	Category
1	Ms. Anita Devi	Land Adventure

2	Col. Sarfraz Singh	Land Adventure
3	Shri Taka Tamut	Land Adventure
4	Shri Narender Singh	Land Adventure
5	Shri Keval Hiren Kakka	Land Adventure
6	Shri Satendra Singh	Water Adventure
7	Shri Gajanand Yadava	Air Adventure
8	Late Shri Magan Bissa	Life Time Achievement

MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD (MAKA) TROPHY

Panjab University, Chandigarh

RASHTRIYA KHEL PROTSAHAN PURUSKAR

S. No.	Category	Entity recommended for Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar, 2020
1.	Identification and Nurturing of Budding and Young Talent	Lakshya Institute Army Sports Institute
2.	Encouragement to sports through Corporate Social Responsibility	Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) Ltd.
3.	Employment of sportspersons and sports welfare measures	Air Force Sports Control Board
4.	Sports for Development	International Institute of Sports Management (IISM)

First female golfer from Germany Sophia Popov wins Women's British Open

- World number 304 Sophia Popov became the first female golfer from Germany to capture a major title after winning the Women's British Open by two strokes at Royal Troon in Scotland.
- Popov, who went into the final round with a three-shot lead, bounced back from bogeying the first hole by making five birdies in her 3-under 68. Thailand's Jasmine Suwannapura was the runner-up after shooting 67. It completed one of the most unlikely wins in the tournament's history.

India plans to host BRICS Games during Khelo India Games in 2021

- India are planning to host BRICS Games in 2021 and may align it with Khelo India Games.
- This announcement came after Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju, attended a meeting of Sports Ministers of the BRICS nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa).
- India will get the chairmanship of the five-nation independent international group in 2021.
- BRICS Games 2021 will be held during same time and at the same venues as of Khelo India Games 2021 so that our players from various parts of the country who will gather for Khelo India Games will have the benefit of witnessing BRICS Games from close quarters.

Alexander Kristoff wins first stage of Tour de France

- Norway's Alexander Kristoff won a crash-filled opening stage of the 2020 Tour de France after a sprint finish in treacherous conditions on Nice's Promenade des Anglais, claiming the yellow jersey for the first time in his career.
- UEA Team Emirates rider Kristoff used his experience in the finishing burst to take the honors from world champion Mads Pedersen of Denmark and Dutch rider Cees Bol. Seven-time green jersey winner Peter Sagan finished fifth in the dash for line.

Lewis Hamilton wins Belgian Grand Prix to secure 89th victory of career

- Mercedes driver Lewis Hamilton dominated the Belgian Grand Prix to take his fifth victory in seven races this year and the 89th of his career.
- He is followed by Valtteri Bottas and Max Verstappen.

Para swimmer Satyendra Singh first Divyang sportsperson of country to get prestigious Adventure Award

- Para-swimmer Satyendra Singh Lohia of Madhya Pradesh is the first Divyanga Indian sportsperson of the country, who has been awarded today with the Tenzing Norgay Adventure Award.
- He is also the first Asian Divyang swimmer to cross the 42-kilometer Catalina Channel in the US in just 11 hours 34 minutes.
- Para-swimmer Satyendra Singh was also conferred with the Best Sportsperson National Award by Vice President Venkaiah Naidu on World Divyanga Day.
- He has also been awarded the highest sports award of Madhya Pradesh as well as many other national and international honours.

Deep Grace, Jayanti Behera get Biju Patnaik awards on National Sports Day

- Indian women's hockey team defender Deep Grace Ekka and para-athlete Jayanti Behera received the Biju Patnaik sports award for outstanding performance from Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik through video conference on the occasion of the National Sports Day.
- Both of them received a citation along with cash award of Rs 2 lakh each.
- Similarly, Biju Patnaik Bravery Award was presented to two girls from Kendrapara, Purnima Giri and Sabita Giri, who received cash award of Rs 1 lakh each, medal and citation. Biju Patnaik Sports Award for excellence in coaching went to chess coach Satya Ranjan Patnaik. He received cash award of Rs 1 lakh.
- Siba Prasad Das received a cash award of Rs 32,50,000 for coaching to sports persons with disability. Among others, Padmini Rout, Hupi Majhi, Rajashree Mohapatra, Manisha Merel, Pratyasha Ray also received cash awards.

<div align="center">Revision Points</div>

Organization	Headquarters	Key Person
All India Football Federation (AIFF)	New Delhi	Praful Patel
Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT)	New Delhi	Pramod Chandra Mody
United Nations	New York, USA	António Guterres
International Monetary Fund (IMF)	Washington D.C.	Kristalina Georgieva
Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank	Beijing, China	Jin Liqun
Competition Commission of India (CCI)	New Delhi	Ashok Kumar Gupta
Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)	New Delhi	Rita Teaotia
National Skill Development	New Delhi	Manish Kumar

Corporation (NSDC)		
Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI)	New Delhi	Sangita Reddy
NTPC Ltd	New Delhi	Gurdeep Singh
Coal India Ltd	Chennai	Sarat Kumar Acharya
Power Finance Corporation	New Delhi	Ravinder Singh Dhillon
Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority	New Delhi	Paban K. Borthakur
International Solar Alliance (ISA)	Gurugram	Upendra Tripathy (Leader)
Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank	Beijing, China	Jin Liqun
World Bank	Washington D.C, USA	David Malpass
Asian Development Bank	Mandaluyong, Philippines	Masatsugu Asakawa
International Cricket Council (ICC)	Dubai, UAE	Manu Sawhney
National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)	Washington DC	James Morhard
European Union	Brussels	Ursula von der Leyen
AIIMS	New Delhi	Harsh Vardhan
United Nations Childrens' Fund (UNICEF)	New York, USA	Henrietta H. Fore
World Health Organization	Geneva, Switzerland	Tedros Adhanom
International Labour Organization (ILO)	Geneva, Switzerland	Guy Ryder, Juan Somavía
Defence Research Development Organization	New Delhi	Sateesh Reddy
FlipKart	Bengaluru	Kalyan Krishnamurthy
United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization	Paris	Audrey Azoulay
Indian Council of Medical Research	New Delhi	Balram Bhargava
Google	California, United States	Sundar Pichai
Amazon	Washington, United States	Jeff Bezos
International Finance Corporation (IFC)	Washington, D.C., United States	Philippe Le Houérou
Paytm	Noida	Vijay Shekhar Sharma
Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs	New Delhi	M Ajit Kumar
All India Institute of Ayurveda	New Delhi	Tanuja Nesari
Tech Mahindra	Pune	C. P. Gurnani

| African Development Bank Group | Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire | Akinwumi A. Adesina |

Important Obituaries

Name	Field
Hasmukhbhai Joshi	Former Saurashtra coach (Hisbook - 'Old Ranji Trophy Players of the Period 1963 to 1969 — my teammates and intimates')
Lee Teng-hui	Former president, Taiwan
RD Pradhan	Former Arunachal Pradesh Governor
Sa Kandasamy	Tamil writer and documentary filmmaker
Anant Shet	Former speaker of Goa
Kamal Rani Varun	Uttar Pradesh's Technical Education Minister (COVID-19)
John Hume	Nobel Peace Prize winner
Sunnam Rajaiah	Former Bhadrachalam MLA, and senior CPI (M) leader (COVID-19)
Ebrahim Alkazi	Theatre legend
Shivajirao Patil Nilangekar	Former Maharashtra Chief Minister
Doris Buffett	Philanthropist
Shirley Ann Grau	Pulitzer Prize-winning fiction writer
Sadia Dehlvi	Delhi-based writer and activist
Shyamal Chakraborty	West Bengal CPM leader and former transport minister (COVID-19)
Mukund Lath (Padma Shri in 2010)	Historian, scholar, and an exponent of the Mewatigharana
Manitombi Singh	Former India defender and Mohun Bagan
Nandi Yellaiah	Senior Congress leader and eight-time MP
James Harris (popularly known as Kamala)	WWE legend
Rahat Indori	Urdu poet and lyricist
V Swaminathan	Tamil producer (COVID -19)
GK Menon	Sports journalist
Trini Lopez	Singer and Actor
Sumner Redstone	Viacom CBS head
Yadupati Singhania	Uttar Pradesh Cricket Association
Chunnakara Ramankutty	Malayalam poet and film and drama lyricist
Chetan Chauhan	Former Test batsman
Robert Trump	Donald Trump's younger brother
Dr B Siva Kumar	Carnatic musician &veena vidwan
Pandit Jasraj (Padma Shri,	Vocalist

Padma Bhushan and Padma Vibhushan awardee)	
Nishikant Kamat	Director-actor
Gopalaswamy Kasturirangan	Former cricketer-administrator and the BCCI curator
Ben Cross	British actor (1981 Oscar-winning sports drama 'Chariots of Fire)
Bhaskar Maity	Former India international goalkeeper
AB Raj	Filmmaker
Ashok Sahil	Urdu poet
Pascal Lissouba	President of the Republic of Congo
Gail Sheehy	Journalist, commentator and pop sociologist
Archana Mahanta	Assamese singer
AR Lakshmanan	Former judge of the Supreme Court
H. Vasantha Kumar	Tamil Nadu Congress Committee working president and Kanyakumari MP
Purshottam Rai	Athletics coach (Won Dronacharya Award)
Chadwick Boseman	Black Panther' star
Purushotham Rai	Former India athletic coach
Pranab Mukherjee	Former President of India (13th President)