

December 2020

BOLT

Monthly Current Affairs



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Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Banking & Finance | 3 |
| Economy | 8 |
| National | 10 |
| International | 12 |
| Sports | 13 |
| Agreements & MoUs | 16 |
| Schemes | 23 |
| Appointments & Resignations | 24 |
| Awards | 28 |
| Ranks & Reports | 32 |
| Important Days | 36 |
| Summit & Conferences | 40 |
| Science & Technology | 43 |
| Defence | 46 |
| Books & Authors | 49 |
| Miscellaneous | 51 |
| Obituary | 52 |
| Person in news | 57 |
| Insurance | 59 |
| India & World | 61 |
| Environment | 63 |
| Apps & Portals | 65 |
| Acquisitions & Mergers | 67 |
| Agri-Business | 70 |
| External Affairs | 71 |
| FinTech | 72 |
| PSUs | 73 |
| States/UTs | 74 |
| Committees | 85 |

Banking & Finance

1. Paytm partners Suryoday Small Finance Bank to provide instant digital loans to MSMEs

India's digital financial services platform Paytm partnered with Suryoday Small Finance Bank to empower MSMEs with instant digital loans. This is the first lending partnership for Paytm with a small finance bank to help merchants get loans seamlessly. Loans to be disbursed to over ₹1 Lakh small businesses.

2. IFSCA obtains Membership of International Association of Insurance Supervisors (IAIS)

IFSCA is a unified authority for the development & regulation of financial products. It obtained membership from IAIS. With this, IFSCA would have access to IAIS's global network & would be able to exchange ideas & information with other global regulators. IFSCA was established in April 2020. HQ: Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

3. SIDBI floats asset reconstruction company for MSMEs

The Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has floated the country's first asset reconstruction company focussing on non-performing assets of micro, small and medium enterprises, christened India SME Asset Reconstruction Company. SIDBI Founded: 2 April 1990; HQs: Lucknow.

4. RBI Raises Contactless Card Payment, UPI Auto Pay Limits To Rs 5,000 From Jan 1, 2021

RBI has proposed to enhance the limit for contactless card transactions from Rs 2000 to Rs 5000 from Jan 1, 2021. Transaction limit on e-mandates for recurring transactions through cards/UPI has been proposed to be increased from Rs 2000 to Rs 5000. AFA stands for Additional factor authentication.

5. RBI opens LAF, MSF windows for regional rural banks

RBI has allowed regional rural banks to access liquidity adjustment facility, marginal standing facility & call/notice money market, aimed at facilitating better liquidity management for these lenders. As of now, RRBs are not permitted to access these. LAF: allows banks to borrow money through repurchase agreements.

6. RBI advises banks not to make any dividend payouts from profits pertaining to the FY ended March 2020

RBI has reiterated that commercial & co-operative banks can retain FY20 profit & not make any dividend payments. Objective was to help banks conserve cash; RBI will review its stand based on financial positions of the banks for the September quarter. Repo Rate: 4% Reverse Repo: 3.35%

7. RBI stops HDFC Bank from new digital launches and sourcing of new credit card customers

RBI has asked HDFC Bank to temporarily stop all launches of digital business generating activities; sourcing of new credit card customers as HDFC Bank went through multiple outages in its internet banking/mobile banking/payment utilities over past 2 years Sashidhar Jagdishan is the new CEO of HDFC Bank

8. Yes Bank celebrates the launch of 'YES Premia' program during 'Truly Yours' Week, from December 1-7, 2020

YES Premia, is a premium banking program that offers personalized solutions focused on the particular needs of key consumer segments - from small business owners to salaried professionals and senior citizens. Yes Bank CEO: Prashant Kumar; HQ: Mumbai.

9. Punjab National Bank (PNB) launches loan management solution called 'LenS-The Lending Solution'

PNB has launched a tech-based loan management solution 'LenS-The Lending Solution', to speed up and maintain accuracy in online loan processing and sanctioning of credit proposals. It is envisaged to be implemented in a phased manner for all kinds of loans PNB Headquarters: New Delhi CEO: S. S. Mallikarjuna Rao

10. Rupifi Joins Hands With Axis Bank, Visa To Launch Credit Card For Small Businesses

The card will be offered to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to transact on aggregator platforms for their business purchases. Rupifi works with large aggregators like food delivery platforms, e-commerce companies, grocery, pharma, agri-commodity. Rupifi company: India's first Lending-As-A-Service play for SMEs.

11. Ujjivan SFB launches neighbourhood banking channel:- Money Mitra

Money Mitra is in-line with the purpose of building banking behavior, specifically among micro banking customers. It will facilitate entrepreneurs running local businesses. The bank has established over 100 Money Mitra outlets across the country and plans. Ujjivan SFB Founder: Samit Ghosh; Founded: 2017

12. RBI cancels licence of Karad Janata Bank Sahakari, more than 99% of depositors to get full payment back under DICGC

On liquidation, every depositor is entitled to repayment of his/her deposits up to a monetary ceiling of Rs 5,00,000 from the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC) as per usual terms and conditions. Karad Janata Bank Sahakari bank at Karad, Maharashtra

13. Equitas Small Finance Bank launches 3-in-1 (saving+trading+demat) account offering various investment options.

Equitas SFB has launched a 3-in-1 account which allows its customers to invest in a wide variety of financial products. It will help the customers to keep all their banking and financial investments under one umbrella entity. Vasudevan Pathangi Narasimhan is MD and CEO of the bank.

14. HDFC Bank invests in fintech start-up smallcase

HDFC Bank invested in investment start-up smallcase as a part of its \$14 million Series B funding round. Smallcases are model portfolios of stocks & ETFs that are created and managed by registered individuals & entities and accessible to retail investors. CEO of Smallcases: Vasanth Kamath.

15. RBI releases Draft Circular on Declaration of Dividend by NBFCs

The Reserve Bank of India released a draft circular on Declaration of Dividend by NBFCs. The RBI has proposed that NBFCs should have at least 15% CRAR for the last 3 years, including the accounting year for which it proposes to declare a dividend. Governor of Reserve Bank of India: Shaktikanta Das.

16. RTGS to be available 24x7 from December 14: RBI

The RBI announced that the money transfer facility, Real-Time Gross Settlement System (RTGS), will be available round the clock on all days of the year from December 14, 2020. Currently, the facility is available between 7 AM and 6 PM on all working days. Minimum amount to be remitted through RTGS is Rs 2 lakh.

17. RBI to set up Automated Banknote Processing Centre(ABPC) in Jaipur

RBI has decided to set up an ABPC in Jaipur for receipt, storage and dispatch of currency notes. Functions of ABPC include processing of banknotes received from currency chests and bank branches, and destruction of soiled banknotes in an automated manner. RBI is responsible for management of currency & related things.

18. YES Bank launched premium credit card for India's affluent and ultra High-Net-Worth-Individuals (HNIs)

YES Bank launched Yes Private Prime Credit Card for India's affluent and ultra HNIs. It is available on Mastercard World Elite platform. A strictly by-invitation-only lifestyle Card offers a unique Customer Value Proposition and host of other experiences. YES bank: CEO -Prashant Kumar; HQ - Mumbai

19. Canara Bank unveils "FX 4 U" for forex remittance via Internet Banking.

Canara Bank has launched FX 4 U that enables its entire internet banking users to handle forex transactions hasslefree. Eligible customers will be able to undertake remittance facilities in adherence to the FEMA regulations. Canara Bank: HQ - Bengaluru; CEO & MD - L V Prabhakar.

20. Ewire Softech, incubated under Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM), ties up with YES Bank for prepaid card.

Ewire Softech launched a prepaid card in association with YES Bank. The co-branded digital banking mobile app will help common public & corporate houses with loans, insurance & CASA accounts. The card will be offered through YES Bank's branches. YES Bank: MD & CEO - Prashant Kumar; HQ - Mumbai.

21. Paytm launches 24x7 RTGS money transfer for merchants.

With 24x7 RTGS customers can make instant bulk payments to Bank Accounts, UPI addresses & Paytm Wallets via Paytm Payouts' APIs & Paytm for Business Dashboard. Now Paytm Payout is only one to offer 24x7 money transfer via Wallet, UPI, IMPS, NEFT, RTGS. Paytm: HQ- Noida; Founder & CEO - Vijay Shekhar Sharma.

22. RBI imposes Rs 50 lakh penalty on an urban co-operative bank in Kerala

RBI imposed a monetary penalty of ₹50.00 lakh on The Urban Co-operative Bank Ltd. No. 1758, Perinthalmanna for non-compliance with directions issued on Income Recognition and Asset Classification (IRAC) norms and on Management of Advances-UCBs. RBI governor - Shaktikanta Das

23. SBI Card, Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd(BPCL) jointly launch "BPCL SBI Card Octane" card offering benefits to high fuel spending

SBI Card launched "BPCL SBI Card Octane" in association BPCL, offering maximum savings to consumers who spend a significant amount on fuel. It offers reward points, value backs, free fraud liability cover & domestic airport lounge access, etc. SBI Card MD - Ashwini Kumar Tewari; BPCL Chairman -K. Padmakar

24. RBI announces opening of 2nd cohort under Regulatory Sandbox(RS) with theme of 'Cross Border Payments'.

RBI announced opening of 'Cross Border Payments' cohort & reduced net-worth requirement for entities interested in participating from Rs.25 lakh to Rs.10 lakh. India is the largest recipient of inbound remittances, accounting for 15% of global share. 'MSME Lending' is the theme for the third cohort.

25. NPCI adds offline transactions feature in RuPay cards, reloadable wallet facility for retail payments.

NPCI has enabled an offline payments feature on RuPay Contactless cards, which provides reloadable wallets within the Card. The RuPay NCMC (National Common Mobility Card) offline wallet can be used to make ticket payments in transit like in metros, cabs etc. Head of RuPay & NFS, NPCI - Nalin Bansal

26. IndusInd Bank launches its first metal credit card 'PIONEER Heritage' in partnership with Mastercard.

IndusInd Bank in partnership with Mastercard launched its first metal credit card - 'PIONEER Heritage'. The card has been specially curated to match the requirements of affluent Indian professionals & entrepreneurs. IndusInd Bank launched 'PIONEER Banking' in January 2020.

27. Yes Bank partners with VISA; introduces new line of E-series debit cards.

YES BANK partnered with VISA to enhance payments efficiency for salaried & YES FIRST account holders. It also introduced a new line of vertical E-series Debit cards across Mastercard and VISA cards. This card will be laid out vertically. YES Bank: MD & CEO - Prashant Kumar; HQ - Mumbai.

28. PMC Bank restrictions extended by 3 more months; RBI says bank needs more time for reconstruction

Stating the need to examine proposals received for the Expression of Interest (EoI) from investors, RBI extended restrictions on PMC period from December 23, 2020 to March 31, 2021. PMC bank was placed under restrictions from 23 September 2019. Restrictions imposed - Section 35A of Banking Regulation Act.

29. Reserve Bank of India extended KYC to legal entities (LEs) on the Central KYC Registry (CKYCR).

Regulated entities should upload KYC data pertaining to accounts of LEs opened on or after April 1, 2021 on CKYCR. Data pertaining to all individual accounts opened on or after January 1, 2017 are already uploaded. KYC is required by rule 9 of PML rules. RBI: Governor - Shaktikanta Das. HQ - Mumbai.

30. ICICI floats 'Infinite India' platform to help MNCs set shop in country

This platform to provide banking and other valued services to foreign companies for setting up or expanding business in the country. As an 'Authorised Dealer Category 1', the bank can authorise the setting up of liaison offices (LO), branch offices (BO). CEO: Sandeep Bakhshi; Headquarters: Mumbai

31. Central Bank of India launches 'RuPay Select' Contactless Debit Card

This innovative offering by the bank in the form of RuPay Debit Select Card will focus on customers' lifestyle, fitness, rejuvenation, nutrition, and personal care. These cards also come with features such as facilitating offline transactions. MD & CEO: Pallav Mohapatra; HQ: Mumbai

32. PayPal's Xoom integrates with UPI payments to support instant remittances to India

This integration allows non-residential Indians (NRIs) & persons of Indian origin (PIOs) in the US, Canada, & Europe to remit money to their family and friends in India. The recipients can set up a default bank account for receiving payments in that account. Xoom users can remit money to 66 Indian banks

33. YES BANK collaborates with Salesforce to enhance customer experience

The deployment of Salesforce, the global leader in Customer Relationship Management Loan Origination System for retail banking will enable the Bank to provide personalized solutions and connected banking experiences for consumers across segments. Arundhati Bhattacharya, CEO and Chairperson, Salesforce India.

34. RBI selects four more sandbox entities in its first cohort for retail payments.

RBI has selected Tap Smart Data Information Services, ToneTag, Ubona Technologies and Eroute Technologies for its first cohort Regulatory Sandbox(RS) and the initial two were National Support Consultancy Services & Nucleus Software Exports. Live testing of innovative products is being done under RS.

35. Central Bank of India to exit from Cent Bank Home Finance Ltd, its housing finance biz; to sell JV stake for Rs 160 crore.

CBHFL is a financing & mortgage company jointly promoted by 4 public sector institutions (Central Bank of India, National Housing Bank, SUTTI & HUDCO). The bank will exit this joint venture by selling its entire stake of over 64% to Centrum Housing Finance. Central Bank of India: MD&CEO - Pallav Mahapatra; HQ - Mumbai.

36. RBI cancels licence of Subhadra Local Area Bank, Kolhapur

RBI cancelled the licence of Subhadra Local Area Bank as its affairs were conducted in a "manner detrimental" to interests of its present & future depositors. It had breached the minimum net worth requirement for 2 quarters in the financial year 2019-20. Cancelled under Section 22 (4) of the Banking Regulation Act.

37. Punjab National Bank introduces PNB e-Credit Card

A digital replica of a physical Credit Card, It will allow PNB customers to use e-credit card at any e-commerce platform or merchant website, without the need of carrying the physical card, by clicking on the e-Credit Card facility in PNB Genie Mobile app. PNB: HQ - New Delhi; CEO -S. S. Mallikarjuna Rao.

38. Bank of Baroda unveils digital lending platform for retail customers

It will enable prospective retail loan seekers to get loans digitally through a paperless process at the convenience of their place & time of choice. Also provides 'In Principle approval' in 30 minutes without human intervention in 4 simple steps. BoB: HQ - Alkapuri, Vadodara; MD&CEO - Sanjiv Chadha

39. Fintech firm Cashaa & United Multistate Cooperative Society launch crypto bank 'Unicas'

Partnership will enable Cashaa to access United's regulatory licenses, physical branches & overall banking infrastructure. Users can transact in cryptocurrency & fiat from one account. Unicas is initially opening its services online & through 14 branches. CEO: Cashaa - Kumar Gaurav (Founder); Unicas - Dinesh Kukreja.

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Economy

1. Highest FDI inflows to India coming from Singapore and USA; software sector biggest beneficiary

According to data published by Department for Promotion of Industry & Internal Trade, Singapore invested Rs 62,084 crore & USA invested Rs 53,266 crore into India between April & Sep '20. In the fiscal 2nd quarter, India received \$28 billion of FDI inflows Gujarat is the highest recipient of FDI inflows (₹1.19 lakh cr)

2. GST collections at stood at ₹1.05 lakh crore in November

GST collection in November 2020 included CGST of ₹19,189 crore, SGST of ₹25,540 crore & IGST of ₹51,992 crore & cess of ₹ 8,242 crore. GST revenues in Oct were ₹1.05 lakh crore marking 2 successive months in which revenues topped ₹1 lakh crore mark. The revenues rose 1.4% on an annual basis at ₹104963 lakh crore.

3. India extends anti-dumping duty on steel products from China, US

India has extended anti-dumping duty on imports of cold-rolled flat products of stainless steel of width 600-1250 mm & above 1250 mm of non-bonafide usage, from China, Korea, European Union, S. Africa, Taiwan, Thailand, and the US, till January 31, 2021. Anti-dumping duty was first imposed in 2015.

4. RBI predicts economy to contract at 7.5% for Fiscal Year 2020-21, growth to turn positive in second half

RBI has revised its forecast of economic growth for FY 2020-21 to (-)7.5% compared to its earlier forecast of (-)9.5%. 2nd half of FY is expected to show positive growth. Change in forecast has been prompted by a surge in demand in both rural & urban areas The economy declined by a massive 23.9% in 1st quarter.

5. Fitch revises India's GDP forecast to -9.4% for FY21

Fitch said the coronavirus recession has inflicted severe economic scarring and the country needs to repair balance sheets and increase caution about long-term planning. Projected contraction of 10.5 per cent due to a sharp economic rebound in the July-Sep The GDP had grown 4.2 per cent in FY 2019-20

6. India would be fastest growing Asian economy in 2021 at 9.9%: Nomura

Foreign exchange and brokerage house Nomura expects the Indian economy to grow at 9.9 per cent in 2021 and it could well be the fastest-growing Asian economy in calendar year 2021 (CY21), eclipsing China (GDP growth pegged at 9%) and Singapore (at 7.5%). Nomura expects global growth to 5.6% from -3.7% in 2021.

7. ADB raises its India FY21 GDP growth forecast to -8% from -9% earlier in its 'Asian Development Outlook 2020 Update'

The GDP forecast for FY2020 (2020-2021) is upgraded from 9.0% contraction to 8.0%, with GDP in H2 probably restored to its size a year earlier, the multilateral lender said in its Asian Development Outlook Supplement (ADOS) for December. Asian Development Bank (ADB) established on 19 December 1966.

8. International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) notifies IFSCA (Bullion Exchange) Regulations, 2020

IFSCA is in charge of the International Bullion Exchange to be set up at GIFT IFSC, Ahmedabad. The regulations notified for the same covers the Bullion Exchange, Clearing Corporation, Depository and Vaults. The regulations are divided into 16 chapters. GIFT is India's first international financial services centre.

9. Market regulator SEBI forms new department 'Corporation Finance Investigation Department (CFID)', to check promoter frauds.

SEBI has set up a specialised department CFID to tackle cases of diversion of funds, bank loans and resources by company promoters. The move comes after a spate of cases involving Cox and Kings, DHFL and the now infamous liquor baron Vijay Mallya. SEBI: Chairman - Ajay Tyagi; HQ - Mumbai.

10. SEBI approves new shareholding norms for listed companies under Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP).

SEBI approved new shareholding norms for CIRP companies & decided to give relaxation in minimum promoter contribution in follow-on public offer. Firms should have at least 5% public shareholding during admission to dealing on the stock exchange. CIRP is a recovery mechanism in Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code.

11. 5 states complete reforms in ease of doing business; eligible for Rs 16,728 cr. extra borrowing

Five states have so far completed the stipulated reforms in the Ease of Doing Business. Among these states, Tamil Nadu has received maximum Rs 4,813 crore; followed by Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana & Madhya Pradesh. Union Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman.

12. Reliance India Ltd, London based BP started production at Asia's deepest gas field R-Cluster in KG D6 block

The R-Cluster is expected to reach plateau gas production of 12.9 million standard cubic meters per day in 2021. The deepwater gas projects in the KG D6 block (R, Satellite Cluster & MJ field) combined are likely to meet 15% of India's gas demand by 2023. This block is in Krishna-Godavari basin of Bay of Bengal coast.

13. Cabinet approves 100% FDI in DTH services by changing I&B guidelines.

Cabinet approved 100% FDI in the DTH broadcasting services sector. Licences also will now be issued for 20 years (now it is 10 years) with a renewal provision after every 10 years & fee from 10% gross revenue (GR) to 8% of adjusted gross revenue (AGR). I & B Minister - Prakash Javadekar.

14. FinMin allows Rajasthan to borrow Rs 2,731 crore more through open market borrowings post ease of doing business reform

Rajasthan has now joined 5 other states (Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Telangana) which have completed the reform facilitating ease of doing business and 6 states were granted additional borrowing permission of Rs 19,459 crore. Minister of Finance - Nirmala Sitharaman.

15. Cabinet approval: Project worth Rs 3,004 crore for deepening, optimisation of inner harbour facilities at Paradip Port

Development of the new Western Dock on build, operate and transfer (BOT) basis under PPP mode to handle cape size vessels, capital dredging by the selected concessionaire & providing Common Supporting Project Infrastructure is to be done. PPT: Commissioned - 1966; Location - Odisha.

16. Cabinet approval: Interest subvention of Rs 4,573 for ethanol distilleries

Scheme will include grain-based distilleries besides molasses-based distilleries for production of ethanol & boost ethanol distillation capacity to 1000 crore litres (currently has 684 crore litre) for achieving 20% ethanol blending with petrol by 2030. Minister for Petroleum & Natural Gas - Dharmendra Pradhan

National

1. Union Min for Tribal Affairs Arjun Munda launched the first virtual 10-day long Aadi Mahotsav festival for tribes

Arjun Munda launched the 10-day long Aadi Mahotsav. It is a unique celebration of the spirit of tribal culture, crafts, cuisine and commerce. It commenced in 2017. It aims to familiarize people with the rich & diverse craft & culture of tribal communities. TRIFED Chairman: Ramesh Chand Meena.

2. Education Ministry sets up a task force under Amit Khare for preparing roadmap on technical education in mother tongue

Education Ministry set up a task force for preparing a roadmap on imparting technical education under the chairmanship of Secretary of Higher Education Amit Khare. The decision was taken at a high-level meeting chaired by Education Minister, Ramesh Nishank IITs & NITs to offer courses in mother tongue from next year.

3. Govt announces 10 best performing police stations in India; Manipur's Nongpok Sekmai tops list

Nongpok Sekmai in Manipur's Thoubal district has been selected as the best performing police station in the country, followed by AWPS-Suramangalam in Tamil Nadu's Salem city & Kharsang in Arunachal Pradesh's Changlang district, as per Union Home Ministry. Announced at the virtual 55th annual DGPs, IGPs conference.

4. Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Ministry of AYUSH decides to set up an AYUSH Export Promotion Council

It was also decided in the review that the entire AYUSH sector will work together to achieve price & quality competitiveness to boost AYUSH exports. Officials from Ministry of Commerce & Industry, RIS, BIS & Invest India & AYUSH industry shared their view. Ministers, Piyush Goyal: Comm.& Industry; Shripad Naik: AYUSH

5. Ministry of AYUSH, AIIMS to set up Department of Integrative Medicine

Ministry of AYUSH and AIIMS to set up a Department of Integrative Medicine at AIIMS. It was decided that Centre for Integrative Medicine and Research(CIMR) AIIMS may develop an integrated protocol with Ayurveda and Yoga for study on Post COVID treatment. Minister of AYUSH: Shripad Yesso Naik.

6. PM Modi lays foundation stone of New Parliament Building under Central Vista Project

PM laid the foundation stone for the construction of the new Parliament. The four-storied New Parliament Building to be built in an area of 64500 sq. m at an estimated cost of ₹971 Crore, to be completed in time to commemorate India's 75th Independence Day Contract to construct the new edifice is given to TATA Projects.

7. ADB approves \$300mn loan to improve primary health care in India's urban areas

ADB approved a \$300 million loan to strengthen and improve access to comprehensive primary health care in urban areas in India. The program will benefit an estimated 256 million urban residents, including 51 million from the slum areas of different states. Asian Development Bank (ADB) is owned by 68 members.

8. Handicraft and GI Toys exempted from Quality Control Order

The Central government has exempted Handicraft and Geographical Indications toys from Quality Control Order. Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) mentioned this exemption in Toys (Quality Control) Second Amendment Order, 2020. DPIIT works under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

9. British PM Boris Johnson to be Chief Guest at 72nd Republic Day Parade next year

Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson will be the chief guest at the 72nd Republic Day Parade in January 2021. He is the first British PM since John Major (1993) to grace the Rajpath parade in 27 years and also the sixth chief guest from the UK. In 2020, Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro was the chief guest.

10. CCEA approves Rs 6700 crore North East power system strengthening scheme.

CCEA approved Rs 6700 crore scheme for power system improvement in North East Region. Economic development through strengthening of intra - state transmission and distribution systems is aimed. Funded by World Bank and Ministry of Power on 50:50 bases. It is to be commissioned by December 2021.

11. Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda inaugurates Tribes India showrooms in Kolkata and Gwalior

Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda inaugurated Tribes India showrooms in Kolkata and Gwalior for preserving and promoting the art and culture of the tribal population who form roughly 8% of the population. TRIFED established: 1987; HQs: New Delhi.

12. Aesthetic Dhokra Decorative Pieces Added to the Tribes India Collection

Dhokra is a non-ferrous metal casting style that uses the lost-wax technique. These products reflect simplicity & motifs of tribal and folk life & make for excellent gifting options. Dhokra products are statues of fish, elephants & hangers from Lohra tribes. The tribe extends from Jharkhand to West Bengal and Orissa

13. Union Government for first time lays down Rights to the Electricity Consumers through "Electricity Rules 2020"

Union Ministry of Power has promulgated rules laying down the rights of power consumers in the country. New electricity rules give consumers across India have the right to a 24x7 supply. DISCOMs have to ensure a minimum standard of service under this act. Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Power: R.K. Singh.

14. PM releases postal stamp as part of Aligarh Muslim University's centenary celebrations

First time PM Modi is participating in a programme of the AMU, being held via video conferencing. AMU became a University in 1920, through an Act of Indian Legislative Council by elevating the Mohammedan Anglo Oriental College to the status of a university. Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank

15. Cabinet approval: Industrial Corridor nodes at Krishnapatnam & Tumakuru under Chennai Bengaluru Industrial Corridor.

Construction of Krishnapatnam Industrial Area (Rs. 2,139.44 crore) & Tumakuru Industrial Area in (Rs. 1,701.81 crore) approved. It is to facilitate investments in these cities by providing resilient infrastructure. 1.8 lakh employment generation estimated. NICDIT implements industrial corridor projects.

16. Indian Railway Completes 180 Kmph Speed Trial Of new Vistadome Tourist Coaches, adding muscles to Atma Nirbhar Bharat Mission

New coaches made by ICF completed 180 kmph oscillation trials. Squeeze tests were already completed. With larger viewing area including roof top glasses with 44 seats for passengers the aim is to provide world class modern travelling experience. 13 Vistadome coaches are currently operational in select routes.

International

1. Singapore Becomes First Country to Approve Sales of Lab-Created Meat

Eat Just Inc., a maker of meat & egg substitutes, is approved to sell its laboratory-created chicken in Singapore, which becomes the first government to allow the sale of cultured meat. It is created from animal cells without the slaughter of any chickens. It will be available under GOOD Meat Brand in the market.

2. New Zealand (NZ) Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern declares 'climate emergency'

NZ PM Jacinda Ardern declared a climate emergency, telling parliament that urgent action was needed for the sake of future generations. NZ is committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2050. Britain became the first in the world to declare a climate emergency NZ aims to generate all energy from renewable sources by 2035.

3. U.K. becomes first country to approve Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine

UK became the 1st country to formally approve the Pfizer & BioNTech Covid-19 vaccine, a symbolic milestone in fight against pandemic. Clinical trials of the vaccine by Pfizer, a U.S. pharmaceutical giant, and its German partner, BioNTech was 95 effective. UK PM: Boris Johnson Capital: London; Currency: Pound Sterling

4. 'Pandemic' is named as 2020's Word of the Year by Merriam-Webster

World Health Organization on March 11 declared the novel coronavirus outbreak a pandemic. That same day, searches for the word were 115,806% higher than on the same date last year. Coronavirus, Quarantine were among runners up for the 2020 Word of the year. Pandemic: Outbreak of a disease that occurs over wide geography.

5. Bangladesh signs first Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) with Bhutan since its independence

PTA allowing duty free access to a range of goods btw two countries. This is the first PTA Bangladesh has signed with any country in the world. The trade volume between the two countries is approximately 50 million dollars with 7.56 million of export. Bangladesh Capital: Dhaka; Currency: Taka

6. Kuwait emir reappoints Sheikh Sabah Al-Khalid as prime minister

Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on his re-appointment as Kuwait's Prime Minister and expressed confidence that the excellent relations between the two countries will continue to expand and flourish. Capital: Kuwait City; Currency: Dinar

7. Singapore's foodie "hawker" culture given UNESCO recognition

Singapore's tradition of communal dining at hawker centres, open-air food courts popularised by celebrity chefs and hit films such as 'Crazy Rich Asians', has been recognised by UNESCO for its cultural significance. Hawker centres were set up in the 1970s UNESCO Founded: 16 November 1945; HQs: Paris, France.

8. European Union approves Pfizer-BioNTech's corona vaccine for use in 27 nation grouping

EU's executive commission gave the green light after the European Medicines Agency said the vaccine meets safety and quality standards. The Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said doses will be available for all EU countries, at the same condition EU members: 27; HQ: Belgium, Brussels

Sports

1. Lewis Hamilton's 95th Career F1 Win in Bahrain Grand Prix

Newly-crowned seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton took his 11th victory of 2020, winning out over Red Bull pair of Max Verstappen & Alex Albon at Bahrain Grand Prix. Lewis Hamilton is a British racing driver currently competing in Formula One for Mercedes. F1 series owned by Liberty Media, an American mass media co.

2. Virat Kohli beats Tendulkar's record to become fastest cricketer to score 12,000 ODI runs

India captain Virat Kohli became the fastest cricketer to score 12,000 ODI runs, breaking a record held by Tendulkar. Kohli reached the milestone during a match against Australia. He touched the figure in his 242nd innings while Tendulkar took 300 games. He was awarded the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award in 2018.

3. Radhakrishnan Nair appointed as the chief coach of athletics by AFI

Athletics Federation of India has appointed the vastly experienced Radhakrishnan Nair as its full-time chief coach. Nair, who is also a certified Technical Official and World Athletics Level-5 coach, has been instrumental in enhancing the coaches education 1st Indian with Intern'l Coach. Enrichment Program certificate

4. Corey Anderson quit New Zealand cricket after accepting a three-year contract with the upcoming Major League Cricket T20 in USA

Anderson, who holds the record for the fastest ODI century in men's cricket, bids adieu with 93 caps for New Zealand across the three formats. Anderson's contract requires him to play Major and Minor League Cricket and undertake coaching activities at MLC. New Zealand cricket team Captain : Kane Williamson.

5. Ex-800m world champion Marina Arzamasova handed a four-year doping ban

An out-of-competition sample provided by the Belarusian on July 29 2019 was found to contain LGD-4033. Also known as ligandrol, it is ordinarily used to treat conditions such as muscle wasting and osteoporosis and is banned by the World Anti-Doping Agency. World Anti-Doping Agency HQ: Montreal, Canada; formed:1999

6. Madagascar has replaced Maldives as the host of the 2023 Indian Ocean Island Games (IOIG)

Madagascar to host IOIG replacing Maldives, due to coronavirus concerns. IOIG is a multi-sport tournament for athletes from Islands of the Indian Ocean. The participating nations are Mauritius, Seychelles, Comoros, Madagascar, Mayotte, Réunion & Maldives. First Island Games in 1979 was held at Reunion.

7. India wicketkeeper Parthiv Patel announces retirement from all forms of cricket

India wicketkeeper Parthiv Patel announced his decision to retire from all forms of cricket. Parthiv Patel last played for India during their tour of South Africa in 2018. He scored 11,240 runs in 194 first-class matches, 5172 runs in 193 List A matches. He is the youngest wicket-keeper to represent a country in Tests

8. Government to Start 1,000 Khelo India Centres To Help Retired Sports Persons

Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry hosted 10th global sports summit, TURF 2020. Union Minister of Sports addressing the summit announced the starting up of 1,000 Khelo India small centres to help retired sportspersons get employment. Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports: Kiren Rijiju.

9. International Olympic Committee Adds Breakdancing As Official Sport For Paris 2024 Games

International Olympic Committee has decided to take breakdancing out for a spin with its upcoming Paris 2024 games. The Olympics website states that breakdancing, skateboarding, sport climbing and surfing will be new categories for the next summer Olympics. It will also feature 100% gender equality in athlete quotas.

10. Domestic season to begin with T20 Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy, announced BCCI

Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy for domestic T20 championship to take place from January 10 to 31. The venue for the tournament is yet to be finalised and the board has currently asked players to assemble at their respective venues on January 2. Syed Mushtaq Ali scored the 1st overseas Test century for India.

11. Qatar to host 2030 Asian Games, 2034 edition in Saudi Arabia.

The hoeting of 2030 Asian Games were awarded to Qatar & 2034 to Saudi Arabia. The Qatari capital of Doha beat Saudi Arabian counterpart Riyadh for the 2030 Asian Games in the vote at the Olympic Council of Asia's general assembly. Qatar is also the host of the 2022 World Cup.

12. Mauritian badminton player Foo Kune banned for two years by CAS.

Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) has banned Mauritian badminton player Kate Jessica Foo Kune for 2 years for an anti-doping violation. She tested positive for a banned steroid during 2019 African Badminton World Championships in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. CAS: President - John Coates; HQ - Lausanne (Switzerland).

13. Formal recognition of Yogasana as a competitive sport.

The Ministry of AYUSH & Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports announced the formal recognition of Yogasana as a competitive sport. Sports discipline of Yogasana is likely to have 51 medals in 4 events and 7 categories. National Individual Yogasana Sports Championship in 2021.

14. India strengthens its commitment to clean Sport, contributes USD 1 million to WADA for scientific research.

India has pledged a sum of \$1mn to the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA). It will allow WADA to develop innovative anti-doping testing & detection methods and further strengthen WADA's independent Investigations & Intelligence Department. WADA: HQ - Montreal, Canada; President Witold Banka.

15. Sports Ministry includes Gatka, Kalaripayattu, Thang-Ta & Mallakhamba in Khelo India Youth Games 2021.

The Sports Ministry has approved the inclusion of four Indigenous Games to be a part of Khelo India Youth Games 2021, scheduled to take place in Haryana. The games are: Gatka, Kalaripayattu, Thang-Ta and Mallakhamba. Yogasana was included as a competitive sport recently.

16. Indian pugilists bag nine medals including 3 golds in Cologne, Boxing World Cup championship

Indian boxers won three gold medals, besides two silver and four bronze, at the recently concluded Cologne Boxing World Cup held in Koln, Germany. Amit Panghal won gold in men's category while Manisha Moun and Simranjit Kaur won gold in Women's category. The Cologne World Cup is the new name of the Chemistry Cup.

17. Wrestler Anshu Malik clinches silver, India's first medal at Individual World Cup

Anshu Malik clinched India's first medal at the Individual World Cup with her silver in the 57kg category. She lost the gold medal bout 1-5 to Moldova's Anastasia Nichita. She had won a bronze at the Asian Championship early this year. Indian Wrestler & Gold Medallist Pawan Kumar is her uncle.

18. FIFA U-17 and U-20 World Cups cancelled due to COVID-19

Indonesia and Peru were due to host the two tournaments, but now they have been awarded the 2023 editions. Earlier, the 2021 U-17 Women's World Cup, scheduled to be held in India in February, was cancelled. India will host the next edition of the U-17 Women's World Cup



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Agreements & MoUs

1. Federal Bank ties up with OrbitRemit to facilitate money transfer from New Zealand to India

Federal Bank Ltd entered into an online Rupee remittance tie-up with OrbitRemit Ltd. The agreement will facilitate Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) & small businesses in New Zealand to transfer money to our country in a low cost, easy and in a more reliable way OrbitRemit is a full-service provider based in New Zealand.

2. India & Vietnam signed seven agreements during the virtual summit

Agreements for cooperation in areas such as defence, petrochemicals and nuclear energy and unveiled a joint vision for peace and prosperity against the backdrop of concerns in both countries about China's aggressive actions across the region. PM of Vietnam: Nguyen Xuan Phuc; Capital: Hanoi; Currency: dong

3. Kaspersky partners Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) to create secure cyberspace

In a bid to create safe and secure cyberspace in India, cybersecurity firm Kaspersky on Monday signed an MoU with the Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) at MeitY. Under this, mechanisms will be created to detect the latest cybersecurity threats. Director-General CERT-In: Dr. Sanjay Bahl. Kaspersky HQ: Russia.

4. India and the US sign MoU on Intellectual Property cooperation

Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry signed the MoU with US Patent and Trademark Office, Department of Commerce of the US. The MoU aims at increasing IP co-operation between the two countries. Intellectual property: Property that includes intangible creation

5. NABARD and SBI sign MoU to extend concessional refinance facility

Karnataka regional office of NABARD & State Bank of India signed an MoU to extend concessional refinance facility to beneficiaries of watershed development & tribal development projects. It aims to benefit 45000 beneficiaries from 260 FPOs in 28 districts. SBI to be the implementing agency for digitalising the SHGs.

6. SJVN signs MoU with IREDA for Green Energy Projects

SJVN Limited, a PSU under the Ministry of Power has entered an MoU with Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Ltd. (IREDA), a PSU under the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy, will provide its services to SJVN for Green Energy projects. SJVN :- Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam Ltd

7. NTPC signs MoU with IIFM, Bhopal for Narmada Landscape Restoration Project

The project aims to establish an incentivisation mechanism to maintain sustainable landscape practices in Narmada basin. The program is partnership with a grant in aid from NTPC Ltd & USAID in equal Proportion. USAID: United States Agency for International Development

8. NBCFDC & NSFDC Under M/O Social Justice & Empowerment Enters in to Memorandum of Agreements with Punjab National Bank

Scheme of Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India (VISVAS) Yojana for financial empowerment of economically marginalized OBC/SC SHGs & Individuals. benefit on the basis of Pan india. It benefit OBC/SC SHGs with loans/borrowings up to 4 L VISVAS Yojana: Vanchit Ikai Samooh aur Vargon ki Aarthik Sahayta

9. MoRTH signs MoU with Austria on Technology Cooperation in Road Infrastructure Sector

The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways signed an MoU with Austria on Technology Cooperation in Road Infrastructure Sector. It aims to create an effective framework for bilateral cooperation in Road Transportation, infrastructure development, etc., Austria Capital: Vienna Currency: Euro

10. Cabinet approves MoU between India and Suriname on Cooperation in the field of Health and Medicine

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi gave its approval for MoU between India and the Ministry of Health of Suriname on Cooperation in the field of Health and Medicine. It will encourage co-operation between the two countries.

Suriname Capital: Paramaribo Currency: Suriname Dollar

11. Confederation of Indian Industry(CII), Amazon India Joined Hands To Boost MSMEs export potential

CII & Amazon India signed MoU to increase export potential of MSMEs in 10 states & help them leverage e-commerce to boost domestic trade. As part of the MoU, MSMEs will be trained to sell online. MoU was signed at the 17th CII Global SME Business summit. Union MSME Minister Nitin Gadkari; CII DG Chandrajit Banerjee.

12. CII launches 'Digital Saksham' initiative with Mastercard and National Institute for MSMEs

CII launched 'Digital Saksham' initiative with Mastercard's Centre for Inclusive Growth and ni-msme for 3 lakhs+ MSMEs across India. It is an expansive program designed to strengthen the competitiveness of MSMEs through digital know-how and acceptance. Ni-msme, under Ministry of MSME, headquartered at Hyderabad.

13. BSNL, in partnership with Skylo, to introduce worlds' first, satellite-based narrowband-IoT (NB-IoT) network.

BSNL in partnership with Skylo announced satellite-based NB-IoT in pursuance of vision of a truly Digital India. This solution will connect with BSNL's satellite ground infrastructure and provide pan-India coverage, including Indian seas. This is the world's first satellite-based NB-IoT network

14. WNS Cares Foundation (WCF) Partners with NITI Aayog to Empower Children and Youth on Cyber Safety Education

WNS Cares Foundation(WCF), the CSR arm of WNS partnered with Atal Tinkering Labs(ATL), an initiative under the Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) by NITI Aayog, to empower youth with knowledge on cyber safety & digital education through its platform CyberSmart. It will be launched in more than 6500 schools across India.

15. National Skill Dev Corp NSDC joins hands with BYJU's to train and upskill teachers

As part of Skill India Mission, the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) joined hands with major ed-tech company BYJU's to support teacher training and upskilling by providing free access to its educational content and tools to help the teachers. MD & CEO of NSDC: Dr Manish Kumar. CEO BYJU's: Byju Raveendran.

16. DBS Bank India partners with Haqdarshak, to aid MSME recovery from Covid-19 pandemic.

DBS Bank India has collaborated with Haqdarshak to assist Indian MSME via Haqdarshak's new platform which provides access to MSME-focused government-assisted schemes across the country. A grant of INR 2.7 mn enabled Haqdarshak to build this platform. DBS Bank India: MD & CEO - Surojit Shome; HQ - Mumbai

17. Star Alliance Expands Strategic Partnership with TCS to Deliver Enhanced Customer Experiences.

TCS expanded its 15 years long partnership with Star Alliance, world's largest airline alliance. TCS to help Alliance Adopt Cloud, Data Analytics, Business Intelligence & Machine Learning to Improve its Business Performance & Ability to Innovate at Scale. Jeffrey Goh is CEO of Star Alliance

18. Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research(NIBIO) signs MoU with cGanga for development of sludge management framework in India.

At the 5th India Water Impact Summit, NIBIO signed an MoU for development of sludge management framework in India with cGanga(think-tank of NMCG). It will help improve India's water management by adopting best practises of Norway. cGanga was established in 2016 at IIT Kanpur.

19. Sanofi, a Pharmaceutical giant, renews deal worth 25mn USD with WHO to fight tropical diseases, sleeping sickness.

WHO & Sanofi have signed a 5 year 25mn USD agreement to help WHO in elimination of human African trypanosomiasis (sleeping sickness), leishmaniasis, control & prevention of Chagas disease & integrated control of the skin Neglected Tropical Diseases. WHO: HQ - Geneva; Director General - Tedros Adhanom

20. Postal Dept signs MoU with CSC e-Governance Services India Ltd(SPV) to set up Common Service Centres in Post Offices (PO-CSCs)

MoU was signed by Postal Dept with CSC SPV to set up PO-CSCs in more than 10000 Post Offices for providing various G2C (Government to Citizen) and B2C (Business to Citizens) services to citizens in rural and remote areas of the country. CSC SPV set by MeitY to implement the CSC schemes.

21. Government of India and World Bank sign \$400 million project to protect India's poor from the impact of COVID-19

\$400 million project to support India's efforts at providing social assistance to the poor and vulnerable households severely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic was signed between GoI and WB. \$750 million was approved in May 2020 under the programme. WB: President - David Malpass; Country Dr, India - Junaid Ahmad.

22. Centre, NDB sign \$1 billion loan pact to support India's economic recovery from COVID-19 pandemic

The loan of \$1,000 million from NDB will support the Government of India's efforts in mitigating the economic impact of the COVID-19 & enable economic recovery in the rural areas through NRM works & employment generation under MGNREGS. NDB: President - Marcos Prado Troyjo; HQ - Shanghai, China

23. Citibank And NCPA Partner To Offer Hindustani Music Scholarships To Young Musicians.

Since 2009, National Centre for the Performing Arts with Citi has been offering scholarships to young promising students who seek advanced training in Hindustani music (vocal & instrumental). This year it is for khayal/dhrupad & tabla/pakhawaj. NCPA was founded in 1969 by JRD Tata and Dr. Jamshed Bhabha.

24. WHO & International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) sign MoU on emergency medical teams

WHO & IFRC signed a MoU(Red Channel Agreement) to cooperate on implementing the Emergency Medical Team (EMT) initiative. It will bring synergies to health emergency response between them, particularly in technical standards, accountability & coordination. WHO DG - Tedros Adhanom; IFRC President - Francesco Rocca.

25. Cabinet approved MoU between India and USA for exchange of information in areas of mutual interest in the electricity sector.

MoU between Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) & Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) was approved. It will help in improving regulatory & policy framework for developing efficient wholesale power markets & enhancing grid reliability. CERC is a key regulator of power sector in India.

26. Virtual Summit between PM Modi and PM Sheikh Hasina: India and Bangladesh sign 7 MoUs, agreements.

MoUs included framework of understanding in the Hydrocarbon sector, framework agreement on High Impact Community Development Project, protocol on transborder elephant conservation, Garbage and solid waste disposal, in the field of agriculture etc. India also released a postal stamp to commemorate Bangabandhu.

27. ASDC and FADA in partnership Google India aims to prepare over 20,000 auto dealerships to engage with customers.

The Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) along with Automotive Skills Development Council (ASDC) has tied up with Google India to bridge the digital skills gap in the country's auto dealerships & build their capacity. From 2016-2019, visits to dealerships in India fell by 50%

28. IIFL Home, ICICI Bank join hands for affordable housing, MSME loans

IIFL Finance subsidiary has tied up with ICICI Bank to provide affordable housing and MSME loans. Under the tie-up, IIFL Home will originate and service customers through the entire loan life-cycle, and ICICI Bank will provide funding to these customers. ICICI Bank CEO: Sandeep Bakhshi; HQs: Mumbai; Founded: June 1994

29. Assam signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Small Industries Development Bank of India to develop the MSME concept

Assam's Industries & Commerce Dept had signed an MoU with SIDBI under which a Project Management Unit will be deployed by SIDBI with govt of Assam. Through this MoU, SIDBI in association with Industries & Commerce Dept aims to develop the MSME concept. Assam Capital: Dispur; Chief minister: Sarbananda Sonowal.

30. PayU ties up with Google Pay to introduce tokenised payments flow for merchants.

PayU with Google Pay has introduced tokenised payments flow for Indian merchants. With the digital token linked to the phone and card information tokenised, Google Pay users can make repeat payments seamlessly and securely. Card data replaced with a unique identification code(token).

31. Ministry of Food Processing Industries signs a Joint Communique and 5 MoUs.

MoFPI signed a Joint Communique with the Ministry of Tribal Affairs & 5 MoUs with TRIFED, ICAR, NSFDC, NAFED and NCDC for implementation of PM FME scheme. Agreement with Union Bank of India as nodal bank for the PM FME scheme was signed as well. FME - Formalisation of Micro food processing Enterprises.

32. Bank of Baroda signs MoU with defence forces for new Baroda Military Salary package

It will be offered to serving and retired personnel of IAF through the Bank's network of over domestic branches & business correspondent. It covers Personal Accidental Insurance, Permanent Total Disability, Air Accident Insurance, etc. BOB Headquarters: Alkapuri, Vadodara. Founded: 20 July 1908.

33. World Bank Signs \$500 Million Project to Develop Green, Resilient and Safe Highways in India

Funds mainly to the highway corridors in the states of Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh. The project will also enhance the capacity of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways in mainstreaming safety and green technology. President: David Malpass; HQ: Washington DC

34. MoU signed between CGWB & CSIR-NGRI for High-Resolution Aquifer Mapping & Management in Arid Region of North western India

Central Ground Water Board (CGWB), Ministry of Jal Shakti and CSIR-NGRI, Hyderabad for use of advanced heliborne geophysical survey and other scientific studies in parts of the States of Rajasthan, Gujarat and Haryana under the Aquifer Mapping Programme. Dr. Harsh Vardhan: Ministry of Science and Technology

35. Asian Development Bank lends \$40M to Northern Arc Capital (NACL) to support Indian MSMEs

To support the livelihoods of microfinance borrowers and MSMEs in India. The loan is disbursed to NACL as part of ADB's ongoing COVID-19 response. NACL will on-lend the loan proceeds and provide guarantees to financial institutions & individual borrowers. HQ: Mandaluyong, Philippines; President: Masatsugu Asakawa

36. South Korea-based LG and automotive supplier Magna International Inc announced billion dollar joint venture in electric car gear

The joint venture, tentatively called LG Magna e-Powertrain and valued at \$1 billion, will manufacture e-motors, inverters and onboard chargers. The deal expands a wave of consolidation among suppliers aiming to capture a growing market for electric vehicle LG stands for Lucky GoldStar; Established in 1958

37. Memorandum of Understanding between Indian Navy and CSIR-NIO

MOU deals with systematic and focused research in the field of ocean data collection, environmental impact assessment, and ocean modeling, has maintained the highest standards in this domain and this will help to expertise in the field of oceanography. National Institute Of Oceanography; HQ: Goa ; Formed: 1966

38. Mahindra Logistics, signed an MoU with 1Bridge for last-mile delivery in rural India

The third-party logistics (3PL) solutions provider, Mahindra Logistics, signed an MoU with 1Bridge, to work together on last-mile delivery & distribution of products of products in rural India. This model will substantially facilitate rural employment. 1Bridge; one of India's largest village commerce networks.

39. TRIFED exchanged a MoU with Shreem Swarnam Divine Products Private Limited (DIVINITI)

To create an upmarket niche brand of products to be named as "TRIFED-DIVINITI" a premium range from the existing range of tribal products. India outlet opens at Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International airport Guwahati. Union minister for tribal affairs Arjun Munda.

40. NMDC and MECL join hands to explore coal, diamonds among other minerals across India

NMDC Limited, India's largest iron ore producing Navratna Company, has signed an MoU with Mineral Exploration Corporation Limited (MECL) to collaborate and conduct exploration in mutually agreed projects for iron ore, gold, coal, diamond and other minerals This will support GoI's 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan' initiative

41. Ministry of skills development joins hands with Microsoft and NASSCOM for digital learning content at ITIs

With this collaboration, nearly 1,20,000 students in around 3000 ITIs across India can be benefited by this digitized e-learning module via the Bharatskills portal which is a central repository for skills for the trainees and trainers of the ITI. Bharatskills portal was launched in Oct 2019.

42. Aurobindo Pharma enters licensing pact with US biotech COVAXX for manufacture, sale of COVID-19 vaccine

Hyderabad, Aurobindo Pharma Ltd & Covaxx, a US-based company, have entered into an exclusive license agreement to develop, commercialise & manufacture UB-612, the first Multitope Peptide-based vaccine to fight COVID-19, for India & UNICEF. A peptide is synthetic protein, which is quickly scalable.

43. Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship and Tata launched first batch of Indian Institute of Skills in Mumbai

Skill development and job creation under Skill India Mission and to provide an impetus to Skill India programme through private sector participation. It is a joint initiative between MSDE, Government of India & Tata Indian Institute of Skills. Minister of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship: M.N.Pandey

44. India, Japan sign deal to boost cooperation between steel industries

An agreement to enhance cooperation between their steel industries with the aim of ramping up domestic production and greater coordination in the global market, which is dominated by China. It will boost mutual cooperation by an, "India-Japan steel dialogue". India & Japan:- Second & third largest steel producing nations

45. HDFC Ltd Signs MOU with CII's Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) to Promote Green Building Initiatives

Under the MOU, HDFC & IGBC will promote green housing by jointly organizing training & awareness programs to facilitate capacity building across the country. It is a unique initiative by a financial institution creating policies to promote green buildings. CEO: Keki M. Mistry ; HQ: Mumbai.

46. Bajaj Auto signs MoU with Maharashtra Government for Rs 650 Crore Investment at Chakan Plant

The facility is expected to commence production in 2023. This facility will be utilised for the/ manufacturing of high-end KTM, Husqvarna and Triumph motorcycles as well as for the company's electric vehicles starting with the Chetak electric scooter. Maharashtra CM: Uddhav Thackeray; Governor: Bhagat Singh Koshyari

47. Daimler and Infosys partner on hybrid cloud-powered innovation & IT infrastructure transformation in automotive

The partnership will enable the company to deepen its focus on software engineering and to establish a fully scalable on-demand digital IT infrastructure and anytime-anywhere workplace. The collaboration will empower Daimler to strengthen its IT capability. Infosys formed: 1981; CEO: Salil Parekh ; HQ: Bengaluru

48. Bajaj Allianz General partners with J&K government for PMJAY SEHAT

Bajaj Allianz has been implementing PMJAY in the region since 2018 where it has covered over 600,000 families. Now 2.1 million families will be covered under the SEHAT scheme to provide universal health insurance cover with a sum insured of Rs 5 lakh. Bajaj Allianz: HQ -Pune; MD&CEO: Tapan Singhel

49. ICICI Bank and Google Pay collaborate to bring digital registration of FASTag

It has become the first bank to join hands with Google Pay for the issuance of FASTag. Customers will now be able to order, track and recharge ICICI Bank FASTag via the Google Pay app. FASTags is mandatory for all motor vehicles from January 1, 2021

50. Hero Electric ties up with startup eBikeGO

It is to supply over 1,000 bikes to transform last-mile deliveries from petrol to electric. eBikeGo will procure Hero Electric bikes with the first batch of 120 already delivered to the startup. Hero Electric will provide service support. CEO: Hero Electric- Sohinder Gill eBikeGO - Irfan Khan

51. BSE signs MoU with Bihar's bullion trade & industry association Patliputra Sarafa Sangh to deepen its network in bullion trade

MoU will strengthen commodity derived markets, enable them to face competition & manage price risks better, design together new products on 'Precious Metals' commodities contract & deepen understanding of commodity market amongst stakeholders. BSE began in 1875, is Asia's first & world's fastest Exchange.

52. Central Bank of India in pact with SIDBI for using its Asset Restructuring Module for the bank MSME customers

The module is a DIY web portal to help MSMEs prepare their own restructuring proposals under restructuring scheme by RBI. MSMEs key in only the most essential data of their past financials, future projections & restructuring requirements for proposal. SIDBI: HQ- Lucknow; Founded - 1990.

53. UNDP and Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation (PCMC), Pune join hands for 'first social impact bond (SIB)'

The bond lays down outcome-based targets to be achieved at the start. PCMC will bear the cost of a public welfare project if the pre-defined targets are fulfilled. This SIB will support the PCMC in improving healthcare services for local residents. 1st time a govt body will act as 'outcome funder' in a bond.

54. BSSUK, a cooperative sugar mill & NKJ Biofuel tie up to set up ethanol plant in Kabirdham, Chhattisgarh.

It is the country's first such PPP plant. NKJ Biofuel Ltd will carry out ethanol production using sugarcane juice and molasses, a byproduct of sugar mill, for a period of 30 years. Rs 100 crore will be invested; Capacity- 40 kilolitre per day. Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel.

55. Common Services Centers SPV partners with IIT Delhi to set up innovation lab 'DIVINE' in rural area

The design and innovation lab which will conduct research on new products & services for village level entrepreneurs (VLE). Infrastructure & expertise available at IIT-Delhi will help solve rural problems with the wide network of VLEs across the country. Lab: Design & Innovation in VLE's Indigenous Network Ecosystem



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Schemes

1. Quarterly Return filing & Monthly Payment of Taxes scheme launched for GST payers with turnover up to Rs 5 cr

Government has launched the QRMP scheme for small taxpayers under GST system. Taxpayers with aggregate annual turnover of up to Rs 5 crore in the preceding financial year and have filed their October GSTR-3B (sales) return by November 30, 2020, are eligible GST was introduced in the year 2017.

2. Bank of Baroda launches Atmanirbhar Women as part of its Baroda Gold Loan Scheme

Under the scheme, the bank is offering loans at 0.50 per cent concession for women. The bank under the gold loan scheme is also offering agri-gold loan at 0.25 percent concession and for retail loan at 0.50 per cent concession. HQ: Alkapuri, Vadodara Founder: Sayajirao Gaekwad III year:1908

3. Cabinet approves setting up of public Wi-Fi networks under 'PM-WANI'

In a bid to improve wireless connectivity, Cabinet approved setting up of public Wi-Fi networks across India. It will be provided through public data offices (PDOs). It is being rolled out as part of Prime Minister Wi-Fi Access Network Interface (PM-WANI) PDOs need not have a licence, registration or any other fees.

4. Cabinet approves Rs 23,000 crore Atmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana (ABRY) to boost fresh hiring.

Cabinet approved an outlay of Rs 22,810 crore to the ABRY to incentivise job creation. The government will contribute to the EPF on behalf of both employee and employer for two years, for recruitments made between October 1 this year and June 30, 2021. It is under Atmanirbhar Bharat Package 3.0 for covid recovery.

5. QCI at the behest of FSSAI Launches Recognition Scheme for Hygiene Rating Audit Agencies.

QCI has come out with scheme for approval of Hygiene Rating Audit Agencies to scale up Hygiene Rating by increasing number of recognised agencies. It will help improve confidence of consumers & food service operators in basic hygiene and quality of food. FSSAI CEO -Arun Singhal; QCI Chairman - Adil Zainulbhai

6. Launched JSA II: Catch the Rain Awareness Generation Campaign

The campaign was launched jointly by Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju. The awareness generation phase of the campaign will run from mid-December 2020 to March 2021. Aim:- Focus on water conservation and rainwater harvesting.

7. First flight operations flagged off on Belgaum -Surat – Kishangarh route under Regional Connectivity Scheme – UDAN

The first flight operations from Belgaum (Karnataka) to Surat (Gujarat) to Kishangarh (Ajmer) route aligns with the government's objective to provide air connectivity with metros to the Tier-2 & Tier-3 cities of the country under UDAN. UDAN: Ude Des Desh Ka Aam Nagrik Launched: 2017

Appointments & Resignations

1. Marisol Casado re-elected as President of World Triathlon

Marisol Casado has been re-elected to serve a 4th term as President of World Triathlon. She has led World Triathlon since 2008. World Triathlon is the international governing body for the multi-sport disciplines of triathlon, duathlon, aquathlon etc., HQ: Lausanne, Switzerland. CEO: Antonio Arimany.

2. Sandeep Kataria becomes first Indian to be appointed as global CEO of Bata

Footwear major Bata Shoe Organization appointed Sandeep Kataria as the company's Chief Executive Officer, effective immediately. With this, Kataria becomes the first Indian to be elevated to the global role of the Bata. He takes over from Alexis Nasard. Kataria was the CEO of Bata India. HQ: Lausanne, Switzerland.

3. Lt Gen Rajeev Chaudhry assumes the charge as Director General Border Roads

Lt Gen Rajeev Chaudhry assumed the charge as 27th Director General Border Roads (DGBR). Lt Gen. Chaudhry was responsible for conceptualising and conducting the first-ever and only Engineer Brigade Exercise with US Engineer Brigade as part of EX YUDH ABHYAS He takes over as the 27th Director-General of Border Roads.

4. Varsha Joshi appointed as the National Dairy Development Board interim chairperson

IAS officer and joint secretary in the union fisheries, animal husbandry and dairying ministry, Varsha Joshi, will take over as interim chairman of the Anand-headquartered National Dairy Development Board (NDDB). She will replace Dilip Rath. NDDB Founded: 16 July 1965.

5. Amitabh Jain appointed as Chhattisgarh's new chief secretary

Amitabh Jain has been appointed as new chief secretary of Chhattisgarh. He succeeds Rajendra Mandal. Before being elevated to the post of chief secretary he was posted as the Additional Chief Secretary Finance with additional charge of water resources dept Chhattisgarh Governor: Anusuiya Uikey; CM: Bhupesh Baghel.

6. Uday Shankar becomes first M&E executive to be elected as FICCI president

Uday Shankar, the outgoing chairman of Star & Disney India and president of The Walt Disney Company, Asia Pacific, is the newly elected president of FICCI for the year 2020-21. He will succeed Sangita Reddy, current president of FICCI. He spearheaded the launch of Aaj Tak in 2000.

7. WHO Foundation appoints Indian-origin health expert Anil Soni as 1st CEO

Indian-origin global health expert Anil Soni has been appointed as the first CEO of The WHO Foundation, an independent grant-making agency, which works alongside the World Health Organization to address most pressing health challenges across the world. WHO foundation Chairman: Thomas Zeltner HQ: Geneva

8. Coffee Day Enterprises appoints Malavika Hegde, the founder's wife, as new CEO

She is the wife of late V.G.Siddhartha, the founder of Coffee Day Global Ltd and Amalgamated Bean Coffee Trading Co. Ltd.. H. Vasudhara Devi, Giri Devanur and Mohan Raghavendra Kondi have been appointed as additional directors. Coffee Day Enterprises :- a bengaluru-based firm founded in 1993

9. Annika Sorenstam elected president of International Golf Federation.

Annika Sorenstam was elected president of the International Golf Federation replacing the outgoing Peter Dawson. Sorenstam, a 72-time winner on the LPGA Tour and former No. 1 from Sweden, will take up the position on Jan 1. Golf became an olympic sport again in 2016 after 112 years.

10. Zena Wooldridge Elected As World Squash Federation President.

Zena Wooldridge from England has been elected as the WSF President. Wooldridge is the second female President after New Zealand's Susie Simcock, since inception in 1967. She replaces outgoing President Jacques Fontaine, from France. Emeritus President, WSF - Jahangir Khan

11. Anindya Banerjee appointed as next Ambassador of India to Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Anindya Banerjee has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Anindya Banerjee is presently an Assistant High Commissioner in the Assistant High Commission of India, Chittagong. Atul M. Gotsurve was the previous ambassador of DPR Korea.

12. Indian-American Pramila Jayapal Elected As Chair of Congressional Progressive Caucus (CPC)

Indian-American Pramila Jayapal has been elected as chair of CPC, making her one of the most powerful US lawmakers for the 117th Congress. Born in Chennai, she became the first Indian-American woman to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives. Indian-American Congressman Ro Khanna elected as Deputy Whip.

13. Private lender HDFC Bank appoints Sanmoy Chakrabarti as Chief Risk Officer(CRO).

HDFC Bank has appointed Sanmoy Chakrabarti as the CRO for 3 years in place of Jimmy Tata, who will take on the role of Chief Credit Officer. Previously, he has been in-charge of market risk, treasury mid-office, operational risk management & Basel credit. HDFC Bank: HQ - Mumbai; MD & CEO - Sashidhar Jagdishan.

14. RBI clears re-appointment of Uday Kotak as MD of Kotak Mahindra Bank(KMB) for 3 years.

KMB said RBI has approved the re-appointments of Uday Kotak as MD & CEO, Prakash Apte as its Part-time Chairman and Dipak Gupta as Joint MD for a period of 3 years, with effect from January 1, 2021. PSB appointments require the prior approval of RBI. Approval provision is under Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

15. Shashi Shekhar Vempati,CEO of Prasar Bharati elected Vice President of Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU).

Shashi Vempati was elected as VP of ABU, one of the largest broadcasting associations in the world, for a 3 year term. ABU formed in 1964 is a professional association of broadcasting organisations with over 286 members in 57 countries and regions. Prasar Bharati: Founded - Nov 1997; HQ - New Delhi.

16. Bank of Baroda appoints Ian De Souza as new chief financial officer.

Bank of Baroda has appointed Ian De Souza as new chief financial officer. He will replace Subrat Kumar. A Chartered Accountant, De Souza has 23 years of experience in the banking and financial services domain. Bank of Baroda: CEO & MD -Shri Sanjiv Chadha.

17. NHAH chairman Sukhbir Singh Sandhu gets second extension of six months.

National Highways Authority of India (NHAH) chairman Sukhbir Singh Sandhu has received a six months extension in his central deputation. He was due to end his second extension term on January 21 next year. He has been Chairman since Oct 2019. NHAH: HQ - New Delhi Established - 1988.

18. Vice Admiral Rajat Datta appointed as next DG Armed Forces Medical Services

Surgeon Vice-Admiral Rajat Datta has been appointed as the new Director-General of Armed Forces Medical Services & would be the seniormost medical officer of the armed forces in India. He also holds the appointment of Cardiologist to the President of India. He will replace incumbent Lieutenant General Anup Bannerjee.

19. YES SECURITIES appoints Prasanth Prabhakaran as Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer

YES SECURITIES, the wholly owned Investment Banking, Merchant Banking, Wealth Broking & Investment Advisory subsidiary of YES BANK, announced the elevation of Prasanth Prabhakaran as the MD & CEO. He has worked with India Infoline, Kotak Securities & HDFC. YES Bank- CEO: Prashant Kumar; Founded: 2004

20. Chetan Sharma Named New Chairman Of Selectors by BCCI; Abey Kuruvilla And Debasis Mohanty Added To Panel

Zone-wise appointments for 5 member All-India Senior Men's Selection Committee included Chetan Sharma(north), Abey Kuruvilla (west) & Debasis Mohanty(east), with Sharma as chairman. As per the BCCI constitution, candidate with most Test caps becomes chief. Pacer Sharma debuted in 1984 & played in 23 Tests & 65 ODIs.

21. Florin Citu appointed as the New prime minister of Romania

Former investment banker and finance minister Florin Citu become the new prime minister at a time when Romania is struggling against the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and its economic fallout. He is from the ruling National Liberal Party (NLP). Capital: Bucharest; currency : Romanian Leu

22. SEBI appoints 13th Chief Election Commissioner as observer for e-voting on Franklin Templeton schemes

Taruvai Subayya Krishnamurthy as the observer for e-voting of unit holders on the six wound up schemes by Franklin Templeton Mutual Fund. The regulator has also constituted a technical team: -B N Sahoo, Nayana Ovalekar, K Sriram, M Krishna and Ch E Sai Prasad. 13th CEC of India from February 2004 - May 2005

23. Vineet Agarwal takes over as new Assocham President

Managing Director of logistics major Transport Corporation of India Limited Vineet Agarwal has taken over as the new President of The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India. He replaces Niranjana Hiranandani, Hiranandani Group MD. Assocham-Apex trade associations of India formed 1920; HQ: Delhi

24. Union Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan nominated to the Board of GAVI, The Vaccine Alliance

He will be representing the South East Area Regional Office/ Western Pacific Regional Office constituency on the board. The seat is currently held by Mr. Myint Htwe of Myanmar. Vardhan will be representing India from 1st January 2021 to 31st December 2023. GAVI: Founded - 2000; HQ - Geneva, Switzerland

25. Maharashtra DGP Subodh Kumar Jaiswal appointed CISF DG; Hemant Nagrale to be Maharashtra's new DGP

The Appointment's Committee of the Union Cabinet approved the proposal of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). Jaiswal is an IPS officer of 1985 batch. The new Maharashtra DGP was appointed as per SC rulings in Prakash Singh case. Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) was raised in 1969.

26. YES Bank appoints Niranjan Banodkar as new CFO, Adlakha to be new HR head

Both the appointments will be effective January 1, 2021. Banodkar will replace Anurag Adlakha as group CFO & Adlakha replaces Deodutta Kurane as Chief Human Resources Officer. Niranjan joined the bank in April 2006 and was heading its market risk division. Yes Bank: HQ - Mumbai; MD&CEO - Prashant Kumar.

27. ISRO chairman K Sivan gets one-year extension as secretary of Department of Space

The appointments committee of the Union cabinet approved extension of one year up to January 14, 2022, to K Sivan. He will now continue as ISRO chairman and Secretary, Department of Space. He took charge as Chairman in January 2018 from AK Kiran Kumar. ISRO: Established - 15 August 1969; HQ - Bengaluru.



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Awards

1. Giant Metrewave Radio Telescope(GMRT) 3rd Indian facility to bag Institute of Electrical & Electronics Engineers(IEEE) milestone

Pune's GMRT is an array of 30 antennas in a 'Y' fashion, operated by TIFR – National Centre for Radio Astrophysics, was the brainchild of Govind Swarup. It was awarded IEEE milestone for its novel engineering, advanced technology in radio astronomy. IEEE HQ: New Jersey, United States. GMRT is located in Pune.

2. "Lukoskin" developer Hemant Kumar Pandey gets DRDO's "Scientist of the Year" award

Award for his contribution in developing several herbal medicines, including the popular drug Lukoskin meant for the treatment of leucoderma. Scientist has developed six herbal drugs so far. Now he undertaking research at DRDO's DIBER at Uttarakhand. Leucoderma : white patches get developed on the skin.

3. Wrestler Bajrang Punia, shooter Elavenil Valarivan win FICCI Sports person of the Year Awards

Wrestler Bajrang Punia & shooter Elavenil Valarivan bagged the top honours at the FICCI India Sports Awards 2020. Cricket legend Anil Kumble received the 'Best Company Promoting Sports (Private Sector)' award on behalf of his enterprise - Tenvic Sports. The Awards were conferred by a jury headed by Mukul Mudgal.

4. President Donald J. Trump to Award the Medal of Freedom to Lou Holtz

US President Trump to award Presidential Medal of Freedom to Louis Leo Holtz, one of the greatest football coaches. It is the Nation's highest civilian honour awarded to individuals who have made meritorious contributions to national interests of the US. The award was established in 1963 by President John F. Kennedy.

5. Infosys Science Foundation awards in winners of Infosys Prize 2020

The Infosys Science Foundation (ISF) awarded the winners of the Infosys Prize 2020 for their outstanding contributions to science and research in a virtual awards ceremony. The prize consists of a pure gold medal & a citation and a reward of USD 1,00,000. The awards are given to contributions in six fields.

6. Ranjitsinh Disale: School teacher from Solapur bagged prestigious Global Teacher Prize 2020

He was honoured for having "transformed the life chances" of girls at the Zilla Parishad Primary School in Paritewadi, in Maharashtra state. He also introduced digital learning tools and his system of QR Coded Textbooks is now used across India. He won the National Innovation Foundation's Innovator award 2018

7. 'Invest India' bags United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD's) Investment Promotion Award 2020

The award recognizes and celebrates the outstanding achievements and best practices of Investment Promotion Agencies (IPAs) across the globe. The evaluation was based on UNCTAD's assessment of work undertaken by 180 Investment Promotion Agencies. UNCTAD HQ: Geneva, Switzerland; Formed: 1964

8. ICAR's IISS Conferred King Bhumibol World Soil Day 2020 Award

Indian Council of Agricultural Research's Bhopal-based Indian Institute of Soil Science was awarded the King Bhumibol World Soil Day 2020 Award by the Food and Agricultural Organisation. It is to recognize its contribution in 'Soil health awareness'. Award is named after King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand.

9. Raj Kamal Jha Wins Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize 2020 for 'The City and the Sea'.

Raj Kamal Jha won Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize for his book, The City and the Sea. The book is based on the Nirbhaya case. He will get \$5000 (usually \$10000) and Rabindranath Tagore statuette. There is a Tagore Prize for Social Achievement as well. The Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize Founder - Peter Bundalo

10. Paul Sein Twa, co-founder of KESAN and Salween Peace Park in Myanmar, receives Goldman Environmental Prize 2020

Paul and his team at KESAN supported Karen indigenous communities in establishing the Salween Peace Park in Myanmar and on the border of Thailand. The Park represents a unique community-based approach to conservation in one of Asia's biodiversity hotspots. Karen Environmental and Social Action Network – KESAN.

11. UNESCO to launch an international prize in the name of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

UNESCO to launch an international prize in the field of 'creative economy' in the name of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Starting November 2021, the dollar 50 thousand award will be given away once in two years for global economic initiatives of the youth. Mujibur Rahman is the founding leader of Bangladesh and first PM

12. Postal Department confers Meghdoot awards to Postal Employees for their achievements in 2019-20

Meghdoot Award Function 2020 was conducted on December 15, 2020. The Meghdoot award is given every year for excellence in postal service. The award was given in 8 categories. Cash award of Rs.21,000/-, a Gold Medallion and a Citation are presented. Meghdoot Awards were instituted in the year 1984.

13. Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) gets Golden Peacock Environment Management Award 2020.

SAIL was awarded the Golden Peacock Environment Management Award for 2020 in the Steel Sector by Institute of Directors. SAIL, as its Corporate Responsibility for Environment Protection continuously focuses on adopting various environmental measures. SAIL won this last year as well.

14. Indian entrepreneur, Vidyut Mohan, named among 'Young Champions of the Earth' winners by UNEP.

Vidyut Mohan was one of the "Young Champions of the Earth" winners by UNEP. Co-founder of "Takachar", a social enterprise enabling farmers to prevent open burning of farm residues & earn extra income by converting them into value-added chemicals on-site. Prize is annually awarded to 7 entrepreneurs under age 30.

15. Six environmental trailblazers honored with UNEP's 2020 Champions of the Earth Award.

UNEP announced 6 winners of Champions of the Earth Award for initiatives aimed at healing the planet amid natural & man-made threats. Champion of the Earth Lifetime Achievement was Robert D. Bullard, an American scholar for promoting environmental justice. UNEP: Executive director - Inger Andersen; HQ - Nairobi, Kenya.

16. Lewandowski and Lucy Bronze Win FIFA Player Of The Year Awards.

Poland captain Robert Lewandowski was named men's player of the year by the FIFA. England defender Lucy Bronze was named best women player of the year. The Puskas Award for best goal went to Tottenham's South Korean striker Son Heung-min. FIFA president - Gianni Infantino

17. PM delivered keynote address at ASSOCHAM Foundation Week; ASSOCHAM Enterprise of the Century Award to Mr. Ratan Tata

Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually delivered the keynote address at ASSOCHAM Foundation Week 2020. Prime Minister also presented the ASSOCHAM Enterprise of the Century Award to Mr. Ratan Tata, who received the award on behalf of the TATA Group. ASSOCHAM was established in 1920 by promoter Chambers.

18. Unilever, Tata Power and Maruti win at Grant Thornton SABERA 2020 Awards

Grant Thornton SABERA Awards acknowledge inspiring stories of impact & development aligned with UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Hindustan Unilever & Tata Power Category: Responsible Business; Maruti Category: Exemplary Business Adaptation Through COVID. Theme: Humanity beyond Calamity: Preparing for the New World Order

19. Srinagar's Amar Singh College conservation project recognised with UNESCO award.

Srinagar based Amar Singh College's building, built nearly 80 years ago, is one of the seven conservation projects to be recognised with '2020 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation'. It was recognised with the 'Award of Merit'. INTACH chapter in the UT carried out the conservation.

20. Sarod maestro, Rajeev Taranath, to receive SVN Rao National Award

Sri Ramaseva Mandali Trust will confer the Sri S.V. Narayanaswamy Rao Memorial National Award 2020 on sarod maestro Pandit Rajeev Taranath. Taranath, is a Padma Shri awardee (2019) and is a disciple of Ustad Ali Akbar Khan. The first SVN Rao awarded to M S Subbulakshmi.

21. Ratan Tata honoured with 'Global Visionary of Sustainable Business and Peace' award by FIICC for "unity, peace and sustainable"

A man respected by the business communities of all the three countries – India, Israel and UAE. Ratan Tata's support toward Israel has been unstinted. His commitment to put India on the global map with dignity and respect has been noted by each and everyone Federation of Indo-Israel Chambers of Commerce (FIICC)

22. Lewis Hamilton pips Jordan Henderson to win BBC's Sports Personality of the Year

The 35-year-old driver, who last month equaled Michael Schumacher's record of seven F1 titles, overcame Jordan Henderson and Hollie Doyle to win the British broadcaster's prestigious prize. He was also praised for his role in the 'Players Together campaign'. He is a British racing driver; Team: Mercedes

23. Trump Presents PM Modi With Top US Honour 'Legion Of Merit'

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was awarded the 'Legion of Merit' by U.S. President Donald Trump for his role in advancing the India-U.S. relationship. The Legion of Merit, instituted in 1942 by former U.S President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Field Marshal K.M. Cariappa received this award in 1949.

24. Country's largest power producer, NTPC wins prestigious CII-ITC Sustainability Awards 2020 in CSR.

This awards in Corporate Social Responsibility Domain. NTPC has been honoured in the Corporate Excellence Category, Commendation for Significant Achievement. This is the highest award conferred by CII-ITC in CSR domain and second-time NTPC got this award. NTPC is the only PSU to receive in the Corporate Excellence.

25. AFSCB Adjudged as the "Best Company Promoting Sports (Public Sector) 2020" at FICCI India Sports Awards 2020.

Air Force Sports Control Board was awarded this for actively promoting sports. AFSCB had won 'Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar' in Aug 2020 for 'Employment of Sports Persons and Sports Welfare measures'. Three air warriors have qualified for the Tokyo Olympics 2021.

26. Rafael Nadal wins Stefan Edberg Sportsmanship Award

Rafael Nadal won the Stefan Edberg Sportsmanship award for the 4th time. He won a record-stretching 13th Roland Garros title at the French Open this year. Novak Djokovic honoured for finishing 2020 on top of the singles ranking for the 6th time. Stefan Bengt Edberg is a Swedish former world No.1 tennis player

27. Bihar wins Digital India award for transferring money to beneficiaries' accounts in COVID time.

Chief minister's office, state's disaster management department & NIC jointly selected as winners for the 'Innovation in Pandemic' category. Through Bihar Corona Sahaayta Mobile App financial assistance of Rs 1,000 was provided to more than 21 lakh people. Award is for innovative digital solution & service to citizens.

28. Virat Kohli wins the Sir Garfield Sobers Award for Male Cricketer of the Decade: ICC Awards

Virat Kohli scored 20,396 runs in all international cricket in the decade, which is more than anyone else. He also won the ICC Men's ODI Cricketer of the Decade Award. Ellyse Perry won the Rachael Heyhoe-Flint Award & she had scored 4,349 runs. Sobers is considered to be cricket's greatest ever all-rounder.

29. Dr. Narendra Dabholkar Memorial Award for Dravidar Kazhagam president K. Veeramani.

Veeramani has dedicated his whole life to propagate rationalism and served for the cause of social justice in society. U.S.-based Maharashtra Foundation has instituted the award in memory of Dabholkar and it includes ₹1 lakh and a citation. Dabholkar was a Maharashtra-based rationalist.

30. Santoor maestro Pt Satish Vyas conferred Tansen Samman at the World Music Festival, Tansen Samaroh

96th Tansen Music Festival began in Gwalior & will conclude at Behat village on December 30. Pt Satish Vyas was conferred upon the prestigious Tansen Samman. Bhopal-based institution Abhinav Kala Parishad was honoured with Raja Mansingh Tomar award. Festival pays tribute to Tansen, one of 9 gems in Akbar's court.

31. Harmony Foundation Announces Awardees Of Mother Teresa Memorial Awards For Social Justice

Instituted in 2005 to celebrate & commemorate the memory & legacy of Mother Teresa. Awardees this year included Dr Anthony Fauci, Fr. Dr. Pradeep Kumar, Sanjay Pandey (IPS) KK Shailaja (Minister of Health Kerala), Vikas Khanna, Fr Fabio Stevenazzi etc. Theme - Celebrating Compassion In Times Of Covid

32. Shri V.K. Yadav chairman of railway board conferred with Eminent Engineer Award for the Year 2020

It was conferred by the Institution of Engineering and Technology for his outstanding contribution towards modernization and reforms over Indian Railways. IET is a multidisciplinary professional engineering institution established in 1871. IET has 168,000 members in 150 countries.

Ranks & Reports

1. India tops OECD list of educated migrants in rich countries

OECD reveals that there are around 120 million migrants in OECD Countries. 30-35% of them are highly educated. India topped the list with more than 3 mn highly educated migrants which is around 65%. China stood second with a rate of 48.6% or 2.25 million. The Philippines ranked 3rd. OECD HQ: Paris, France.

2. Every 6th person under water stress, About 1.2 billion people globally experienced very high levels of water stress : FAO

According to a report published by the Rome based Food and Agriculture Organization about 1.2 billion people globally experienced very high levels of water stress. Nearly half of them live in South Asia, while 460 million live in east and southeast Asia. Amount of freshwater available/person declined 20% in 2 decades.

3. No quick end to economic damage after COVID-19 Vaccine: UNCTAD Report

The UNCTAD report titled 'Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on Trade and Development: Transition to a New Normal' projects that global economy will contract by 4.3% in 2020 and that the crisis could send an additional 130 million people into extreme poverty. UNCTAD Secretary-General Mukhisa Kituyi. HQ: Geneva, Switzerland

4. Lahore Tops List Of World's Most Polluted Cities, Delhi Ranks Second

According to the US Air Quality Index, Pakistan's cultural capital Lahore has once again topped the list of world's most polluted cities. The PM rating for the city was 423. New Delhi with a PM of 229 came in second. Nepal's Kathmandu was ranked third. An AQI under 50 is regarded as 'satisfactory' air quality.

5. India tops Asia in bribery, use of connections to access public services: "Global Corruption Barometer -Asia".

India has highest rate of bribery (39%) & use of personal links to access public services (46%) such as healthcare and education in Asia as per report titled "Global Corruption Barometer - Asia" released by global civil society Transparency International. Indonesia and China have the second and third highest rates.

6. India records largest reduction in malaria cases in South-East Asia between 2000-19: WHO's World Malaria Report 2020

India made impressive gains in the global fight against malaria, recording the largest reduction in cases in South-East Asia from 20 million in 2000 to about 5.6 million last year, according to the World Health Organisation's The World Malaria Report 2020. Malaria: A disease caused by a plasmodium parasite.

7. No Indian University on Top 10 on QS Asia University Rankings; IIT Delhi, IIT Bombay, and IIT Madras made to Top 50

Quacquarelli Symonds rankings of the top 50 universities for higher education present in Asia reveals that no university from India has qualified to be in the top 10 categories. 3 IITs include IIT Delhi, IIT Bombay, and IIT Madras made to the top 50 list. The National University of Singapore topped the list.

8. India's Amul is now world's 8th largest milk processor: IFCN report

Amul, a brand of dairy cooperative major Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation Ltd (GCMMF) is ranked 8th in the list of top 20 global dairy processors released by the International Farm Comparison Network (IFCN). By 2022, both India and Amul will turn 75.

9. ILO's Global Wage Report 2020-21 says Women, Lowest-Paid Workers' Wages Most Affected Due To COVID-19 Pandemic

Women and lowest-paid workers have been hurt the most by this fall in wages, in ILO's Global Wage Report for 2020-21. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, monthly wages declined or grew more slowly in the first six months of 2020, according to ILO. ILO Director-General: Guy Ryder; HQ: Geneva; Founded:1919

10. India in top 10 performers on climate change Performance index

The CCPI is developed by not-for-profit organisations Germanwatch & New Climate Institute (Germany) together with the Climate Action Network (CAN International). Sweden topped in the list, India got 10th rank. Biggest current emitter of greenhouse gases China ranks 53rd

11. India Drops to 2nd, Chile Takes No.1 in Bloomberg New Energy Finance's (BNEF) Climatescope survey

India dropped to 2nd place in BNEF 2020 Climatescope survey as a result of a decline in clean energy investment, which fell 12 per cent in 2018-19 to \$8.5 billion and has plummeted 32 per cent since 2017. Chile took No.1 spot and Brazil third. Chile was ranked 2nd in last year's survey.

12. India drops to 9th spot in global spam call tally, Gujarat gets max calls: Truecaller

Indian mobile users saw a 34% decline in spam calls received in 2020, helping the country move lower to the 9th position in the tally of most spammed countries, according to a report by Truecaller. Within India, Gujarat received the most spam calls in 2020 Brazil was ranked first. In 2019, India was ranked fifth.

13. Malayan Giant Squirrel could decline by 90% in India by 2050: Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) Survey

According to a recent survey of ZSI projected that numbers of the Malayan Giant Squirrel (*Ratufa bicolour*) could decline by 90% in India by 2050. The destruction of its habitat could restrict the squirrel to only southern Sikkim and North Bengal by 2050. IUCN Status of the Malayan Giant Squirrel: Near Threatened.

14. NITI Aayog releases 'Vision 2035: Public Health Surveillance in India', to strengthen the Public Health Surveillance (PHS).

NITI Aayog released the vision document to strengthen PHS in India by 2035 through integration of 3 tier public health system into Ayushman Bharat. PHS is to be based on individuals' Electronic Health Records(EHR) collected using unique health identifiers. NITI Aayog: CEO - Amitabh Kant; Vice Chairman - Rajiv Kumar.

15. Health minister Harsh Vardhan released phase-1 of the 5th National Family Health Survey for 17 states, 5 UTs.

Health minister released phase-1 of the 5th NFHS survey. It provides estimates for 131 key indicators across various categories of Population & Household profile, Marriage & Fertility, Maternal & Child Health, Nutrition, Women Empowerment, etc. IIPS, Mumbai coordinates the survey.

16. Number of bank accounts owned, operated by women grows: National Family Health Survey 2019-20.

Bank accounts owned & operated by women themselves have reported growth in almost all states surveyed in the 1st phase of 5th NFHS survey. Bihar reported the maximum increase from 26.4 percent in 2015-16 to 76.7 percent in 2019-20, followed by Manipur. PMJDY scheme is attributed to this financial inclusion success.

17. India, China will lead power usage growth in 2021:IEA in its first 'Electricity Market Report'.

India and China will lead the growth in international demand for electrical energy in 2021, though consumption will get better at a slower tempo than after the worldwide monetary disaster of 2008, IEA in its first 'Electricity Market Report'. IEA: HQ - Paris, France; Executive Director - Fatih Birol.

18. Fairwork India Ratings 2020: Urban Company tops list in working conditions

According to the Fairwork India Ratings 2020 Report, Urban Company topped the list as far as working conditions among platform economy companies are concerned. It scored 8 out of 10. Ekart scored 7 out of 10 while Dunzo and Grofers scored 4 out of 10 each. Platform economy refers to work that is outsourced via platforms

19. SBI revises FY21 GDP growth estimate to -7.4% from -10.9% in its Ecowrap report.

SBI report upgraded India's GDP forecast from -10.9% to -7.4% for FY21 and said it would take 7 quarters from the 4th quarter of FY21 for GDP to reach the pre-pandemic level in nominal terms. It forecast FY22 GDP growth to be at 11 percent. Estimates based on SBI "Nowcasting Model" with 41 indicators.

20. Mumbai, the most expensive Indian city for expats once again, dropped 34 places: ECA's International Cost of Living Report 2020

Mumbai dropped 34 places and was placed 94th most expensive city for expatriates. New Delhi - 144, Bengaluru -174, Hyderabad -177 & Kolkata-179. Globally, Hong Kong is at No.1, Tokyo - 2nd, New York- 3 & Geneva at 4th place. Luanda in Angola plunged 104 places from 37 to 141.

21. India drops two ranks, stands at 131: UNDP's Human Development Index 2020.

India's HDI value for 2019 is 0.645 and was ranked 131 out of 189 countries. India's gross GNI per capita on the basis of purchasing power parity (PPP) fell from \$6,829 in 2018 to \$6,681 in 2019. Norway topped the index, followed by Ireland & Switzerland. Medium human development - ranks from 120 to 156.

22. India's 1st LGBT+ workplace equality index, 'India Workplace Equality Index' (IWEI), launched.

IWEI, 1st comprehensive benchmarking tool to measure LGBT+ inclusion at the workplace was launched. From the 65 firms competing, 21 won gold, 18 silver & 13 bronze. Launched by Keshav Suri Foundation with Pride Circle, Stonewall UK & FICCI. Godrej Group & Hindustan Unilever won in gold.

23. India falls 17 spots on 2020 Human Freedom Index to 111th rank.

This index on global ranking of personal, civil and economic freedom placed India at 111 out of 162 countries, China at 129 rank, Bangladesh at 139 and Pakistan at 140. New Zealand was ranked one in the index, followed by Switzerland and Hong Kong. Bottom most - Venezuela, Sudan, and Syria.

24. World Bank comes out with corrected Doing Business rankings, lowers China place by 7 notches

The review details irregularities & required corrections affecting data for 4 countries: China, UAE, Saudi Arabia and Azerbaijan. As per the 'Doing Business' 2020 report, India had jumped 14 places to the 63rd position on the ease of doing business ranking. The ranking of Azerbaijan has been improved to 28 from 34.

25. About 14 per cent cut in CO2 emissions possible in small commercial vehicle segment with EV push: study

India can see 14% reduction in CO2 emissions in small commercial vehicle segment with higher electric vehicle penetration by 2030, as per study 'Roadmap for Electrification of Urban Freight in India' released by TERI & Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation. TERI Founder: Darbari S Seth; Founded: 1974.

26. 60 percent rise in Leopard population across the Country; India now has 12,852 leopards.

'Status of Leopard in India 2018' report was released by Union environment minister Prakash Javadekar. States of MP(3,421), Karnataka(1783), and Maharashtra(1690) have recorded the highest leopard estimates. Leopards are the most adaptable carnivores. Leopard: Panthera pardus

27. India May Become Fifth Largest Economy By 2025; Third Largest By 2030: Centre for Economics and Business Research

India overtook the U.K. in 2019 to become the 5th largest economy in the world but has been relegated to 6th spot in 2020. CEBR report said India will overtake the UK to become the 5th largest in 2025 & would overtake Germany in 2027 and Japan in 2030. CEBR is a UK based think tank.

28. Action Agenda for an Atma Nirbhar Bharat (AAN) report prepared by TIFAC released by Dr.Harsh Vardhan

Aim of the action report is to create a sense of scientific social responsibility & lay down imperatives for the future of technology in India. The report is a follow-up of TIFAC's white paper on "Focussed Interventions for Make in India: post COVID-19" TIFAC is an autonomous organization set up in 1988 under DST.

29. Indian economy could be 'most resilient' in subregion of South and South-West Asia over long term: UNESCAP report

Report says positive but lower economic growth post COVID-19 pandemic & the country's large market will continue to attract investments. Growth was mainly driven by India's FDI inflows which accounted for 77% of total inflows in the region. Report: 'FDI Trends & Outlook In Asia And The Pacific 2020/2021'

30. FM Sitharaman Inaugurates DRI's 63rd Founding Day Celebrations, unveils 'Smuggling In India Report 2019-20'

Sitharaman released the Smuggling in India Report 2019-20 which analyses organized smuggling trends on Gold, Foreign Currency, Narcotic Drugs. It detected 412 cases of smuggling & seizure of contraband worth ₹1,949 cr in FY20. DRI- Dept of Revenue Intell. Minister of State for Finance: Anurag Singh Thakur.

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Important Days

1. World AIDS Day: December 1. Theme for 2020: "Global solidarity, shared responsibility".

Every year on 1 December the world commemorates World AIDS Day. People around the world unite to show support for people living with and affected by HIV and to remember those who lost their lives to AIDS. AIDS stands for Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome. It is caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

2. BSF celebrates 56th Raising day: December 1

BSF was raised in accordance with an Act of the Parliament on December 1, 1965, soon after India-Pakistan War of 1965. The Border Security Force is India's Primary border guarding organisation on its border with Pakistan and Bangladesh. BSF HQ: New Delhi. BSF Director General: Rakesh Asthana. Motto: Duty Unto Death.

3. International Day for the Abolition of Slavery: December 2

December 2 is celebrated as International Day for the Abolition of Slavery every year. The day intends to end all forms of slavery in the world. According to the UN, 24.9 million people are in forced labour, 15.4 million people are in forced marriage. According to UN, 150 mn children are forced into child labour.

4. National Pollution Control Day: December 2

National Pollution Control Day is observed in India every year on 2 December to raise awareness about the problems of increasing air, water, soil, and noise pollution and to commemorate the people who lost their lives in the Bhopal Gas Tragedy in 1984. Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) was constituted in 1974.

5. World Computer Literacy Day: December 2

World Computer Literacy Day is observed every year on December 2nd to create awareness and drive digital literacy in underserved communities worldwide. It promotes technological skills, especially in children and women. The day was first observed in 2001. The day was founded by the Indian computer company NIIT.

6. International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD): 3 December

International Day of Disabled Persons aims to promote the well-being of persons with disabilities in society. Theme for 2020: Building back better: towards an inclusive, accessible & sustainable post-COVID-19 world by, for & with persons with disabilities. IDPD was introduced in 1992 by the UN General Assembly.

7. Indian Navy Day: 4 December

Indian Navy Day is celebrated every year on Dec 4 to commemorate attack on Karachi harbour during India-Pakistan war in 1971 that contributed to ultimate victory of Indian Armed Forces over Pakistan. This year a virtual tour has been organized for viewers. 2020 Theme: "Indian Navy Combat Ready, Credible & Cohesive".

8. International Day of Banks: 4 December

On 19 Dec 2019 UNGA designated 4 December as International Day of Banks in recognition of significant potential of multilateral development banks and other international development banks in financing sustainable development and providing know-how. World Bank HQs: Washington, D.C., United States

9. Directorate of Revenue Intelligence celebrates its 63rd Founding Day: 4th December

DRI celebrated its 63rd Founding Day on 4th December. In view of the COVID-19 pandemic, this time the celebration was done virtually in the presence of Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman along with Minister of State for Finance Anurag Thakur. DRI HQs: New Delhi; Founded: 4 December 1957.

10. International Volunteer Day: 5 December | Theme: Together We Can Through Volunteering

International Volunteers Day, is an international observance that was mandated by the UN General Assembly in 1985. The Day is an opportunity for us all to promote volunteerism, encourage governments to support volunteer efforts to realize SDGs. United Nations Volunteers HQ: Bonn, Germany.

11. World Soil Day 2020: 5 Dec | Theme: Keep soil alive, protect soil biodiversity

Every year December 5 is celebrated as World Soil Day to bring people's focus & attention on the importance of healthy soil as well as stress on the importance of sustainable management of soil resources. First official Soil Day was observed in 2014 by UN. Food & Agriculture Organisation HQs: Rome, Italy Head: Qu Dongyu

12. Armed Forces Flag Day or the Flag Day of India: observed on December 7

Since 1949, 7th December is observed as the Armed Forces Flag Day throughout the country to honour the martyrs and the men in uniform who valiantly fought & continue to fight on our borders to safeguard the nation. Armed Forces Day: third Saturday of every May

13. International Civil Aviation Day observed on December 7

This day is observed to help generate and reinforce worldwide awareness of the importance of international civil aviation to the social and economic development of nations. ICAO Council establishes a special single anniversary theme for the full four-year. Theme: "Advancing Innovation for Global Aviation Development".

14. Nation pays homage to Bharat Ratna Dr BR Ambedkar on his 64th Mahaparinirvan Diwas on December 6

Eminent dignitaries and Parliamentarians will offer tributes to the architect of the Constitution at his statue in the Parliament House complex in New Delhi. He suggested the ideals of economic & social justice, equality & fraternity. He is known as the 'Father of Indian Constitution'

15. Army Service Corps celebrates its raising day on December 8

Oldest and the largest administrative service of the Army, Army Service Corps (ASC) is celebrating its raising day. 8th December 1950, the word 'Royal' was dropped from the nomenclature of the Army Service Corps since the day been celebrated as raising day. Army Chief General: MM Naravane.

16. International Anti-Corruption Day observed on 9 December

UN Assembly designated 9 December as International Anti-Corruption Day, to raise awareness of corruption and the role of the Convention in combating & preventing it. Governments, the private sector, NGO, UNDP, UNODC are at the forefront of these efforts. UNODC: United Nation Office on Drugs & Crime; HQ: Vienna, Austria

17. International Day of Commemoration & Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide & of the Prevention of this Crime on 9 Dec

It marks as the 72nd anniversary of the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (the "Genocide Convention"), the first human rights treaty adopted by the UN General Assembly. First international legal definition of "genocide," in 1948.

18. Human Rights Day: December 10; Theme for 2020: "Recover Better - Stand Up for Human Rights"

Human Rights Day is observed on 10 December. It marks the date when the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948. It proclaims the inalienable rights to which everyone is entitled as a human being. Human Rights Day was formally established on December 4, 1950.

19. International Mountain Day observed on December 11.

International Mountain Day is celebrated on 11 December every year. This day is dedicated to the role that mountains play in providing fresh water, clean energy, food, and recreation. 2020 Theme: Mountain biodiversity 15% of the world's population lives in the mountains.

20. International Bharati Festival on Dec 11, to celebrate 138th birth anniversary of Mahakavi Subramania Bharati

The festival is being held in honour of Bharati, a Tamil writer, poet, journalist, independence activist and social reformer, whose 138th birth anniversary is on Dec 11. Organized virtually, the festival will see participation of several poets and artists. Mahakavi means Great Poet.

21. International Universal Health Coverage Day: 12 December. Theme: Health for All: Protect Everyone

In 2017, the United Nations proclaimed 12 December as International Universal Health Coverage Day (UHC Day). The day aims to raise awareness of the need for strong and resilient health systems and universal health coverage with multi-stakeholder partners. Ayushman Bharat Scheme aims to achieve universal health coverage

22. International Day of Neutrality: 12 December

International Day of Neutrality is observed on 12th December. Neutrality refers to the legal status arising from abstention of a state from all participation in a war between other states & maintenance of an attitude of impartiality toward the belligerents This day was adopted by UN General Assembly in 2017.

23. National Energy Conservation Day: December 14

National Energy Conservation Day is celebrated every year on December 14. The purpose behind the celebration is to spread awareness about the necessity of energy and its conservation in our daily life. An award on a similar theme is also given on the day. Bureau of Energy Efficiency under Power Ministry organises it.

24. Vijay Diwas celebration on December 16 to mark India's victory in 1971 India-Pakistan war.

Vijay Diwas is celebrated every year on December 16 to mark India's triumph in liberating Bangladesh from Pakistan in 1971. PM Modi will light up `Swarnim Vijay Mashaal` at the National War Memorial in New Delhi to celebrate the 50th-anniversary of the war Kargil Vijay Diwas is observed on July 26 every year.

25. International Migrants Day - 18 December

International Migrants Day is celebrated every year on December 18 to highlight the contributions made by international migrants & internally displaced persons (IDPs) & challenges they face. The number of international migrants in 2019 reached 272 million. 2020 Theme is "Reimagining Human Mobility".

26. International Human Solidarity Day: 20th December

UN General Assembly, on 22 Dec 2005, by resolution identified solidarity as one of the fundamental & universal values that should underlie relations b/w peoples in 21st century, and decided to proclaim 20 Dec of each year. International Human Solidarity Day United Nations Founded: 24 October 1945; HQs: New York, US.

27. National Mathematics Day 2020 to commemorate birth anniversary of Srinivasa Ramanujan: December 22

The legendary mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan made extraordinary contributions to mathematical analysis, number theory, infinite series & continued fractions. Mainly to honour Ramanujan's work in the field of mathematics. First observed this day in 2012. His work: Analytical theory of numbers & elliptic functions.

28. National Farmers Day or Kisan Diwas: December 23

The day was chosen to honour the birth anniversary of the fifth Prime Minister of India, Choudhary Charan Singh. This day aims to praise the farmers as they are the spine of India. Chaudhary Charan Singh followed the famous slogan - "JAI JAWAN JAI KISAN" "JAI JAWAN JAI KISAN" introduced by Lal Bahadur Shastri.

29. National Consumer Rights Day 2020: December 24

This day provides an opportunity for individuals to highlight the importance of the consumer movement and the need to make every consumer more aware of their rights and responsibilities. Consumer Protection Act came into force on 24 Dec, 1986. World Consumer Rights Day: March 15

30. Good Governance day celebrated on December 25

India observed the Good Governance Day on former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's birth anniversary on December 25. Atal Bihari Vajpayee was a great statesman, poet, and compassionate leader. He served three terms as the prime minister of India. first Indian leader to address UN General Assembly in Hindi.

31. International Day of Epidemic Preparedness, 27 December

The United Nations system, in particular the World Health Organization, plays a pivotal role in coordinating responses to epidemics. This International Day falls on the birthdate of Louis Pasteur, the French biologist responsible for Vaccinations United Nations: an intergovernmental organization formed in 1945

Summit & Conferences

1. PM Modi inaugurated 3rd global renewable energy event RE-INVEST

PM Modi inaugurated the 3rd Global Renewable Energy Investment Meeting and Expo (RE-INVEST 2020) to woo investors for investing in clean energy in India. India has set an ambitious target of having 175GW of renewable energy by 2022 and 450GW by 2030. Govt has launched KUSUM Scheme to install solar pumps.

2. Colombo Hosts India-Maldives-Sri Lanka Maritime Security NSA Trilateral Meeting

In their meeting after six years, Maldives, India and Sri Lanka have expanded the scope of their platform from a maritime focussed trilateral initiative to looking at common security threats. Indian National Security Advisor Ajit Doval participated in this The first NSA-level officials meeting took place in 2011.

3. Finance Minister delivers keynote address at the inauguration of the Sri Lanka Economic Summit 2020

FM Sitharaman delivered a Keynote Address at inauguration of the 20th Sri Lanka Economic Summit 2020 in virtual format organised by Ceylon Chamber of Commerce. Theme of the event was "Roadmap for Take-off: Driving a People-Centric Economic Revival". Capitals: Colombo, Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte Currency: SL Rupee.

4. Govt launches 'Green Charcoal Hackathon' in bid to reduce carbon footprint

Union Minister RK Singh launched the 'Green Charcoal Hackathon' with aim to create a conducive environment by reducing carbon emissions, nurture technology solutions. Aim is to achieve clean air by eliminating farm fire & produce enregy from agri wastes. NTPC Vidyut Vyapar Nigam launched the event.

5. Virtual business conclave with CLMV countries organised by commerce and industry ministry, CII begins

It organised by confederation of Indian Industry. Min of State for External Affairs V Muraleedharan stated that India envisages a free, open, inclusive & rules-based Indo-Pacific region, including the Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam (CLMV) region. Topic:- 'Building Bridges for Constructive Development'

6. Rajnath Singh addresses the ASEAN defence ministers' meeting plus (ADMM-PLUS)

Rajnath Singh addressed the ASEAN defence ministers' meeting plus (ADMM-PLUS). He stressed the need to continue the efforts to address the threats of bio-terrorism and pandemic diseases. ADMM-PLUS is a platform for ASEAN and its eight dialogue partners. It focusses on promoting mutual trust & confidence in the region

7. PM Modi to address inaugural session of virtual India Mobile Congress 2020

IMC 2020 is being organized by the Department of Telecommunications, and the Cellular Operators Association of India. It will be held from 8 - 10th December. PM's vision to promote 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat', 'Digital Inclusivity' etc. Theme 2020: "Inclusive Innovation - Smart, Secure, Sustainable".

8. World Economic Forum (WEF) will be held in Singapore from 13-16 May 2021 and return to Davos, Switzerland, in 2022

WEF's annual gathering of academics, political and business leaders will move from Davos to Singapore, making its debut in Asia, due to coronavirus concerns. It is the second time the event will be held outside of Switzerland since its start in 1971. Klaus Schwab, founder and executive chairman of the WEF.

9. Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat inaugurated 5th India Water Impact Summit (IWIS) with focus on "Arth Ganga"

The Ministry of Jal Shakti and the Centre for Ganga River Basin Management and Studies (cGanga) organised the fifth India Water Impact Summit 2020. Summit theme was based on the concept of "Arth Ganga", river conservation synchronised development. Rajiv Ranjan Mishra, DG National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG).

10. Global Ambition Summit marks 5 years of Paris accord

Climate Ambition Summit is hosted by UN & UK to mark the 5th anniversary of the adoption of the Paris Agreement. The Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change adopted by 196 parties at 21st Conference of Parties in Paris in 2015 US has 25% of historical emission; India has only 3%.

11. Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari inaugurates 30th Annual Global Conclave of IISSM

Koshyari inaugurated the 30th Annual Global Conclave of the International Institute of Security and Safety Management (IISM). The theme of this 2-day conclave is 'COVID-19 – From Survival to Revival: Emerging Paradigms in Security and Safety Services'. Executive Chairman of IISSM: Ravindra Kishore Sinha.

12. India, Iran, Uzbekistan hold first Trilateral Working Group meeting on joint use of Chabahar port.

India, Iran & Uzbekistan discussed the joint use of Chabahar port for trade and transit purposes and enhanced regional connectivity. India's proposal to hold Chabahar Day on the sidelines of the International Maritime Summit was welcomed. Capitals: Uzbekistan - Tashkent; Iran - Tehran

13. Indian Army in partnership with the Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers (SIDM) Organised Webinar on Modernisation of Repair

Indian Army with SIDM conducted a webinar on 'Agile EME: Facilitating Boots on Ground through Aggressive Industrial Outreach', to plan modernisation of its equipment repair mechanism, reduce time taken, cut costs, reduce import dependency etc. EME is an arms and service branch of the Indian Army.

14. Indian Meteorological Society (IMS) & North Eastern Space Applications Centre (NESAC)'s 4-day Tropical Meteorology symposium.

A four-day virtual symposium TROPMET-2020 under the theme "Weather and Climate Services over Mountainous Regions" is organised by IMS in collaboration with NESAC, Shillong from 14-17 December 2020. Theme: "Weather and Climate Services over Mountainous Regions".

15. NCB India and National Narcotics Board BNN, Indonesia conduct 4th Bilateral JWG meeting.

4th Bilateral Joint Working Group (JWG) meeting between NCB India and BNN, Indonesia was held. It was decided to exchange information on illegal entry & exit points of illicit drug trafficking on the Indonesia-India borders & information on technology used. NCB, DG - Rakesh Asthana

16. Dr Harsh Vardhan addresses 75th National Conference of Tuberculosis and Chest Diseases (NATCON)

Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare digitally addressed the Platinum Jubilee of the National Conference of Tuberculosis and Chest Diseases. Govt is conducting world's largest National TB Prevalence Survey with a massive sample size of 500,000. Tuberculosis Association of India established in 1939.

17. Health Minister, Dr. Harsh Vardhan, chairs 22nd meeting of high-level Group of Ministers on COVID-19

Health Minister, Dr. Harsh Vardhan, virtually chaired the 22nd meeting of the high-level Group of Ministers (GoM) on COVID-19. India's COVID 19 Pandemic Growth has dropped to 2% and Case Fatality Rate is amongst lowest in world which is at 1.45%. India's Recovery Rate has peaked to 95.46%.

18. 5th edition of the annual Global Technology Summit (GTS): December 14 to 18, 2020

Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in collaboration with Carnegie India (CI) organized the 5th edition of the GTS. The theme of the 2020 GTS was "The Geopolitics of Technology". External Affairs Minister, S. Jaishankar participated in it. It is one of four flagship annual conferences organized by MEA.

19. 20th Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Council of Ministers (COM) Meeting hosted by UAE virtually.

UAE hosted 20th IORA COM Meeting on December 17, virtually. Discussed ways in coordinating efforts to achieve IORA's vision for a peaceful, stable & prosperous Indian Ocean region as outlined in the Jakarta Concord & IORA Action Plan. IORA HQ at Ebene, Mauritius.

20. Science & Technology Media Conclave and Biodiversity Conclave at IISF 2020.

These were held as part of 41 events at IISF 2020. S&T media conclave looked at the soaring emergence of digital media and its various avatars. At Biodiversity Conclave experts discussed the Concerns Related with the Challenges of Biodiversity. 6th IISF held virtually from 22 to 25 December.

21. 7th National Summit on Good & Replicable Practices and Innovations in Public Healthcare Systems

Union Health Ministry holds this to recognize, showcase & document various best practices and innovations in the public healthcare system. New Health Management Information System, Operational Guidelines for TB & Leprosy were launched. First summit was held in 2013 at Srinagar.



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Science & Technology

1. HAL Delivers Biggest Ever Cryogenic Propellant Tank to ISRO

Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd has delivered the biggest developmental cryogenic propellant tank (C32 LH2) of aluminium alloy designed for improving the payload capability of GSLV MK-III launching vehicle ever fabricated by the company to ISRO. ISRO Founded: 15 August 1969; Director: Kailasavadivoo Sivan.

2. Dr Harsh Vardhan virtually inaugurates the 2nd Cancer Genome Atlas (TCGA) 2020 Conference from New Delhi

Minister of Science & Technology Dr Harsh Vardhan virtually inaugurated the 2nd TCGA 2020 conference in New Delhi. It is a joint effort between the US- National Cancer Institute & the National Human Genome Research Institute began in 2006. TCGA generated over 2.5 petabytes of genomic data.

3. Pfizer one of the world's premier biopharmaceutical companies seeks emergency use authorisation for COVID-19 vaccine in India

Pfizer India has become the first pharmaceutical firm to seek from the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) an emergency use authorisation for its COVID-19 vaccine in the country, after its parent company secured such clearance in the UK and Bahrain. Drug firm Zydus Cadila: got approval from the DCGI for trial.

4. NHRCL adopts aerial LiDAR Survey technique to conduct the ground survey for Delhi-Varanasi High Speed Rail Corridor

National High-Speed Rail Corporation Limited will be adopting LiDAR using Laser enabled equipment mounted on a Helicopter for conducting a ground survey for the preparation of a Detailed Project Report for the Speed Rail Corridor. LiDAR:- Light Detection and Ranging Survey technique

5. Government Approves Rs.1072 crore Submarine Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) Connectivity project between Kochi And Lakshadweep Islands

Union Cabinet approved a project worth Rs.1072 crore to provide direct communication link through a dedicated submarine OFC between Kochi and 11 islands of Lakshadweep. The project is funded by Universal Service Obligation Fund. USOF comes under Department of Telecommunications

6. India's first mRNA vaccine developed by Gennova receives approval for human trials

India's first indigenous mRNA vaccine candidate has received approval from the Drug Controller General of India to initiate Phase I/II human clinical trial. The novel mRNA vaccine candidate, HGCO19 has been developed by Gennova, a company based in Pune. It is supported with seed grant under Ind-CEPI mission of DST.

7. VigyanYatras organised by various institutions to promote scientific temper ahead of India International Science Festival(IISF)

Aiming to promote Scientific Temper among Masses, various institutions have organised VigyanYatra online and mobile science exhibition vans were flagged off in around 30 locations ahead of IISF 2020. VigyanYatra is a promotional activity of IISF. The 6th IISF is going to be organised from December 22 to 25.



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8. Russia Angara A5 Heavy-Lift Space Rocket Successfully Test-Launched for Second Time.

Russia successfully test-launched its heavy lift Angara A5 space rocket for 2nd time. The rocket lifted off from Plesetsk cosmodrome. Its first successful test launch took place in 2014. Angara A5 is designed to replace the Proton M heavy lift rockets. Roscosmos is name of Russia's Space Agency,

9. Chinese lunar capsule of Chang'e 5 probe returns to Earth carrying moon rocks, first in more than 40 years.

A Chinese lunar capsule has returned to Earth with the first fresh samples of rock and debris since the former Soviet Union's Luna 24 robot probe in 1976. The samples come from a part of the moon known as the Oceanus Procellarum, or Ocean of Storms. In July 2020, China launched the Tianwen 1 probe to explore Mars

10. ISRO sets up a dedicated control center 'NETRA for Space Situational Awareness(SSA).

A dedicated control centre, Network for space object Tracking and Analysis. 'NETRA', for SSA activities in the country, aimed at monitoring, tracking and protecting India's space assets, has been set up within the ISTRAC campus at Peenya, Bengaluru. Only America, Russia and Europe had such an SSA centre.

11. ISRO launches new communication satellite CMS-01 successfully.

ISRO has successfully launched new communication satellite CMS-01 as PSLV-C50 carrying the satellite lifted off from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota. The CMS-01's intended operational life is 7 years and will replace ageing GSAT-12. CMS - 01 is India's 42nd communications satellite.

12. 'CoWIN': IT Ministry launches challenge for strengthening COVID-19 vaccine intelligence network

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare along with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has announced COVID Vaccine Intelligence Network. Digitalised platform used to effectively roll out & scale up the mechanism for vaccine distribution. IT minister Ravi Shankar Prasad announced the launch of CoWIN.

13. National Medicinal Plants Board, Ministry of AYUSH Launches Consortia for Medicinal Plants

NMPB Consortia will address Quality Planting Material, Research & Development, Cultivation, Trade of medicinal plants/market linkage etc. To establish the linkage between the farmers and manufacturers, a 'Seed to Shelf' approach is being introduced. NMPB was set up on 24th November 2000.

14. Serum Institute of India(SII) launches indigenously developed world's most affordable pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV)

PCV is branded as Pneumosil, at \$3 per dose for public market & little over \$10 per dose for the private market & will provide protection against 10 variants of pneumococcus bacteria that causes pneumonia, meningitis, ear, and blood infections in children. SII - is the world's largest vaccine maker by volume. Dr Harsh Vardhan - Union Minister of Earth Sciences



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15. DRDO Young Scientist Laboratory for Quantum Technologies develops Quantum Random Number Generation(QRNG)

Mumbai based DYSL-QT has developed QRNG which has the ability to detect random quantum events and convert those into a stream of binary digits. This comes days after successful testing of the Quantum Key Distribution technology by DRDO.

DYSL-QT is one of the five YSLs of the DRDO

16. 'TiHAN': India's first Testbed for Autonomous Navigation Systems launched at IIT Hyderabad

Set up under the National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems, it has an essential focus on R&D of interdisciplinary technologies in the specific domain area of Autonomous Navigation and Data Acquisition Systems. Rs.135 crore was sanctioned for TiHan Foundation.

17. Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) develops Eye Cancer therapy in the form of the first indigenous Ruthenium 106 Plaque

BARC has developed an eye cancer therapy in the form of Ruthenium 106 Plaque for the treatment of ocular tumours. It is acknowledged to be at par with international standards, surgeon friendly and a simpler, cost-effective option for the patients.

BARC: Location - Mumbai; Established - 3 January 1954.

18. Hyderabad based spacetech startup Skyroot Aerospace successfully test-fires solid propulsion rocket stage Kalam-5

Kalam-5 is a demonstrator solid rocket propulsion stage with exactly the same propellant, materials, and interfaces as the three solid propulsion stages of their Vikram-1 launch vehicle, which is expected to be launched in December 2021. Skyroot founders - Pawan Kumar Chandana & Naga Bharath Daka

19. International Science Literature Festival – VIGYANIKA organized by to mark the birth anniversary of Srinivasa Ramanujan

Vigyanika-International Science Literature Festival on the opening day of IISF 2020 on the virtual platform to mark the birth anniversary of Srinivasa Ramanujan. CSIR-National Institute of Science Communication & Information Resources, Earth Science ministry Vijnana Bharati (VIBHA) also joined with CSIR and MoES.



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Defence

1. BrahMos Supersonic Cruise Missile in Anti-Ship mode successfully test fired

BrahMos is the supersonic cruise missile jointly developed by DRDO & NPOM of Russia. India test-fired the anti-ship version of BrahMos supersonic cruise missile in the A&N Islands territory. The test is part of the trials being conducted by the Indian Navy. The first launch of Brahmos took place in 2001.

2. PASSEX conducted by Indian Navy and Russian Navy in the Eastern Indian Ocean Region (IOR)

Indian Navy has undertaken a Passage Exercise with Russian Federation Navy in the Eastern Indian Ocean Region. PASSEXs are conducted regularly by IN with units of friendly foreign navies, whilst visiting each other's ports/during a rendezvous at sea. IN & RuFN conduct INDRA exercise biennially.

3. DRDO-designed Joint Venture Protective Carbine(JVPC) undergoes successful trials, to be inducted into services: Defence ministry

DRDO designed 5.56x30 mm JVPC has undergone trials and is ready for induction into the services. JVPC is a Gas Operated Semi Bull-pup automatic weapon having more than 700 rpm rate of fire. The range of the carbine is more than 100 m and weighs 3 kg. It was unveiled during DefExpo- 2020 at Lucknow

4. Indian Navy signs deal with Israeli firm Smart Shooter to procure SMASH 2000 Plus

Indian Navy signed a deal with an Israeli firm Smart Shooter for the procurement of fire control systems (SMASH Fire Control Systems) to counter the threat of drone attacks. It has the ability to improve a soldier's accuracy & speed of hitting targets. SMASH is a kind of device for electro-optic vision.

5. Indian Army Chief Gen. Naravane held talks with top Saudi Generals on ways to enhance defence cooperation.

Naravane met top Saudi Generals to discuss issues of common interest and ways to enhance bilateral defence cooperation with Saudi Arabia. He received a Guard of Honour at headquarters of the Royal Saudi Land Forces. Naravane is the 1st chief to visit gulf countries.

6. Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Limited (GRSE) Kolkata launched 'Himgiri', its 1st Ship of Project 17A.

Himgiri, the first of the 3 Project 17A ships built by GRSE, was launched into water. Under Project 17A, 4 ships at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited and 3 at GRSE are being built with enhanced stealth features, advanced indigenous weapons & sensor fit. Project 17A is also known as Nilgiri-class frigate (2019)

7. Indian Coast Guard (ICG) Offshore Patrol Vessel(OPV) 'Sujeet' Commissioned In Goa.

OPV 'Sujeet', the second in the series of 5 built by Goa Shipyard Limited, was commissioned in Goa. The 105 metres OPV has been designed & built indigenously by the GSL. It is designed to carry one twin engine helicopter and four high speed boats. The last OPV of GSL 'Saksham' was launched in water recently.



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8. Indigenously-Built Indian Coast Guard Interceptor Boat (IB) C-454 commissioned in Hazira, Surat

IB built by L&T Jetty, Hazira plant, will operate from Gujarat under control of Commander Coast Guard Region (N-W) of ICG. It is capable of a high speed of 45knots having capability to operate in shallow waters. It will ensure maritime security of Gujarat. It is the 54th such boat built by L&T for ICG

9. Defence Acquisition Council(DAC) approves proposals worth Rs 27,000 crore to procure equipment from domestic industry.

DAC approved Capital Acquisition proposals of various weapons, platforms, equipment & systems required by Indian Army, Navy and Air Force at an approximate overall cost of Rs 28,000 crore of which products worth Rs. 27,000 crore from domestic industry. DAC chairman - Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.

10. 35th edition of India-Indonesia Coordinated Patrol (IND-INDO CORPAT).

The 35th edition of IND-INDO CORPAT between Indian & Indonesian Navy was conducted. It will contribute towards the Indian Navy's efforts to consolidate interoperability and forge strong bonds of friendship across the Indo Pacific. IND-INDO CORPAT conducted since 2002.

11. 2 DRDO-developed Prithvi-2 missiles test fired off Odisha's Balasore coast.

India successfully test fired 2 Prithvi-2 ballistic missiles off the eastern coast of Odisha in Balasore. The trials of the DRDO-developed nuclear-capable surface to surface missiles were successful. It was developed under IGMDF. IGMDF was conceived under Dr.Kalam.

12. Webinar and expo with theme 'Joint Indo Maldives High Level Defence Engagement' held between India and Maldives.

'Joint Indo Maldives High Level Defence Engagement' webinar between India & Maldives was held. This is part of Aero India 21 series of webinars which is being organised to boost defence cooperation & engagements with friendly foreign countries. India-Maldives joint military exercise - Ex EKUVERIN.

13. Defence minister Rajnath Singh inaugurates the advanced Hypersonic Wind Tunnel test facility in Hyderabad

Defence minister inaugurated advanced Hypersonic Wind Tunnel test facility in Hyderabad. The state-of-the-art facility is pressure vacuum driven enclosed free jet facility with nozzle exit of one-meter diameter. It will simulate Mach 5 to 12. Mach represents the multiplication factor to the speed of sound.

14. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh hands three new systems built by DRDO to Armed Forces

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh handed three indigenously developed DRDO systems to the armed forces. Indian Maritime Situational Awareness System to Navy, Border Surveillance System to Army, and ASTRA Mk-I Missile to the Air force. Chief of Defence Staff: General Bipin Rawat.

15. L&T Defence Gets 'Green Channel Status' From Defence Ministry For Naval Weapon Delivery Systems

L&T Defence was awarded the coveted 'Green Channel Status' from the Directorate General Quality Assurance (DGQA), Ministry of Defence (MoD). It became the first private sector defence company to be granted this status for delivery of major systems. Green Channel Policy was introduced in March 2017 by MoD.

16. Indian & Vietnamese Navy conclude two-day naval passage exercise PASSEX in South China Sea

It was conducted with the aim to further deepen the maritime ties between two countries. INS Kiltan which reached Vietnam with 15 tons of humanitarian assistance under Mission Sagar 3 took part in the exercise. PASSEX stands for Passage Exercise

17. Cabinet Approval: Export of Akash Missile System and a Committee for faster Approval of Exports

To achieve target of \$5 bn in aerospace & defence goods and services by 2025, exporting high value defence platforms like Akash is needed. The committee created comprises of Defence Minister, the External Affairs Minister & the National Security Advisor . Akash inducted in 2014 in Air Force & in 2015 in Indian Army

18. Indian Army Acquires Made-In-India Bridging System To Ensure Speedy Mobility During Key Operations

3 sets of 10-metre short span bridges were inducted in Indian Army. The system will help the forces in difficult terrain which can then be used by vehicles and personnel to cross over. Built by DRDO, they are compatible with 15m SARVATRA bridging system. Army is now capable to bridge gaps between 5 m & 75m



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Books & Authors

1. Book titled 'Future of Regional Cooperation in Asia and the Pacific' released by ADB

Asian Development Bank (ADB) released the book Future of Regional Cooperation in Asia & the Pacific, which reviews the progress with regional cooperation & integration in Asia and the Pacific. It consists of papers contributed by scholars & staff of ADB. ADB was established in 1966. HQ: Mandaluyong, Philippines

2. Indian Icon: A Cult Called Royal Enfield" by journalist Amrit Raj: Book tells story behind making of Indian biking giant

Book "Indian Icon: A Cult Called Royal Enfield" written by journalist Amrit Raj maps trail-blazing story of the brand, the company & the individuals who have made Royal Enfield what it is now a premium homegrown consumer brand for the global markets. Royal Enfield HQs: Chennai; Parent organization: Eicher Motors.

3. New Kids Book "Vahana Masterclass" Launched By Italian Writer Alfredo Covelli

Alfredo Covelli, an Italy based author today launched his new book Vahana Masterclass for children and Young Audience in the Indian market. Targeted towards readers' age (from 8 to 12 years) the books will be illustrated and published by Scholastic India. Italy Capital: Rome Currency: Euro

4. Vice President releases a book on Former President Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, '40 Years with Abdul Kalam- Untold Stories'

Shri M Venkaiah Naidu called upon youngsters to draw inspiration from former President Dr APJ Abdul Kalam and work towards building a strong, self-reliant and inclusive India.'40 Years with Abdul Kalam- Untold Stories' authored by Dr Sivathanu Pillai. A.P.J.Abdul Kalam is known as People's President.

5. Amish Tripathi's second non-fiction book is titled 'Dharma'

The 2nd non-fiction book by author Amish is titled "Dharma: Decoding the Epics for A Meaningful Life". It offers practical, philosophical lessons drawn from ancient Hindu epics. It is co-authored by his sister Bhavana Roy. It is to be published by Westland His last non-fiction book 'Immortals India' was launched in '17.

6. 'Oh Mizoram', a collection of English poems by Governor of Mizoram, P S Sreedharan Pillai released.

VP Venkaiah Naidu virtually released the book 'Oh Mizoram', written by Governor of Mizoram, Shri P S Sreedharan Pillai. Pillai is a lawyer, an orator, a prolific writer, a philanthropist, and a thinker. He has written 125 books in Malayalam & English. Oh, Mizoram is his first poetry collection in English

7. Devendra Fadnavis releases book 'Ayodhya' written by BJP's State Vice President Madhav Bhandari

Maharashtra former Chief Minister and present leader of Opposition in the Legislative Assembly Devendra Fadnavis released the book 'Ayodhya' written by Madhav Bhandari. It deals with the fight to build a Ram temple is a fight to awaken the Hindu community. CM: Uddhav Thackeray; Governor: Bhagat Singh Koshyari

8. Late Justice Rajindar Sachar's Autobiography: 'In Pursuit of Justice'

The family of Late Justice Rajindar Sachar in association with The Indian Society of International Law and The Indian Law Institute is organizing the book launch "In Pursuit Of Justice: An Autobiography". Sachar committee appointed in 2005 to study the conditions of Muslims.

9. Union Minister Shripad Naik Released a Konkani book "Sutranivednachi sutra- ek an Bav" by Dr Roopa Chari

Dr. Roopa Chari is a well-known personality in the field of Compering in Goa. This book will definitely help aspiring youngsters, who wish to make a career in this compering field. This book is published by Sanjana Publications. S.Naik:- Minister of State for AYUSH & of State for defence

10. 'PM Modi and his Government's Special Relationship with Sikhs' Book released on the occasion of Gurupurab

MoHUA Hardeep Singh Puri released a Book titled PM Modi and his Government's Special Relationship with Sikhs on the occasion of Gurupurab. It was published by Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, and released in English, Hindi & Punjabi languages. It is a compilation of steps taken for welfare of Sikh community



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Miscellaneous

1. WHO applauds India for 'Fitness Ka Dose Aadha Ghanta Roz' campaign

Kiren Rijju launched campaign as part of the nation-wide Fit India Movement has received praise from WHO. It urges Indians to follow the basic mantra of 30 minutes of fitness every day. Fit India Movement launched by PM Modi on 29 August 2019. Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports -Kiren Rijju.

2. International Corona Virus Short Film Festival Organised by Indian Infotainment Media Corporation(iiMC).

Organised by iiMC, the International Coronavirus Short Film Festival has received over 2,800 entries from 108 countries. The festival aims at showcasing stories based on cure, safety measures and lives affected during the coronavirus pandemic.

iiMC is the biggest private producer of 35mm/16mm Short Films.

3. National Jal Jeevan Mission launched "Water Quality Testing Innovation Challenge" for developing portable water testing devices.

Launched in partnership with Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade to bring an innovative, modular & cost-effective solution to develop portable devices to test drinking water quality instantly, easily & accurately at households.

Water quality testing, a priority area under the mission.

4. Sonu Sood partners with Digispice Technologies subsidiary- Spice Money to empower one crore rural entrepreneurs.

Spice Money has appointed Sonu Sood as its brand ambassador through Sood Infomatics subscribing 8.69 lakh shares (2% equity share), to digitally & financially empower 1 crore rural entrepreneurs. Sonu Sood's autobiography is titled 'I Am No Messiah.'

5. Sushil Kumar Modi unanimously elected to Rajya Sabha

Senior BJP leader and former Deputy Chief Minister of Bihar Sushil Kumar Modi has been unanimously elected to Rajya Sabha. Byelection was necessitated following the death of Lok Janshakti Party founder and union minister Ram Vilas Paswan. Rajyasabha Dep. Chairman: Harivansh Narayan Singh.



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Obituary

1. Senior TRS leader N Narasimhaiah passes away

In Telangana, senior leader of the ruling Telangana Rastra Samiti & Member of Legislative Assembly, N. Narasimhaiah passed away. He served as floor leader of the CPI-M twice in the erstwhile Andhra Pradesh Assembly while representing Nakrekal constituency. CM of Telangana: K Chandrasekhar Rao.

2. Dave Prowse, actor who played Darth Vader in the original Star Wars trilogy, dies

Dave Prowse who was a British weightlifter-turned-actor played Darth Vader in the original Star Wars trilogy. Prowse was also known to a generation of British children as the Green Cross Code Man, a superhero in a series of road safety advertisements. Star Wars is an American epic space opera media franchise.

3. Rajasthan BJP MLA Kiran Maheshwari passes away

Senior BJP leader and MLA from Rajsamand in Rajasthan, Kiran Maheshwari passed away. She had served, previously, as a member of parliament in the 14th Lok Sabha where she represented the Udaipur Constituency. She has tested positive for COVID-19. Rajasthan Capital: Jaipur. Governor: Kalraj Mishra.

4. Senegalese Footballer Papa Bouba Diop Dies Aged 42

Former Senegal midfielder Papa Bouba Diop is best known for scoring the winning goal against then defending champions France in the 2002 World Cup. He was also part of the team that lost to Cameroon on penalties in the 2002 Africa Cup of Nations final. Senegal – West African country Capital: Dakar

5. Politician Abhay Bhardwaj passed away

Abhay Ganpathrai Bharadwaj was an Indian advocate turned politician. He was also a member of the 21st Law Commission of India and contributed towards legislation like Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act, 2019 and Uniform civil code. He was also a member of Rajya Sabha.

6. Pizza Hut co-founder Frank Carney passes away

Frank Carney, who with his brother started the Pizza Hut empire in Wichita, died. Over the years, he got involved in various business ventures, including other food companies, real estate, oil and gas, automotive, rental and recreational businesses. PepsiCo bought Pizza Hut for \$300 million in 1977.

7. Valery Giscard d'Estaing, Euro's Founding Father passed away

Valery Giscard d'Estaing, who set European monetary union in motion, fathered the 1st draft of the EU's Constitution and helped create the Group of 8 fora, has died. Giscard was France's youngest 20th-century president. (elected in 1974 at the age of 48). He served as the president of France between 1974 & 1981.

8. Dharampal Gulati, owner of MDH and King of Spices passes away

Mahashay Dharampal Gulati, owner & CEO of iconic spice masala brand MDH (Mahashian Di Hatti), passed away. From a small shop in Karol Bagh, Dharampal Gulati built MDH as one of India's leading spices brand. He officially established his company in 1959. Gulati became highest-paid CEO of a FMCG co. in India in 2017.



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9. Lakshadweep Administrator Dineshwar Sharma passes away at 66

Lakshadweep Administrator Dineshwar Sharma, who earlier headed the Intelligence Bureau & was also the Interlocutor for Jammu & Kashmir, died in Chennai. He was 66. Retired IPS officer of Kerala cadre, he was appointed administrator of Lakshadweep in 2019. Intelligence Bureau is India functions under Home Ministry.

10. Narinder Singh Kapany who coined the term fibre optics in 1956 passes away at 94

Narinder Singh Kapany, also known as the father of fibre optics, passed away at the age of 94. The India-born American physicist was named as one of the seven "Unsung Heroes" by Fortune in their 'Businessmen of the Century' issue of November 1999 He authored Fiber optics; principles & applications

11. TRS leader and former minister Kamatham Ram Reddy dies at 81

TRS leader and former Minister Kamatham Ram Reddy passed away. He was 81. He was a three-time MLA from Parigi Assembly segment in Rangareddy district in combined Andhra Pradesh. He served as a former state Revenue Minister. In 2018, he joined TRS from BJP

12. Veteran Hindi writer Madhukar Gangadhar is no more

Eminent Hindi writer Madhukar Gangadhar died at 88. Shri Gangadhar was the lead storyteller of the new story movement. He was an associate of Renuji in Patna Akashvani, director of All India Radio in Allahabad & Deputy Director General at Delhi AIR. All India Radio (AIR), officially known since 1957 as Akashvani.

13. Peter Alliss, the 'Voice of Golf' on British television, dies at 89

Peter Alliss, who became the eccentric Voice of Golf on British television after a playing career in which he competed in eight Ryder Cups and was Europe's best golfer for two seasons, has died. He was 89. He became a member of golf's Hall of Fame in 2012. Britain national game: Cricket; PM: Boris Johnson

14. Former Deputy Speaker Of Uttarakhand Assembly Anusuya Maikhuri Dies At 59

Former deputy speaker of Uttarakhand Assembly and Congress leader Anusuya Prasad Maikhuri died at the Max Hospital in Dehradun. Mr Maikhuri was the deputy speaker of the state assembly from 2012 to 2017. Present Dep.Speaker of Uttarakhand Assembly: Raghunath S.Chauhan

15. Noted Sanskrit pandit and Sanskrit writer Dorbala Viswanatha Sarma passes away at 90

He was well versed in Sanskrit and Telugu and penned several books including Sri Lalithyam - a poetic commentary on Lalitha Sahasranamam. His book Amaruka Satakamu was published by Sadhana Grandha Mandali. Translated Shiva, Vishnu, etc stotrams to telugu He is a native of Medak district, Telangana

16. Veteran Hindi and Marathi actor Ravi Patwardhan passes away at 84

Patwardhan had been a familiar face in Marathi cinema and television since the late seventies with character roles, often playing the judge, lawyer, etc. His Marathi outings include projects like Umbartha, Maphicha Sakshidar etc. He was last seen in the TV show Aggabai Sasubai.



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17. Dennis Ralston, Grand Slam doubles champion in Tennis Hall of Fame, dies at 78

Dennis Ralston, a Tennis Hall of Famer who won five Grand Slam doubles championships, approached individual glory in the 1966 Wimbledon finals and went on to a distinguished career as a coach and teacher, died. The cause was brain cancer. American professional tennis player; career spanned 1960-70s

18. 1964 Olympic champion Kinuko Idogawa dies at 81

Kinuko Idogawa, the main attacker of Japan's 1964 Olympic gold medal winning women's volleyball team has passed away. Japan won in straight sets against Soviet Union. The team was called the "Witches of the Orient" due to their diving and tumbling saves. Hirobumi Daimatsu was the coach of that team.

19. Former Argentina manager Alejandro Sabella dies aged 66

Former Argentina player and manager Alejandro Sabella has died at the age of 66. The ex-midfielder played eight times for his country and later led Argentina to the 2014 World Cup final, when they were beaten in extra-time by Germany in Brazil. Sabella played for Leeds United in England.

20. Noted Hindi poet and journalist Manglesh Dabral passes away

Noted Hindi poet, journalist and a Sahitya Akademi Award winner Manglesh Dabral passed away. He was awarded the Sahitya Akademi Award, India's National Academy of Letters, in 2000 for his poetry collection Ham Jo Dekhte Hain. He was born in Uttarakhand. His poetry has been translated in all major Indian languages.

21. Italy's 1982 World Cup hero Paolo Rossi dies, aged 64

Paolo Rossi of Italy, who scored 6 goals in the 1982 World Cup, died at age 64. He is the only male player in history to win the World Cup, the Golden Boot, the Golden Ball & Ballon d'Or in the same year. Rossi scored 20 goals in 48 appearances for Italy. Italy has won four world cup titles (1934, 1938, 1982, 2006).

22. South Korean filmmaker Kim Ki-duk dies

Kim Ki-Duk made his directorial debut in 1996 with Crocodile. He was a recipient of Golden Lion at 69th Venice International Film Festival and the Silver Lion for Best Director at the 61st Venice International Film Festival. His latest film was 'Dissolve'. He was one of the most important contemporary Asian directors.

23. Indian footballer Dharmalingam Ethiraj no more

Former India international Dharmalingam Ethiraj who was one of the senior members of India's golden generation that won football crown at the 1962 Jakarta Asian Games passed away. In his honour, Madras Engineering Group (MEG) named their stadium after him. President of All India Football Federation: Praful Patel.

24. Vidyavachaspati Bannanje Govindacharya, Sanskrit scholar and Padma Shri awardee, passed away.

Padma Shree awardee (2009), a propagator of Madhva ideology, writer, translator and a great orator, Govindacharya passed away. Noted translations of his are Kalidasa's 'Shakuntala', Shudraka's 'Mricchakatika', and Bana Bhatta's 'Bana Bhattana Kadambari'. He has written 150 books.

25. Former Liverpool, France coach Gerard Houllier dies at 73

Houllier who managed Liverpool from 1998-2004 & led them to 5 major trophies, including the FA Cup, League Cup & Uefa Cup treble in 2000-01, passed away. He became France's assistant coach in 1988, then manager in 1992 but had a short, unsuccessful spell.

26. Eminent Aerospace scientist and Padma Vibhushan awardee Roddam Narasimha passed away.

Roddam Narasimha, who taught Aerospace Engineering at the IISc from 1962 to 1999, passed away. He headed National Aerospace Laboratories from 1984 to 1993 and was chairperson of JNCASR from 2000 to 2014. He was awarded the Padma Vibhushan in 2013. He co-wrote a book with Dr Kalam.

27. Renowned Malayalam Writer UA Khader passed away

U.A. Khader, one of the important writers of fiction in Malayalam passed away. In 1983, his novel Thrikkottur Peruma won him the Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award. He received the Kendriya Sahitya Akademi Award in 2009 for his novella Thrikkotlur Novellukar. Khader had also written a travelogue, Ormakalude Pegoda.

28. Eswatini Prime Minister Ambrose Mandvulo Dlamini passed away.

PM Ambrose Dlamini of Eswatini, Africa's last absolute monarchy passed away. Before he was appointed as PM in October 2018, Dlamini worked in the banking sector and as CEO in Eswatini of South African telecom giant MTN. Eswatini Capital -Mbabane & Lobamba; Currency -Swazi lilangeni

29. R.N. Shetty, businessman and philanthropist, passes away.

Karnataka born businessman & philanthropist R.N. Shetty passed away. He founded R.N. Shetty and Company in 1961, venturing into construction, infrastructure, hospitality & education sectors. He built tunnels for the railways, dams, bridges, canals etc. He won Visvesvaraya Memorial Award in 2004.

30. Einstein of Homoeopathy Prafull Vijayakar Passes Away

Prafull Vijayakar, famous homoeopath who discovered & practised a predictive form of homoeopathy, passed away. Predictive Homeopathy attempts to understand basic constitution of the patient and uses the same as the basis of prescribing medicine. It is the only school of homoeopathy recognized by ECPD, UN.

31. First spokesperson of RSS, Madhav Govind Vaidya, passed away.

Senior RSS ideologue and the first spokesperson of the organization Madhav Govind Vaidya died on December 19. A teacher turned professional journalist, served as Editor of Tarun Bharat, Nagpur based pro-RSS Marathi daily. Was nominated member of Maharashtra Legislative Council (1978-84)

32. Senior Congress leader Motilal Vora passes away at the age of 93 in Delhi

Motilal Vora passed away due to post-Covid-19 complications and He also had a lung infection. Vora was a Rajya Sabha member from Chhattisgarh and All India Congress Committee (AICC) treasurer for 16 years till 2018 the former chief minister of Madhya Pradesh

33. Sugathakumari, a pensive Malayalam poet who fought for nature and mankind, passes away

Renowned poet and activist Sugathakumari passed away, after testing positive for the coronavirus. One of the most active campaigners of the Save Silent Valley Movement. Raathrimazha, Ambalamani (temple bell) and Manalezhuthu are her famous works Silent Valley: tropical evergreen forest in Palakkad, Kerala

34. John Edrich, the former England opener, dies aged 83

John Edrich, the former England batsman who was renowned as one of the world's doughtiest players of fast bowling, has died at the age of 83. He died of natural causes on December 23, at his house in north Scotland. Edrich played 77 Tests between 1963- 1976 England Test captain: Joe Root; One Day captain: Eoin Morgan

35. Iconic Urdu poet and critic Shamsur Rahman Faruqi dies at 85.

Padma Shri poet credited to have revived "Dastangoi", a 16th century Urdu oral storytelling art form, passed away. He received Saraswati Samman in 1996 for "She'r-e Shor-Angez". Some of his books - Mirror of Beauty , Ghalib Afsaney Ki Himayat Mein etc. He ran magazine Shabkhoon for 40 years.

36. Former England and Surrey bowler Robin Jackman has died at the age of 75.

Jackman played in four Tests and 15 one-day internationals for his country, while he took 1,402 wickets in a 399-game first-class career between 1966 and 1982. Following his retirement, he became a commentator in South Africa. Jackman was born in India in 1945

37. Dance historian Sunil Kothari passes away at 87.

Padma Shri dance historian, scholar & critic Sunil Kothari has authored more than 20 books on Indian dance forms. He won Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (1995); Gaurav Puraskar (2000) & Life Time Achievement Award of Dance Critics Association, New York (2011) He held Uday Shankar Chair in Rabindra Bharati University

38. French fashion designer Pierre Cardin passes away at 98

Hailed for his avant-garde styles, Cardin set up his own fashion label in 1950. In 1959, he created one of the first ready-to-wear collections for women. He created the legendary bubble dress & "Space Age" collection remains a landmark in fashion history. First designer to sell clothes collections in department stores

39. Veteran broadcaster Indira Joseph Venniyoor passes away at 94

Indira Joseph Venniyoor was a renowned broadcaster, All India Radio veteran & first English news announcer of Travancore Radio when its English service began in 1949. She was the wife of well-known literary scholar & art critic the late E.M.J. Venniyoor. First news bulletin in India went on air in 1927.

40. Former Indian footballer and Olympian Nikhil Nandy passes away at 88

Was part of the national team that finished 4th at 1956 Melbourne Olympics, the team that reached semi-final in 1958 Asian Games in Tokyo, Bengal team that won Santosh Trophy in 1955 & won the Calcutta Football League with Eastern Railways back in 1958. His brothers Santosh, Anil part of team at 1948 Olympics.



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Person in news

1. AR Rahman becomes BAFTA Breakthrough India ambassador

Academy Award-winning music composer AR Rahman was announced as the ambassador for the British Academy of Film and Television Arts' (BAFTA) Breakthrough Initiative. This initiative will help in development of relationships between British India's talents. Chief Executive of BAFTA: Amanda Sonia Berry.

2. Filzmoser and Canto appointed IJF climate ambassadors

Austria's Sabrina Filzmoser and Brazil's Flavio Canto have been appointed as International Judo Federation (IJF) climate ambassadors by IJF. Filzmoser is a two time world bronze medallist and Canto has won bronze at the 2004 Athens Olympics. IJF HQ: Budapest, Hungary; President: Marius Vizer

3. Yulimar Rojas and Mondo Duplantis crowned 2020 World Athletes of the Year

Swedish pole vaulter Mondo Duplantis and Venezuelan triple jumper Yulimar Rojas are the 2020 Male and Female World Athletes of the Year. They are their countries' first recipients of the prestigious athletics award announced during the virtual awards. Mondo Duplantis: the youngest ever winner of the male Athlete

4. Nirmala Sitharaman, Kiran Mazumdar Shaw in Forbes 2020 list of most powerful women

Nirmala Sitharaman (41st place), Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw (68th spot) and Roshni Nadar Malhotra (55th place) are among Indian women on the Forbes list of world's 100 Most Powerful Women. US Vice President-elect Kamala Harris made it on 3rd place in the list. Angela Merkel topped the list for the 10th year in a row.

5. Joe Biden and Kamala Harris named Time 'Person of the Year'

United States President-elect Joe Biden and Vice-President-elect Kamala Harris have been chosen as the Time Magazine's 2020 'Person of the Year'. Time named basketball superstar LeBron James Athlete of the Year for his achievements on and off the court. K-Pop Sensation BTS was named Entertainer of the Year.

6. Ashraf Patel named Social Entrepreneur of the year

Two organizations that train youth for leadership roles, Pravah & ComMutiny, won Social Entrepreneur of the Year award instituted by Schwab Foundation and Jubilant Bhartia Foundation. The award was presented to Ashraf Patel representing Pravah & ComMutiny. The award was presented by Smriti Zubin Irani, a union minister.

7. Indian-origin scientist Anshumali Shrivastava led team discovers new way to filter fake news.

Team led by Anshumali Shrivastava at Rice University discovered an efficient way for social media companies to filter fake news. Their Adaptive Learned Bloom Filter required 50% less memory to achieve the same level of performance as learned Bloom filters. Bloom filter is a low-memory technique invented in 1970.

8. Indian-American Raja Chari among 3 astronauts selected by NASA for SpaceX Crew-3 mission.

Indian-American US Air Force Colonel Raja Chari has been selected as the Commander of the SpaceX Crew-3 mission to the International Space Station (ISS) by NASA and the European Space Agency. SpaceX CEO - Elon Musk.

9. Pakistan pacer Mohammad Amir announces retirement from international cricket

Pakistan fast bowler Mohammad Amir has decided to quit international cricket alleging 'mental torture' from the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB). Amir made his debut for Pakistan in a T20I match against England in June 2009. He won 2009 ICC WT20 & 2017 ICC Champions Trophy with the team.

10. Indian-American Gitanjali Rao, 15, First-Ever TIME "Kid Of The Year"

15-year-old Gitanjali Rao, a "brilliant" young scientist/inventor, has been named by TIME magazine as the 1st-ever 'Kid of the Year' for her "astonishing work" using technology to tackle issues ranging from contaminated drinking water & cyberbullying. Ms Rao was selected from a field of more than 5,000 nominees.



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Insurance

1. Universal Sompo General Insurance Company Ltd Launches Upgraded USGI PULZ Mobile Application for enhancing service delivery

The application brings Universal Sompo one step closer to its aim of offering a digitally seamless experience to its customers. It is a conscious effort on its part to make the platform more versatile, customer-friendly making it hassle-free. Universal Sompo General Insurance Com. HQ: Mumbai; formed: 2007

2. RBL Bank, ICICI Prudential Life Insurance Join Hands For Bancassurance Partnership

RBL Bank and ICICI Prudential have joined hands under a bancassurance partnership. 398 RBL Bank branches across 28 states will distribute ICICI Prudential Life's protection and savings products. Bancassurance means selling insurance products through banks. CEO and MD: RBL Bank - Vishwavir Ahuja

3. AU Small Finance Bank ties up with ICICI Prudential Life to offer life insurance solutions

Through the corporate agency arrangement, over 18 lakh customers of AU Bank across over 700 banking touchpoints in 13 states & 2 UTs, will have access to entire suite of customer-centric protection & long-term savings products of ICICI Prudential Life. AU Bank: HQ - Jaipur; MD & CEO - Sanjay Agarwal

4. SBI General Insurance Ties Up With Mahindra Insurance Brokers Ltd(MIBL) To Make Deeper Inroads Into Tier-2, 3 Cities.

The two companies entered a strategic partnership through MIBL's Sajhedaari programme to increase insurance penetration in tier 2 and 3 cities. As per IRDA, insurance penetration in India is only 11% and in rural side it is 10%. MD: SBI General Insurance - PC Kandpal; MIBL -Jaideep Devare

5. Bharti Axa Life Insurance launched #GotYouCovered for healthcare workers in partnership with Primero Skills & Training.

Bharti AXA along with Primero, started #GotYouCovered campaign to support Primero trained healthcare workers. For each share of the initiative on social media, Bharti AXA extends one face mask to each healthcare worker or student with Primero. It was launched on Universal Health Coverage Day (December 12).

6. EGI launches open Application Programming Interface(API) gateway to facilitate digital collaboration with its partners.

With EGI's new API gateway, partners can integrate their systems with EGI's technology platform. It will enable distributors to retrieve information such as product premium, policy details etc., in real-time & thus reduce turn-around time for customers. Products SWITCH and Health 241, were also launched by EGI before

7. BSE Ebix Insurance Beta Launches Term Insurance for ICICI Prudential Life on its On-Demand Hi-Tech Platform.

BSE Ebix, a joint venture of BSE & Ebix Fincorp, beta launched term Insurance for ICICI Prudential Life Insurance on its hi-tech platform. With this, BSE Ebix now has the ability to handle insurance sales across both Term & Endowment lines. CEO: BSE - Ashishkumar Chauhan; Ebix Group - Robin Raina

8. SBI General Insurance, IntrCity RailYatri (a multi-modal intercity mobility platform), partner to offer ₹5L travel cover.

SBI General Insurance partnered with IntrCity RailYatri, to provide travel insurance of ₹5 lakh on tickets for bus commuters opting to travel through IntrCity RailYatri. Coverage include accidental death, permanent total disability, and medical evacuation. CEO: SBI General - PC Kandpal; IntrCity RailYatri - Manish Rathi

9. Kotak Mahindra Life launches outdoor campaign for its health insurance product 'Kotak Health Shield'

Kotak Life launched a 5-city outdoor campaign to increase awareness about its recently Kotak Health Shield product. It offers a comprehensive insurance plan covering early or major stage illnesses. 5 cities are Bangalore, Chennai, Kolkata, Ahmedabad & Pune. Kotak Life Insurance: MD: G. Murlidhar; HQ -Mumbai.



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India & World

1. Exim Bank extended \$ 448-million line of credit(LOC) to Uzbekistan.

Exim Bank has extended a \$448-million LOC for various infrastructure projects in Uzbekistan. The LOC is given on behalf of the Indian government. Exim Bank has now in place 266 LOCs, covering 62 countries. Exim Bank: HQ: Mumbai; MD: David Rasquinha.

2. India, France launch bilateral fast track mechanism in investments at the 18th Joint Committee Meeting

India & France engage through Joint Committee Meeting to accelerate trade & investment relations for economic recovery in the post-pandemic world. Both sides launched a "Bilateral Fast track" mechanism in investments in the 18th session of Joint Committee. In terms of FDI inflows, France stands in 7th position.

3. India, Myanmar To Share Intelligence Information To Control Drug Trafficking

India & Myanmar agreed to exchange intelligence information to conduct follow-up investigation in drug seizure cases, (especially heroin and (ATS) type stimulants) after the conclusion of 5th India-Myanmar bilateral meeting on Drug Control Cooperation. Director-General of Narcotics Control Bureau - Rakesh Asthana.

4. 7th India-Suriname Joint Commission Meet co-chaired by V. Muraleedharan & Suriname Minister of Foreign Affairs Albert R. Ramdin

7th India-Suriname Joint Commission Meeting was held virtually. The discussions were held in an atmosphere of warmth against the backdrop of friendly India - Suriname relations. It was agreed that the next JCM Meeting would be held in 2022 in Paramaribo. Suriname: Capital: Paramaribo Currency: Suriname Dollar

5. ADB approves USD 2.5 mn technical assistance for advanced biofuel development in India

ADB approved a TA of USD 2.5 mn to support advanced biofuels development and address energy security, waste recycling, climate change and air pollution. It aligns with the National Policy on Biofuels to harness waste, promote advanced biofuel market etc. ADB HQ: Manila President: Masatsugu Asakawa

6. 'Swadhinata Sarak' between Bangladesh and India will be opened on March 26 Next year: Bangladesh Foreign Minister Dr. Momen

Abdul Momen said that the 'Swadhinata Sarak'(Independence Road) between Bangladesh and India will be opened on 26 March,2021. The road which is functional on Indian side will be connected through Mujibnagar, Meherpur district in Bangladesh. March 26,2021 marks the 50th Independence Day of Bangladesh.

7. India and Bangladesh to reopen Chilahati-Haldibari rail link after nearly 55 years.

India & Bangladesh will reopen the Chilahati-Haldibari rail link after nearly 55 years with an aim to enhance transport & connectivity between the two. It was cut off during the 1965 India-Pakistan war. There are 6 pre-1965 rail links between the two. 4 of 6 rail links are operational already.



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8. INS Kiltan arrived at NhaRong Port, Ho Chi Minh City as part of Mission Sagar-III

This mission is part of India's Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) assistance to Friendly Foreign Countries during the ongoing pandemic. The ship will deliver 15 Tons of HADR Stores for the flood-affected people of Central Vietnam. Mission is in accordance with SAGAR vision.

9. INS Kiltan arrives at Sihanoukville Port in Cambodia under Mission Sagar-III

As part of Mission Sagar III it will deliver 15 Ton Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Stores for the flood-affected people of Cambodia. Mission is part of India's HADR assistance to Friendly Foreign Countries during the ongoing pandemic. Mission Sagar: I -5 Indian ocean nations; II -4 African nations.

10. Indo-German initiative 'IGNITE' launched to develop 40,000 skilled workforce by 2024

Siemens, along with the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation & Development of the Federal Republic of Germany and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH with the support of the Ministry of Skill Development Entrepreneurship launched IGNITE: Indo-German Initiative for Technical Education



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Environment

1. Hyderabad's Nehru Zoological Park gets ISO quality management standards (QMS) certification from the UK.

Nehru Zoological Park has become the first zoo in India to acquire ISO 9001:2015 QMS Certification. It was assessed on the basis of sanitisation, food processing, animal breeding, medicare, animal care, hygiene maintenance and establishment. ASCB, United Kingdom gave the certification.

2. Coca-Cola, Pepsi and Nestle named top plastic polluters for third year in a row

Break Free From Plastic's audit said Coca-Cola, PepsiCo & Nestlé top the list of biggest plastic polluters globally based on how often their packaging turns up discarded on beaches, rivers, parks. Cola's branding found on 13834 plastic pieces in 51 countries. Other top polluters were Unilever and Mondelez International.

3. A tough novel species of Indian Muraingrass (Ischaemum janarthanamii) identified in plateaus of Western Ghats of Goa

The species known for their ecological and economic importance, such as fodder, have been spotted by scientists in Goa in the Western Ghats. It grows on low altitude lateritic plateaus in the outskirts of Bhagwan Mahavir National Park, Goa. The species was named in honour of Prof. M. K. Janarthanam.

4. Aerosols in Indo-Gangetic Plain have led to increased rainfall in the Himalayan foothills: DST supported research.

Research supported by DST's Climate Change Program have found that aerosols which contribute to Indo-Gangetic Plain pollution have led to increased incidents of high rainfall events in the foothills of the Himalayan region. Study part of DST's NMSHE under NAPCC.

5. Rare Myristica Swamp Treefrog (Mercurana myristicapalustris) found in Vazhachal forest

Myristica Swamp Treefrog, a rare arboreal species endemic to the Western Ghats was recorded for the first time north of the Shencottah gap in Vazhachal Reserve Forest in Thrissur. The frog was first described in 2013 from lowland Myristica swamps of Arippa. Myristica swamps are tropical freshwater swamp forests.

6. Ladakh gets second Ramsar site with its Startsapuk Tso, Tso Kar lake complex added to the list.

Tso Kar Basin consists of two principal water bodies: Startsapuk Tso & Tso Kar itself, is an A1 category important bird area (IBA), a key staging site in the Central Asian Flyway & an important breeding area for black-necked crane, Great Crested Grebe etc. India now has 42 Ramsar sites, highest in South Asia.

7. Great Indian bustard conservation: Flap-like diverters installed on live wires to prevent collision in Pokhran, Rajasthan.

Collision with live high-tension wires is the prime reason for mortality among great Indian bustards, with as many as 15% of their deaths attributed to the cause. A novel initiative of Wildlife Conservation Society- India installing 1,848 bird diverters. Great Indian bustard: Critically endangered Species.

8. India's first hot air balloon wildlife safari launched at Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh.

Launched by MP forest minister Vijay Shah in line with the vision of Buffer Mein Safar, it will be restricted to buffer area & people can watch tigers, leopards, Indian sloth bears & other wild animals from a height. Operated by Jaipur-based Sky Waltz. Bandhavgarh National Park became Tiger Reserve in 1993.



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Apps & Portals

1. Centre develops Co-WIN app to self-register for COVID-19 vaccine

Ministry of Health developed has Co-WIN aimed at monitoring COVID vaccine in real-time. It is set to help people register for vaccination. The platform has 5 modules: administrator, registration, vaccination, beneficiary acknowledgement and report module. There are 6 vaccine candidates in clinical trial stages in India

2. Department of Posts & India Post Payments Bank unveil new digital payment app 'DakPay': customers can now transact through app

DakPay will provide digital financial & assisted banking services provided by India Post & IPPB through the postal network. Services include sending money, scanning QR code & digital payment for services & merchants, interoperable banking services etc. IPPB Founded - Sep 1, 2018; MD and CEO -J Venkatramu.

3. Minister Gehlot launched Mobile app "Swachhata Abhiyan" to identify, geotag insanitary latrines, manual scavengers.

In the absence of authentic database regarding the location of insanitary latrines, it has been decided to seek the help of NGOs, Social Organisations and the general public for collection and compilation of the data through "Swachhata Abhiyan" app. Union Minister, Social Justice & Empowerment Thawar Chand Gehlot.

4. Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar launches DGNCC Digital Forum.

The digital forum will provide a platform to the National Cadet Corps (NCC) cadets all over the country to share their experiences of various NCC activities. It is a positive step towards digitization of NCC, in line with Digital India vision of the PM. Director General NCC: Lt General Rajeev Chopra.

5. AU Small Finance Bank launches new mobile banking app and netbanking portal

Aimed at providing a superior and comprehensive digital experience to customers, the new platforms will offer over 100 services that cater to not only regular banking needs but also daily lifestyle requirements such as ticket booking, bill payments etc AU Small finance HQ:Jaipur; Founder:Sanjay Agarwal; Founded:1996

6. "FRUITS" portal, a project of e-Governance, Government of Karnataka inaugurated

"FRUITS"(Farmer Registration and Unified Beneficiary Information System) Portal, a project of e-Governance, Government of Karnataka was inaugurated. It integrated into the BHOO MI Package of the Karnataka State for fetching and validating the land details. Canara Bank for agreeing to take up the Project on a pilot basis

7. Ministry of Urban Affairs launched E-Sampada app & portal; 4 Websites & 2 Mobile Apps of Directorate of Estates integrated.

It provides uniformity throughout India under a single window for services including allotment for over 1 lakh govt residential accommodations, office space allotment to govt organisations in 28 cities & venues like 5, Ashoka Road for social functions. Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep S Puri

8. Indian National Centre for Oceanic Information Services (INCOIS) launches 'Digital Ocean'

It will be a one stop-solution for all ocean data related needs & is expected to bring a sea-change in how the oceanographic data is served. It will play a central role in sustainable management of the oceans & expanding India's 'Blue Economy' initiatives INCOIS: Established - 2007; Location - Hyderabad

9. ICICI Bank Launches 'iMobile Pay': Country's First App That Provides Payments And Banking Services For All

'iMobile Pay' app offers a unique combination of facilities of a payment app - such as enabling customers to pay to any UPI ID or merchants, pay bills and do online recharges among others -with instant banking services like savings account, investment etc. ICICI bank CEO: Sandeep Bakhshi; HQ: Mumbai

10. NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant Launches File-Sharing App DigiBoxx.

India's first indigenously developed Digital Asset Management platform DigiBoxx is an Indian digital file storage, sharing & management SaaS product that provides secure storage options for business as well as individual users in a centralized location. SaaS - Software as a Service



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Acquisitions & Mergers

1. IndiGrid inks pact to acquire 74% stake in Parbati Koldam from Reliance Infra

KKR & Co-backed India Grid Trust (IndiGrid) signed a share purchase agreement for the acquisition of 74% in Parbati Koldam Transmission Company Ltd from Reliance Infrastructure Ltd. PKTCL is a joint venture between Reliance Infrastructure Limited and PGCIL. IndiGrid – India's only publicly listed InvIT in power sector.

2. DBS Bank India gets Rs 2,500 cr capital support from parent bank for Laxmi Vilas Bank merger

DBS Bank India Limited (DBIL) received a capital infusion of Rs 2,500 crore from DBS Bank Limited, Singapore to support its amalgamation with Lakshmi Vilas Bank (LVB). The scheme of amalgamation came into effect on November 27, 2020. DBS Bank Ltd is headquartered in Marina Bay, Singapore.

3. Wipro signs \$700 million deal to take over IT services of German firm METRO AG

Bengaluru-headquartered IT services major Wipro has announced a strategic digital and IT partnership deal with METRO AG. With the intention to extend up to 4 additional years, it can be a potential spend of up to \$1 billion. METRO AG: food service distribution industry

4. S&P Global to buy IHS Markit in deal valued at \$44 billion

Data giant S&P Global Inc agreed to buy IHS Markit Ltd in a deal worth \$44 billion that will be 2020's biggest merger. S&P Global is renowned for providing debt ratings to countries and companies, as well as data on capital and commodity markets worldwide IHS Markit was formed in 2016. Founder: Lance Uggla.

5. Facebook buys Kustomer for \$1B to expand into customer service tools

Tech-giant acquired Kustomer, a start-up using a new approach to providing agents with better data & a more unified picture of users by bringing together the many social media and other channels and long history between them and the company in question. Kustomer CEO: Brad Birnbaum. Facebook CEO: Mark Zuckerberg.

6. Tata Digital buys stake in govt's rural e-tailer Grameen e-Store

Tata Digital invested about ₹10 crore for an undisclosed stake in Grameen e-Store, the govt's rural e-commerce venture. Grameen e-Store, launched in 2020, is available in 120,000 locations in India. The e-store is run by Common Service Centres under MeitY. It has already clocked ₹120 crore in turnover so far.

7. Salesforce to acquire workplace chat app Slack for \$27.7 billion

Cloud computing giant Salesforce will acquire workplace chat app Slack for \$27.7 billion. Bill Gates bought Skype for 8.5 bn. dollars (in 2011), Facebook paid \$ 715 million for Instagram (in 2012) & paid about \$ 22 billion for WhatsApp (in 2014). Salesforce CEO: Marc Benioff; HQs: California, United States.

8. Competition commission approves acquisition of Rivigo by Warburg-managed entities

Competition Commission of India has approved acquisition of Rivigo Services Private Ltd, a technology-enabled logistics company in trucking industry, by Spring Canter Investment Ltd through subscription of compulsorily convertible preference shares. Preference shares holders are given priority over common stock

9. Bharti Airtel Ltd, its subsidiary Nettle Buys 4.94% Stake In Bharti Infratel For Rs 2,882 Crore

With this transaction, Bharti Airtel's total direct and indirect stake in its mobile tower arm Infratel has increased to 41.66%. Indus Tower, which was the country's largest standalone mobile tower company, has merged with Bharti Infratel.

Bharti Airtel Ltd CEO: Gopal Vittal; Founder: Sunil Bharti Mitta

10. Earth Rules Pty Ltd, Tata Consumer's Australia Unit to Sell MAP Coffee Business to Buccheri Group for \$1.25 million

It will be received in tranches by Feb. 28, 2021, according to the terms of the asset sale and purchase agreement. MAP Coffee was established in 2002 and supplied Australian cafes, restaurants, and bars with a range of Italian and locally roasted coffee.

Earth Rule pvt became a part of the Tata Group company in 2014.

11. CCI approves acquisition of AES's 49% stake in OPGC by OHPC

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) approved the acquisition of Odisha Power Generation Corporation Ltd (OPGC) by Odisha Hydro Power Corporation Limited (OHPC). It involves 49% equity shares in OPGC from AES OPGC Holding and AES India. OHPC is wholly-owned and controlled by the Odisha government.

12. Reddit acquires short-form video social platform Dubsmash and enters the short video market.

Reddit acquired Dubsmash and under the deal, Dubsmash will continue to exist as a separate platform and brand, but its "innovative video creation tools" will be integrated into Reddit. In Jan, 2020 dubsmash crossed 1 billion video views per month. Suchit Dash is a Cofounder of Dubsmash.

13. Twitter acquires screen-sharing social media app Squad.

Twitter has acquired the app Squad, a multi-participant video chat app. Squad saw a massive spike of 1100% in usage during the pandemic. Twitter could be shutting down its separate live-streaming app Periscope to make room for the addition. Twitter CEO - Jack Dorsey

14. Sony acquires US anime-streaming service Crunchyroll for \$1.175 billion from AT&T

Sony acquired U.S. anime-streaming service Crunchyroll for \$1.175 bn gaining access to Crunchyroll's 90 mn-plus members. The move shows Sony's shift to a "recurring" business model of fee-based services instead of just selling electronics devices. AT&T's Crunchyroll will be incorporated into Sony's Funimation.

15. BP acquires majority stake in carbon offset developer Finite Carbon.

Energy giant BP announced it has acquired a majority stake in Finite Carbon, the largest developer of forest carbon offsets in the US. Finite Carbon develops projects that allow landowners to generate revenue sustainable management of forests.

The investment will deliver \$1 billion to landowners by 2030.

16. Italian confectionery major Ferrero to acquire Eat Natural

Italy-based global confectionery major Ferrero Group, the producer of many iconic brands including Nutella, Ferrero Rocher, Tic Tac, Kinder and Raffaello, will acquire Eat Natural, the maker of high-quality cereal bars, toasted muesli and granola.

Italy Capital: Rome; Currency: Euro.

17. KKR's IndiGrid has acquired Indian solar portfolio of Madrid-based Fotowatio Renewable Ventures (FRV); deal worth Rs 660 crore.

IndiGrid has fully acquired FRV Andhra Pradesh Solar Farm-I & FRV India Solar Park II – from FRV Solar Holdings for Rs.660 crore. IndiGrid is an infrastructure investment trust (InvIT) backed by KKR, an equity firm. IndiGrid is only publicly listed InvIT in power sector.

18. SBI Life buys 8.99% stake in microcredit firm Paisalo Digital

SBI Life, which counts private equity giant Carlyle as its backer, has purchased 3.8 million Paisalo shares at Rs 489.99 a piece, the company informed the stock exchanges. SBI Life; Insurance unit of State Bank of India, the nation's biggest lender. Life Insurance Corporation: Largest Insurance company in India.

19. Tata Communications acquires majority stake in Oasis Smart SIM Europe SAS

Oasis develops and provides advanced technologies and personalised services to enable the deployment of eSIM and SIM technologies. With this investment, eSIM technology will be fully integrated into Tata Communications MOVE. Tata will drive & accelerate product roadmap in R&D with Oasis.

20. Reliance to buy out IMG from sports management JV

Reliance Industries Ltd will purchase IMG Worldwide's 50% stake in IMG Reliance Ltd for no more than Rs 52.08 crore in cash. RIL will rebrand the company after the deal closes. It is engaged in the business of creation, management, implementation, etc. IMG Reliance was formed in 2020.

21. ICICI Bank buys 9.09% stake in Myclassboard Educational Solutions Pvt Ltd for ₹4.5 cr

MESPL offers an online school management platform. Post investment, ICICI Bank will hold 9.09 per cent stake through acquisition of 100 equity shares & 1,04,890 cumulative compulsorily convertible preference shares on fully diluted basis. Ajay Sakhamuri - Founder and CEO - MyClassboard



The advertisement features a dark purple background with a stylized illustration of a man in a grey trench coat and hat. At the top right is the Oliveboard logo. The main text reads 'IB ACIO 2020 Complete Course' in large, bold letters. Below this, a list of features includes 'Live Practice', 'Video Lectures', 'Test Series', and 'Doubt Clearing Sessions'. To the right, a circular emblem contains the Indian national emblem and the motto 'Satyameva Jayate'. Further right, a green box displays '20% Off Use Code "GET20"'. A prominent green button says 'Enrol Now'. At the bottom right, it notes '*Limited Seats only'.

Agri-Business

1. HexGn, AFC India join hands to promote 1,000 agri-tech start-ups over next 5 years.

HexGn & AFC India have joined hands to promote 1,000 agriculture-related entrepreneurship start-ups over next 5 yrs in India. HexGn will host a series of programmes & initiatives to increase capabilities & skills of 1st generation agri-tech entrepreneurs. AFC India Ltd is wholly-owned by NABARD and EXIM Bank.

2. Nokia and Vi CSR deploy SmartAgri solution to enhance farming practices of 50,000 farmers in India

Vi CSR deployed Nokia's Worldwide IoT Network Grid (WING) to provide smart agriculture solutions to 50,000 farmers in India to help achieve better yields. Data to be collected & analysed in 100 locations in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra initially. CEO: Nokia - Pekka Lundmark; Vi - Ravinder Takkar

3. APEDA organises workshop on 'Opportunities in Export of Organic Basmati Rice, Value Addition and Product Diversification'

Considering the potential and prospects of export of Basmati rice, APEDA organized a Workshop on 'Opportunities in Export of Organic Basmati Rice, Value Addition and Product Diversification' in New Delhi. APEDA: HQ - New Delhi; Chairman - M. Angamuthu

4. BSE Rolls Out Electronic Spot Platform 'BSE E- Agricultural Markets Limited' or BEAM For Agri Commodities.

BSE launched BEAM an electronic spot platform for agricultural commodities, through its subsidiary BSE Investments Limited. BSE witnessed a trading of 2 tons of imported almonds worth more than ₹6 lakhs on the launch day. BSE, MD and CEO - Ashish Kumar Chauhan.

5. PM Modi to flag off 100th Kisan Rail from Sangola in Maharashtra to Shalimar in West Bengal

The multi-commodity train service will carry vegetables like cauliflower, capsicum, cabbage, drumsticks, chillies, onion & fruits like grapes, oranges, pomegranate, banana and custard apple. It provides a seamless supply chain of perishable produce. First Kisan Rail - Devlali to Danapur on 7th of August 2020.



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External Affairs

1. Indian Embassy in Beijing launched Bollywood 'cinemaSCOpe' series for SCO diplomats

'CinemaSCOpe' series, being exclusively screened for SCO diplomats and their families commenced at Beijing Indian Embassy premises with the screening of "3 Idiots". More than two dozen Indian films dubbed in Russian, will be screened on a monthly basis. Indian Ambassador to China - Vikram Misri

2. India, UK to forge 10-year roadmap for ties, push talks on trade deal

During talks between UK foreign secretary Dominic Raab & India's S Jaishankar, the two sides decided to work on common challenges and shared opportunities across the Indo-Pacific. The two sides will work towards an "enhanced trade partnership" next year.

Minister of External Affairs of India - S Jaishankar.



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FinTech

1. SBI, NPCI and JCB join hands to launch contactless debit card

State Bank of India (SBI), National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) and JCB International have announced the launch of 'SBI RuPay JCB Platinum Contactless Debit Card'. This Card has been launched on the RuPay network by SBI in association with JCB. Customers can perform contact & contactless payments with this.

2. SBM Bank India launches Hyper-personalised SmartBanking platform in partnership with Finin

SBM Bank India announced the launch of SmartBanking platform in partnership with Finin. Towards this, SBM Bank India issues a Savings Account that can be opened instantly & comes with a VISA powered Debit Card equipped with smart card management features. Finin Founder & CEO: Suman Gandham.

3. Razorpay, PayPal partnership to help MSMEs and freelancers go global

Razorpay and PayPal have come together to enable seamless international payments for MSMEs and freelancers. By integrating PayPal into Razor pay's payment platform, entities can accept international payments without having to write a single line of code. Razorpay aims to disburse payments online. CEO: Harshil Mathur.

4. SEBI paves way for fintech startups to apply for mutual fund(MF) licenses by relaxing norms.

SEBI said that sponsors not meeting profitability criteria can apply for MF licenses. Earlier regulations required both profitability track-record of sponsor and minimum net-worth of Rs 50 crore. Relaxation will help fintechs to get into MF business. Some active Fintechs - PayTM, Zerodha, Groww and Kuvera.



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PSUs

1. Indian Oil Launches XP100 Fuel i.e. India's First 100 Octane Petrol, The fuel is manufactured at IOC's Mathura refinery in U.P

State-owned Indian Oil Corporation has launched the nation's first 100 Octane petrol, helping India join a select league of nations globally that have such superior quality fuel. This XP100 premium is manufactured at IOC's Mathura refinery in Uttar Pradesh. HPCL had recently launched Octane 99.

2. BHEL sets new record of manufacturing India's highest-rated auto transformer

State-owned engineering firm BHEL successfully manufactured & tested (short circuit) India's highest rating Auto Transformer at National High Power Test Laboratory (NHPTL) at Bina in Madhya Pradesh. It is a new benchmark in the global transformer industry. These transformers play crucial role in bulk power transmission

3. ONGC begins production in Bengal basin, making it India's eighth functional basin.

ONGC has commenced oil production from the Asokenagar-1 well, Bengal Basin in West Bengal's 24 Paragana districts. Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Sunday dedicated the Bengal Basin to the nation. It was completed under Early-Monetization Plan. Union Petroleum & Natural Gas Minister, Dharmendra Pradhan

4. CIL subsidiary Western Coalfields to enter into joint venture with Orissa Mineral Development Corporation

CIL subsidiary Western Coalfields Ltd (WCL) will enter into a joint venture with OMDC taking up five coal blocks in the Raigad district on the Odisha-Chhattisgarh border. WCL is planning for a peak production capacity of 75 million tonnes. There 20 more mines will be opened by 2023-24.

5. NHPC to commission 2,000 MW hydropower project on Subansiri, Assam by March 2022

PSU major NHPC Ltd said the 2,000 MW Subansiri hydropower project, which was stalled for nearly 8 years will be commissioned by March 2022. Construction work is to take place at Gerukamukh along the Assam-Arunachal Pradesh border on Subansiri river
 Capital: Dispur
 CM: Sarbananda Sonowal
 Governor: Jagdish Mukhi



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States/UTs

Andhra Pradesh

1. Andhra Pradesh signs MoU with Survey of India for historic land survey

Andhra Pradesh signed an MoU with Survey of India for taking up the land resurvey named 'YSR Jagananna Saswath Bhoo Hakku-Bhoo Raksha Pathakam'. A comprehensive land survey in AP is being taken after 100 years. Advanced technology to be used for the survey Survey of India HQ:Dehradun Surveyor General: Lt Gen Girish Kumar

Arunachal Pradesh

1. Arunachal Pradesh Govt Purchases 1 Lakh tri-color Khadi Face Masks for School Children.

KVIC will provide another 1 Lakh double-layered, tri-color Cotton face masks to Arunachal Pradesh govt with its logo. As the state government prepares to re-open schools for class VIII students from January 4, 2021, it has placed a repeat purchase order. KVIC has sold over 25 lakh face masks in just nearly 8 months.

2. KVIC Brings Alive 1000-yr Old Monpa Handmade Paper Industry of Arunachal Pradesh to Revive the Heritage Art

The fine-textured handmade paper, which is called Mon Shugu in the local dialect, is integral to the vibrant culture of the local tribes in Tawang. The paper has historic & religious significance as it is the paper used for writing Buddhist scriptures. This made from the bark of a local tree called Shugu Sheng.

Assam

1. Asian Development Bank Approves \$231 Million Loan for a Hydropower Project in Assam

The Lower Kopili Hydroelectric Power facility will utilize water from the Kopili river to produce around 120 MW of electricity. The project will double the hydropower generation capacity of Assam Power Generation Corporation Limited. Kopli project: Dima Hasao district of Assam

2. Union Minister Gadkari announces multi-modal logistics park in Silchar, Assam

It will be constructed in Silchar & the Balacherra-Harengajao section of the Silchar-Saurashtra Highway by March 2022. He laid the foundation stone of 20 projects & inaugurated seven projects worth Rs 2,366 crore for Assam with a total length of 439 km.

13-foot tall bronze statue of Vajpayee was unveiled as well.

Bihar

1. Gadkari inaugurates three-lane Koilwar Bridge on Sone river in Bihar worth Rs 266 crore.

Gadkari inaugurated the three lane 1.5 km long Koilwar bridge over Sone river (tributary of Ganga) in Bihar worth Rs 266 crore. The existing two lane rail-cum-road bridge is 138 years old. The bridge is a major road for transport between Bihar and UP. Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways: Nitin Gadkari



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2. Silk City of Bihar, 'Bhagalpur' hosted its first ever 'Bird Festival' for awareness about migratory birds.

A 'Bird Festival' as part of its initiative to save migratory birds that arrive in large numbers annually was held in Bhagalpur. Bhagalpur has been a hub of migratory birds due to water bodies (Vikramshila Dolphin Sanctuary, Jagatpur & Kanwar lake) there. It was held from Dec 11 to 13.

Goa

1. Goa Govt Launches One-Time Power Bill Settlement Scheme 2020

Goa CM Pramod Sawant launched one-time settlement scheme for power consumers. It is launched to support the consumers in clearing their long-pending dues by paying only the principal amount. There is no limit on the outstanding dues pending for payments. Goa Capital: Panaji; Governor: Bhagat Singh Koshyari.

2. Goa's Liberation Day: 19th December

Goa Liberation Day is observed on December 19 every year in India and it marks the day Indian armed forces freed Goa in 1961 following 450 years of Portuguese rule. The 36-hour military operation conducted in 1961 was code-named 'Operation Vijay'. Goa Governor: Bhagat Singh Koshyari; Capital: Panaji.

Gujarat

1. Foundation Stones to be laid for Mega Desalination Plant of 10 crore litre per day (100 MLD) capacity at Mandvi in Kutch, Gujarat.

The Desalination Plant at Mandvi will have a capacity of 100 MLD. It will complement the Narmada Grid, Sauni network & treatment of waste water. Water will be provided to approx. 8 lakh people in the regions of Abdasa, Mundra, Lakhpat & Nakhatrana talukas. It is one of 5 upcoming desalination plants in the state.

2. Gujarat's Kutch to Get India's Largest Renewable Energy Park with generation capacity of 30 gigawatts Generation Park.

The foundation stone of Hybrid Renewable Energy Park near Vighakot village in Gujarat's Kutch district is to be laid. It will be spread over 72,600 hectares with a generation capacity of 30 GW & will have zones for wind and solar energy storage. It will be India's largest renewable energy generation park.

3. Gujarat signs MOU to establish Gujarat-Special Education Region at Dholera

Cerestra Managers Private Limited for establishing a global level Gujarat-Special Education Region (G-SER) at Dholera Special Investment Region (DSIR). Dholera is the 1st Greenfield Industrial City is being established to meet the Industrial 4.0 CM :Vijay Rupani; Governor: Acharya Devvrat

Haryana

1. Skill India establishes first Centre of Excellence for Skill Development in Power Sector in Gurugram, Haryana

Skill India has established 1st Centre of Excellence for Skill Development in Power Sector in campus of National Institute of Solar Energy, Gurugram Haryana. It will focus on creating a pool of highly skilled trainers & assessors for further training. Minister of State for Skill Development: Raj Kumar Singh



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Himachal Pradesh

1. SJVN Ltd gets 3 hydroelectric power projects in Chenab basin totaling 501 megawatts (MW) from Himachal Pradesh govt.

104 MW Tandi, 130 MW Rashil and 267 MW Sach Khas Hydro Electric Projects on the Chenab Basin have been awarded to SJVN. The firm is already developing 430-MW Reoli Dugli, 210 MW Purthi and 138 MW Bardang hydroelectric projects in the Chenab basin. SJVN Ltd - joint venture of GoI & the Government of HP

Jharkhand

1. Jharkhand police prepares handbook titled 'Cyber Security Awareness Handbook' to educate people on cybercrime

In its multi-layered drive to curb cybercrime, the Jharkhand police launched a 36-page handbook on various types of cyber incidents and measures to prevent them. The book, titled 'Cyber Security Awareness Handbook', explains a wide range of cybercrimes. Jharkhand Capital: Ranchi. CM: Hemant Soren.

Karnataka

1. Learning Management System for Government colleges launched by Karnataka CM

Karnataka CM launched a Learning Management System based on Digital technology for Government colleges. It will benefit 4.5 lakh students & 24000 teachers to make an impact on learning and teaching, respectively. It is implemented at a cost of Rs 34.14 cr. Karnataka CM: B.S. Yediyurappa. Governor: Vajubhai Vala.

2. ADB approves \$190 mn loan for upgradation of Bengaluru power distribution system

ADB has approved a USD 190 million (over Rs 1,400 cr) loan for modernisation, upgradation of power distribution system in Bengaluru, includes a \$100 million sovereign loan & a \$90 million without sovereign guarantee loan to Bangalore's BESCOM. BESCOM is a state-owned distribution utility in Karnataka

3. Road Transport and Highways Minister, Nitin Gadkari, inaugurated and laid foundation stone for 33 highway projects in Karnataka

Nitin Gadkari inaugurated & laid foundation stone for 33 highway projects in Karnataka. The projects worth ₹11,000 crores, has a road length of nearly 1200kms. These roads will enhance better connectivity, convenience, and economic growth in the State. Karnataka CM: BS Yediyurappa; Capital: Bengaluru.

4. Karnataka, British council sign MoU to strengthen education, research exchange

Karnataka state higher education council & British Council signed an MOU to facilitate proficiency of English language among students. It is a first-of-its-kind 3yrs MoU involving collaboration on leadership development in higher education institutions. Mysore state carved in 1956 and was renamed Karnataka in 1973.

Kerala

1. 21-year-old Arya Rajendran to be India's youngest Mayor ever in India from Thiruvananthapuram

Arya, who has been a strong CPM worker right from her childhood, is currently state president of CPM-backed 'Balasanghom', which is considered as the world's largest children's organisation. She is also a member of SFI Kerala state committee. CM: Pinarayi Vijayan; Governor: Muhammad Arif Khan

2. Aceware fintech launches micro ATM service in association with ICICI Bank at Kochi, Kerala.

Aimed at enabling withdrawal of money from a bank account from the comfort of home, Aceware has launched Ace Money Micro ATM service in Kochi. Customers of all banks can place an order for money on Ace Money app & money will be delivered in 30-40 minutes. Aceware is a fintech company located in Infopark, Kochi.

3. UN Women and Kerala government collaborate for India's first Gender Data Hub

The Gender Hub builds on the goals established through the International Conference on Gender Equality held in November 2015, to collect, analyze and use more nuanced data and inform policy formulation in a manner that the center-stages women's rights. Chief Minister: Pinarayi Vijayan; Governor: Arif Mohammad Khan

Madhya Pradesh

1. Gwalior, Orchha in United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization world heritage cities list

Historical fort cities of Gwalior and Orchha in Madhya Pradesh have been included in the list of UNESCO's world heritage cities under its urban landscape city programme, UNESCO, an agency of the United Nations, aims at promoting world peace and security. UNESCO HQ: Paris, France; Head: Audrey Azoulay; Founded: 1945

2. Handicrafts exhibition 'Raag-Bhopali' being organized from 26 to 30 Dec in Gauhar Mahal, Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh government has decided to introduce a new brand named Raag-Bhopali to give a new international identity to Bhopal's handicrafts. The exhibition is being organized from 26 to 30 December in Gauhar Mahal, Bhopal. Bhopal is popular for its zari, zardozi, and Jute work.

Maharashtra

1. First Child-friendly Police Station Launched in Maharashtra's Pune

Pune's first child-friendly police station was inaugurated at the cantonment police station. The mandate for this arisen out of Juvenile Justice Act 2015, outlines the steps to be taken for the protection of rights of children in need of care & protection. It was inaugurated by IIT Kanpur Director Dr. Abhay Karandikar.

2. Union Minister Gadkari laid foundation stone for Nagpur Auto & Engineering Cluster Pvt Ltd (NAEC) in Hingna Industrial Area.

Gadkari laid the foundation for NAEC in Hingna Industrial Area of Nagpur. He said electric vehicles, CNG & LNG are the future of Automobiles and this cluster should play a pivotal role in making Nagpur an automobile hub and also reduce oil import burden. It was approved under the Cluster Development Plan of MSME.

3. Maharashtra Government starts a new campaign to detect patients suffering from leprosy and tuberculosis

Citing the success of My Family, My Responsibility, Maharashtra govt started a new campaign to detect patients suffering from leprosy & tuberculosis. It is a month-long campaign that will cover over 8.66 crore people including 6 cr. people in rural areas. My family My Responsibility was launched to track COVID patients



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4. Tata Motors Delivers 26 Low Floor AC Electric Buses to Brihan Mumbai Electric Supply and Transport (BEST), Mumbai under FAME II

The buses are delivered as a part of the larger order of 340 electric buses from Brihanmumbai Electric Supply and Transport (BEST) under the government of India's Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid) and Electric Vehicles (FAME) II initiative. CM: Uddhav Thackeray; Governor: Bhagat Singh Koshyari

5. Maharashtra develops MahaSharad App to improve access of persons with disabilities to free assistive care devices

Maharashtra System for Health and Rehabilitation Assistance or MahaSharad app will act as a bridge between physically challenged persons and private companies, vendors and people interesting in donating such equipment. It is named after Sharad Pawar. Sharad Pawar is an Indian politician from Maharashtra.

Manipur

1. Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah launched several development projects in Manipur

e-office & Thoubal Multipurpose Project (Thoubal Dam) in Imphal inaugurated, foundation stone of major development projects including Churachandpur Medical College, IT-SEZ at Mantripukhri, Integrated Command and Control Center at Imphal etc laid. Union Minister, Development of NE Region, Jitendra Singh.

Meghalaya

1. India signs \$133 million loan agreement with ADB for Meghalaya's power distribution sector

The \$133 mn loan from Asian Development Bank will be used to modernise Meghalaya's power distribution network & improve the quality of power supplied to households, industries, and businesses. The fund will support the state's 24x7 Power for All initiative Country Director of ADB India: Takeo Konishi.

Mizoram

1. Mizoram Enters India's Solar Map With a 2 MW Photovoltaic Plant :-its first solar power plant at Tlungvel.

The grid-connected two-megawatt solar photovoltaic plant was inaugurated by Mizoram's Power Minister R Lalzirliana. Solar power plants of 20 MW & 5 MW capacities are under construction at Vankal in Khawzawl district & near Saitual town. Mizoram CM: Zoramthanga; Governor: P.S Sreedharan Pillai

Nagaland

1. Nitin Gadkari inaugurated & laid foundation stones of 15 National Highway projects of Nagaland

Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways, MSME, Nitin Gadkari along with Nagaland CM Neiphiu Rio virtually inaugurated and laid the foundation stones of 15 National Highway projects of Nagaland. Projects have the total length of 270kms. Project will connect Kohima to Phek District & Myanmar border

2. Nagaland hosts first virtual celebration of Hornbill Festival 2020

Dubbed as Festival of Festivals, Hornbill Festival is celebrated to showcase the rich cultural heritage and tradition of Nagas in one platform at Naga Heritage Village Kisama under Kohima District. 21st edition of the festival is online due to pandemic. It is celebrated every year from 1 to 10 December in the state.

3. Nagaland celebrates its 58th Statehood day: 1 December

Nagaland became the 16th State of the Union of India on 1st December 1,963. The formal inauguration was done by the then President Dr S. Radhakrishnan. The state is all set to celebrate its 58th statehood day marking the beginning of Hornbill Festival. Nagaland Governor: R N Ravi CM: Neiphiu Rio Capital: Kohima

4. Nagaland government totally banned use of flex banners, boards and posters

Nagaland govt has totally banned the use of flex banners, boards & posters by depts, institutions & agencies during functions or prog. in govt offices as they are made up of Poly-Vinyl-Chlorides, a plastic polymer, which is a non-biodegradable material. Nagaland Capital: Kohima; Governor: RN Ravi; CM: Neiphiu Rio.

Odisha

1. Odisha approves unified emergency helpline number 112

Odisha Govt approved unified emergency helpline number 112 to provide all forms of police assistance to people in distress. It subsumes the earlier segregated helpline numbers like 100,101,108 & other for emergency services like police, fire & ambulance. Odisha CM: Naveen Patnaik. Governor: Ganeshi Lal.

2. Odisha tourism launches its flagship Eco-Retreat program at 5 locations

In its bid to attract more tourists to Odisha, the Tourism Department launched the second edition of its flagship "Eco-Retreat" programme at five locations, viz Konark, Bhitarkanika, Daringibadi, Hirakud and Satkosia. They are open till February 28, 2021. Odisha Capital: Bhubaneswar CM: Naveen Patnaik

3. Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik launches PARESHRAM portal

CM Naveen Patnaik launched PARESHRAM portal along with 22 online services of Labour and Employees' State Insurance (ESI) department. Industries, commercial organisations, small entrepreneurs and the public will be benefited through this portal. The portal will provide 52 types of services in the coming days.

4. India's biggest hockey stadium will come up at Rourkela in Odisha.

The 20,000-capacity facility will host matches of FIH men's World Cup in 2023. Spread over 15 acres of land, the stadium will be constructed in the Biju Patnaik University of Technology campus. Men & Women Hockey Team Captains: Manpreet Singh & Rani Rampal. CM: Naveen Patnaik; Governor: Ganeshi Lal

5. Finance Ministry allows Odisha to borrow Rs 1,429 crore more through Open Market Borrowings, post ease of doing business reforms

Odisha has now joined 6 other states (Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, MP, TN, Telangana & Rajasthan) which have completed the reforms that include completion of first assessment of 'District Level Business Reform Action Plan'. 7 states granted permission of Rs 20,888 crore.

Punjab

1. Punjab CM launched digital 'PR Insight' mobile app, web portal

'PR Insight' to monitor the feedback and subsequently improve the delivery of citizen-centric services to ensure responsive and transparent administration in the State. It has been developed by the State Information Public Relations Department. CM: Capt Amarinder Singh Governor: V. P. Singh Badnore

Rajasthan

1. India's first organ donor memorial inaugurated in Jaipur

Rajasthan CM virtually inaugurated nation's 1st organ donor memorial in Jaipur. Organ donor memorial is dedicated in honour of those who have given life to hundreds of others. Memorial is inspired by the famous Jantar Mantar of Jaipur. Memorial has been designed by Sameer Wheaton.

2. Union Minister Gadkari lays foundation stone of Rs 8,341-cr road projects in Rajasthan.

Gadkari inaugurated Rs 8,341-crore 18 highway projects in Rajasthan of nearly 1,127 kilometres. There has been 40 per cent growth in road construction in Rajasthan during the past six years, and the length of NH in the state stands at 10,661 km now. Rajasthan: CM - Ashok Gehlot; Governor - Kalraj Mishra.

Tamil Nadu

1. Tamil Nadu government signed 18 MoUs worth Rs 19,955 crore with an employment potential of 26,509 people.

MoUs were signed with Crown Group Of Companies, Society for Smart Electric Mobility, Voltas, Mylan Torrent Gas, First Solar, Ola Electric, Mahindra CIE etc. The cumulative investment is about Rs 24,458 crore from about 24 projects. Torrent Gas to invest Rs 5,000 crore in Chennai city gas project

2. Giant Rock Bee Honey among 35 new immunity-boosting tribal products Added to Tribes India Collection.

Among more than 35 products added this week to Tribes India collection are natural, fresh, organic produce such as Giant Rock Bee Honey, honey, variants of millet rice, tamarind & black pepper from Malayali tribes of Eastern Ghats in North Tamil Nadu. It is part of "From Our Home to your Home" campaign of TRIFED.

Tripura

1. India, ADB sign 4.21 million dollar PRF facility for preparation of infrastructure development projects

Govt of India & the Asian Development Bank signed a \$4.21mn project readiness financing facility for the preparation of infrastructure development projects to improve urban amenities and develop tourism infrastructure in Tripura. This is ADB's 1st PRF facility for a state in NE region of India

2. Chief Justice Sharad Bobde inaugurates e-service centre at Tripura High Court

CJI Bobde inaugurated the eSewa Kendra in the Tripura High Court. e-Services have been facilitated under the e-Courts project with a view to bring transparency in legal proceedings & ease of access to information related to ongoing or past trials & cases. E-courts project won Digital India Award 2020.

Uttar Pradesh

1. MSME Minister Nitin Gadkari to inaugurate the 23rd Hunar Haat of indigenous master artisans in Rampur, Uttar Pradesh

'Hunar Haat' is the flagship initiative by the Minority Affairs Ministry to generate employment for master craftspeople. It is a platform for products made by traditional artisans & craftsmen from all over India. 23rd Hunar Haat is held at Rampur, UP. Next Hunar Haat - Shilp Gram, Lucknow in Jan 2021.

2. Prime Minister Narendra Modi Inaugurates Construction Work Of Agra Metro Project

The estimated cost of the project will be Rs 8,379.62 cr which will be completed in 5 years. The Agra Metro project comprises two corridors with a total length of 29.4 km. It will boost 'Ease of Living' for the people of Agra as well as benefit tourists. Kumar Keshav, MD of Uttar Pradesh Metro Rail Corporation.

3. Rs 200 cr Lucknow Municipal Corporation Bonds list successfully on the BSE

Bonds of Lucknow Municipal Corporation, the 1st Municipal Bond from the north Indian states listed on BSE raised Rs 200 cr on a private placement basis using the BSE bond platform. The bond issue proceeds will be used for infrastructure projects in Lucknow. Lucknow is the 9th city in India to have raised municipal bonds.

4. Ramayan Cruise Service to be launched soon on river Saryu in Ayodhya: Mansukh Mandaviya, Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways

Ramayan Cruise Tour' on the Saryu river in Ayodhya will be launched soon as per Mansukh Mandaviya, Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways. It will be the first-ever luxury Cruise service on the Saryu river (Ghagra/National Waterways-40). UP Capital: Lucknow; Governor: Anandiben Patel, CM: Y Adityanath.

5. Two new Zoos one each in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh granted recognition by Central government

Two new zoos the Rajgir Zoo Safari in Nalanda, Bihar and Shaheed Ashfaque Ullah Khan Prani Udyaan in Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh were granted recognition.U.P, Bihar was granted recognition during the General Body meeting of the Central Zoo Authority. CZA: Body of the GOI for oversight of zoo; formed:1992.

6. UP's Dandupur railway station to be renamed as Maa Barahi Devi Dham

Dandupur railway station situated between Pratapgarh and Badshahpur on Lucknow-Varanasi rail section will now be named Maa Barahi Devi Dham.a temple of Maa Barahi Devi in Parasrampur village 6 kms from the railway station & an annual fair attract devotees CM:Yogi Adityanath Governor: Anandiben Patel

7. Mega Leather Park With Rs 5,850 Cr Investment To Come Up In UP's Kanpur, To Create 50,000 Jobs.

Mega leather park to come up in Ramaipur village of Kanpur with an investment of Rs 5,850 crores. The park, part of the mega leather cluster project will create 50,000 direct jobs & indirect employment for 1.5 lakh people. UP will be 1st state in India to establish a leather park.

8. J&K LG Manoj Sinha launches the Electronic Vaccine Intelligence Network eVIN to rationalize vaccine flow and distribution

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha launched the Electronic Vaccine Intelligence Network,eVIN at Raj Bhavan, in order to rationalize vaccine flow and distribution. All districts have gone LIVE in eVIN. Jammu and Kashmir was made a Union territory on 31 October 2019

9. UP Govt launches 'Varasat' campaign to curb property & land-related disputes in rural areas.

UP govt launched a first of its kind campaign 'Varasat'(natural succession) to to end land disputes in villages over succession rights and curb property lawsuits. Villagers will get to register their name in land records both in online & offline modes. UP: CM - Yogi dityanath Governor - Anandiben Patel.

10. PM Modi inaugurated 351 km long New Bhaupur-New Khurja stretch of Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor(EDFC)

The 351 km stretch of EDFC & Operation Control Centre (OCC) was inaugurated at Prayagraj. Data technology used in OCC has been prepared in India. The 1,856-km Eastern DFC starts at Sohnewal (Ludhiana) in Punjab and ends at Dankuni in West Bengal. The total length of DFC is 3360 route km.

Uttarakhand

1. AYUSH Ministry approves 200 Ayush Health & Wellness Centres in Almora District of Uttarakhand.

The Ministry of AYUSH has approved 200 AYUSH Health and Wellness Centres in Almora district of Uttarakhand under centrally sponsored scheme of National AYUSH Mission. MoS AYUSH is Shripad Yesso Naik.

2. India's first pollinator park opens in Uttarakhand, will support over 40 key species

Inaugurated by Peter Smetacek, the park, spread over 4 acres in Haldwani in Nainital district, aims to conserve various pollinator species, create awareness & promote research. Endemic species of honeybee *Apis cerana indica* is also reared in the park. Pollinators impact 35% of global agricultural land

West Bengal

1. ICICI Bank to be designated bank for all financial transactions under National Health Mission (NHM) in West Bengal

Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India (ICICI) bank won the mandate to be the designated bank for all financial transactions under National Health Mission in West Bengal, outbidding other lenders despite their bigger presence in the state. NHM was launched in 2013 to address India's malnutrition crisis.

2. ADB, India sign 50 million loan to boost West Bengal's digital platforms for public finance reforms

ADB & the Govt of India signed a \$50 million policy-based loan to improve financial management procedures & operational efficiencies to achieve more fiscal savings, promote informed decision making, and improve service delivery in the state of West Bengal. Loan based on past ADB policy-based programmes in 2012 & 2017.

3. Kolkata's Majerhat Bridge Named "Jai Hind" To Mark Subhas Chandra Bose's 125th Birth Anniversary

The newly-built Majerhat bridge in Kolkata as "Jai Hind" bridge to commemorate the 125th birth anniversary of Subhas Chandra Bose. The new bridge, which has been built in the place of an old one that collapsed in September 2018. The bridge is 650-metre-long. Nickname of S.C. Bose: Netaji.

4. Deep-sea port at Tajpur: West Bengal to invest Rs 15K cr, project will create 25K jobs

West Bengal cabinet approves construction of 'state's first deep sea port in Tajpur'. It will be built at a cost of Rs 15,000 crore and will generate employment for 25,000 people. It will be the West Bengal's first deep seaport.

CM: Mamta Banerjee; Governor: Jagdeep Dhankhar



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Jammu and Kashmir

1. Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) SEHAT Scheme For J&K, 5 Lakh Health Insurance For 21 Lakh People

Already 6 lakh families of the state are getting the benefit of Ayushman Bharat Scheme. 21 lakh families will get the same benefits after the SEHAT scheme and benefits would be portable across all 24,148 hospitals enlisted under AB-PMJAY in India.

The PM-JAY was launched on September 23, 2018.

2. PM to launch PMJAY - SEHAT, health insurance scheme for Jammu-Kashmir on Dec 26

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch the PMJAY - SEHAT scheme stands for Social, Endeavour for Health and Telemedicine, a health insurance scheme for the Union Territory. All the inhabitants of J & K to get free cashless health cover upto 5 lakhs. Lieutenant Governor of J& K: Manoj Sinha

NCT of Delhi

1. PM will inaugurate India's first-ever driverless train operations on Delhi Metro's Magenta Line

After the start of driverless services on the Magenta Line between Janakpuri West to Botanical Garden, the Pink Line of Delhi Metro is expected to have driverless operations by the mid of 2021. These innovations will herald a new era of travelling comfort.

Delhi Metro started on 24 December 2002 & number of lines is 10

Lakshadweep

1. Lakshadweep becomes the first UT to become 100% organic

Lakshadweep after Sikkim became the first UT to become 100% organic as all the farming in the region is carried out without using pesticides and synthetic fertilizers. The entire island has been declared organic under the Participatory Guarantee System. Lieutenant governor of Lakshadweep: Praful K Patel.

Ladakh

1. Ladakh Lieutenant Governor (LG) virtually inaugurates the 2nd edition of Ladakh Literature Festival 2020

Ladakh LG RK Mathur virtually inaugurated the 2nd Ladakh Literature Festival on Dec 10. The 3 day festival will host a series of talks, importance of the region, ancient knowledge of Ladakh, Folk music, cultural Dance, geology and wildlife of Himalayas. Radha Krishna Mathur is the first LG of Ladakh UT.

2. Harsh Vardhan opens new India Meteorological Department's centre at Leh, Ladakh

Located at a height of 3500 meters, Meteorological Centre Leh will be the highest meteorological centre in India. It will cater to the various kinds of weather & climate needs of people & administration of Ladakh.

3. 1st service of Pawan Hans MI 17 Helicopter between Kargil to Srinagar started.

13 passengers were lifted from Kargil (Ladakh) to Srinagar (Jammu and Kashmir) and 14 from Srinagar to Kargil. The service will ease the issue of transportation during the winter season. The fare of this helicopter service is Rs 9,000 per passenger First LG: Ladakh - R K Mathur; Jammu and Kashmir - Manoj Sinha

4. MGNREGA helps in creating Ice Hockey Infrastructure at village level in Ladakh.

MGNREGA helped create 3 Ice Hockey Rinks at village level in Ladakh while two Ice Hockey Rinks have been constructed under Special Development Package. Stongday, Sapi, Purtikchey, Bodh Kharbu etc were some villages that got Ice Skating Rink. Ladakh hosted world's highest altitude women's hockey tournament

5. 'Losar' Festival celebrated In Leh to mark the beginning of Tibetan New Year.

'Losar' is celebrated to mark the beginning of the new year of the Buddhist community. It is celebrated in the 11th month of the Tibetan calendar, which can mean November, December, January or February. Tibetans in Himachal Pradesh celebrate this as well. The variation of the festival in Nepal is called Lhochhar.

6. LAHDC Kargil CEC Kargil Feroz Ahmad Khan laid the foundation stone of Agriculture Processing and Marketing Centre, Kurbathang

Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, LAHDC Kargil CEC Kargil Feroz Ahmad Khan laid the foundation stone of Agriculture Processing and Marketing Centre, Kurbathang and inaugurated Training and Awareness Camp for Farmers and Self Help Groups, SHGs. Ladakh comprises of two districts namely Leh and Kargil.



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Committees

1. Amit Shah to lead panel on Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose's 125th birth anniversary event

Centre appointed a panel headed by home minister Amit Shah to celebrate Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose's 125th birth anniversary to honour his contributions to the freedom struggle. The committee will start its working on 23th jan 2021. He was leader of Azad Hind Fauj/ INA; founded by Mohan singh.

2. Govt constitutes high-level ministerial committee for implementation of Paris Agreement

Government constituted a High-level Ministerial Committee for implementation of Paris Agreement. The Apex Committee for Implementation of Paris Agreement to be chaired by Environment Secretary. It aims to generate a coordinated response to climate change. C.K. Mishra - Secretary of MoEFCC.

3. Department of Science and Technology constitutes committee for conservation of Indian heritage by using futuristic technologies

DST has constituted an advisory committee to use futuristic & new age technologies for heritage conservation, documentation & digital restoration. It will be chaired by Prof.Santanu Chaudhury. Constituted under Frontier and Futuristic Technologies Division



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QUICK LEARNERS

BANKING

| POLICY/EXCHANGE RATE & RESERVE RATIO | PERCENTAGE |
|---|-------------------|
| Repo Rate | 4.00% |
| Reverse Repo Rate | 3.35% |
| Marginal Standing Facility Rate (MSF) | 4.25% |
| Bank Rate | 4.25% |
| Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) | 3.0% |
| Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR) | 18.0% |

Economy

| ORGANIZATION/ PARAMETERS | RATE/ FIGURES |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Reserve Bank of India | Predicts Indian economy to contract at 7.5% for FY 2020-21 |
| Fitch Solutions (India's GDP) | Forecast to -9.4% for FY21 |
| ADB (India's GDP) | Growth forecast to -8% for FY21 |
| Nomura | Predicts Indian economy in 2021 at 9.9% |
| SBI Ecowrap | India's GDP growth FY21 estimate to -7.4% |

APPOINTMENTS

| APPOINTMENT | POST |
|------------------------|--|
| Sandeep Kataria | Global CEO of Bata |
| Lt Gen Rajeev Chaudhry | Director General Border Roads |
| Varsha Joshi | National Dairy Development Board interim chairperson |
| Amitabh Jain | Chhattisgarh's new chief secretary |
| Uday Shankar | FICCI president |
| Anil Soni | CEO of The WHO Foundation |
| Malavika Hegde | CEO of Coffee Day Enterprises |
| Annika Sorenstam | president of International Golf Federation |
| Zena Wooldridge | World Squash Federation President |
| Anindya Banerjee | India's next Ambassador to Democratic People's Republic of Korea |
| Pramila Jayapal | Chair of Congressional Progressive Caucus |
| Sanmoy Chakrabarti | HDFC's Chief Risk Officer(CRO) |
| Uday Kotak | MD Kotak Mahindra Bank |

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Shashi Shekhar Vempati | Vice President of Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union |
| Ian De Souza | Bank of Baroda's chief financial officer |
| Sukhbir Singh Sandhu | NHAI chairman |
| Vice Admiral Rajat Datta | Next DG Armed Forces Medical Services |
| Prasanth Prabhakaran | YES SECURITIES Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer |
| Chetan Sharma | BCCI Chairman Of Selectors |
| Florin Citu | Prime minister of Romania |
| Vineet Agarwal | Assocham President |
| Subodh Kumar Jaiswal | DG CISF |
| Niranjan Banodkar | YES Bank's CFO |
| K Sivan | Secretary of Department of Space |
| Marisol Casado | President of World Triathlon |

AWARDS

| WINNER | AWARD |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Lou Holtz | Medal of Freedom |
| Ranjitsinh Disale | Global Teacher Prize 2020 |
| Bajrang Punia, Elavenil Valarivan | FICCI Sportsperson of the Year Awards |
| Invest India | United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD's) Investment Promotion Award 2020 |
| Indian Institute of Soil Science | King Bhumibol World Soil Day 2020 Award |
| Raj Kamal Jha | Rabindranath Tagore Literary Prize 2020 |
| Paul Sein Twa | Goldman Environmental Prize 2020 |
| Steel Authority of India Limited | Golden Peacock Environment Management Award 2020. |
| Lewandowski and Lucy Bronze | Win FIFA Player Of The Year Awards |
| Ratan Tata | ASSOCHAM Enterprise of the Century Award |
| Rajeev Taranath | SVN Rao National Award |
| Ratan Tata | 'Global Visionary of Sustainable Business and Peace' award |
| Narendra Modi | Legion of Merit |
| NTPC | CII-ITC Sustainability Awards 2020 |
| Air Force Sports Control Board | Best Company Promoting Sports at FICCI India Sports Awards 2020 |

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Rafael Nadal | Stefan Edberg Sportsmanship Award |
| Virat Kohli | Sir Garfield Sobers Award |
| Satish Vyas | Tansen Samman |
| V.K. Yadav | Eminent Engineer Award for the Year 2020 |
| Hemant Kumar Pandey | DRDO's "Scientist of the Year" award |

IMPORTANT DAYS

| DATE | DAY | THEME |
|------------|---|---|
| 1 December | World AIDS Day | Global solidarity, shared responsibility |
| 2 December | International Day for the Abolition of Slavery | NA |
| 2 December | National Pollution Control Day | NA |
| 2 December | World Computer Literacy Day | NA |
| 3 December | International Day of Persons with Disabilities | Building back better: towards an inclusive, accessible & sustainable post-COVID-19 world by, for & with persons with disabilities |
| 4 December | Indian Navy Day | Indian Navy Combat Ready, Credible & Cohesive |
| 4 December | International Day of Banks | NA |
| 4 December | Founding Day of Directorate of Revenue Intelligence | NA |
| 5 December | International Volunteers Day | Together We Can Through Volunteering |
| 5 December | World Soil Day | Keep soil alive, protect soil biodiversity |
| 7 December | Armed Forces Flag Day or the Flag Day of India | NA |
| 7 December | International Civil Aviation Day | Advancing Innovation for Global Aviation Development |
| 8 December | Raising Day - Army Service Corps | NA |
| 9 December | International Anti-Corruption Day | Recover with Integrity to Build Forward Better |

| | | |
|-------------|--|---|
| 10 December | International Day of Commemoration & Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide & of the Prevention of this Crime | NA |
| 10 December | Human Rights Day | Recover Better - Stand Up for Human Rights |
| 11 December | International Mountain Day | Mountain biodiversity 15% of the world's population lives in the mountains. |
| 12 December | International Universal Health Coverage Day | Health for All: Protect Everyone |
| 12 December | International Day of Neutrality | NA |
| 14 December | National Energy Conservation Day | NA |
| 18 December | International Migrants Day | Reimagining Human Mobility |
| 20 December | International Human Solidarity Day | NA |
| 22 December | National Mathematics Day | NA |
| 23 December | National Farmers Day | NA |
| 24 December | National Consumer Rights Day | NA |
| 25 December | Good Governance day | NA |
| 27 December | International Day of Epidemic Preparedness | NA |

OBITUARY

| OBITUARY | RELATED FIELD |
|----------------------------|---|
| N. Narasimhaiah | Senior TRS leader |
| Dave Prowse | British Actor |
| Kiran Maheshwari | Senior BJP leader and MLA from Rajsamand in Rajasthan |
| Papa Bouba Diop | Senegalese Footballer |
| Abhay Ganpathrai Bharadwaj | Politician |
| Frank Carney | Pizza Hut co-founder |
| Valery Giscard d'Estaing | Euro's Founding Father |

| | |
|--|---|
| Mahashay Dharampal Gulati | Owner & CEO of MDH |
| Dineshwar Sharma | Lakshadweep Administrator |
| Narinder Singh Kapany | Father of fibre optics |
| Kamatham Ram Reddy | TRS leader and former Andhra Pradesh Revenue Minister |
| Madhukar Gangadhar | Veteran Hindi writer |
| Peter Alliss | Golfer ; The 'Voice of Golf' on British television |
| Anusuya Maikhuri | Former Deputy Speaker Of Uttarakhand Assembly |
| Dorbala Viswanatha Sarma | Noted Sanskrit pandit and Sanskrit writer |
| Ravi Patwardhan | Veteran Hindi and Marathi actor |
| Dennis Ralston | American professional tennis player |
| Kinuko Idogawa | Japanese Volleyball Player |
| Alejandro Sabella | Argentine football player and manager |
| Manglesh Dabral | Noted Hindi poet and journalist |
| Paolo Rossi | Italian footballer player |
| Kim Ki-duk | South Korean filmmaker |
| Dharmalingam Ethiraj | Indian footballer |
| Vidyavachaspati Bannanje Govindacharya | Sanskrit scholar |
| Gerard Houllier | Former Liverpool, France coach |
| Roddam Narasimha | Eminent Aerospace scientist |
| UA Khader | Renowned Malayalam Writer |
| Ambrose Mandvulo Dlamini | Eswatini Prime Minister |
| R.N. Shetty | Businessman and Philanthropist |
| Prafull Vijayakar | Einstein of Homoeopathy |
| Madhav Govind Vaidya | First spokesperson of RSS |
| Motilal Vora | Senior Congress leader |
| Sugathakumari | Malayalam poet |
| John Edrich | Former England batsman |
| Shamsur Rahman Faruqi | Iconic Urdu poet and critic |
| Robin Jackman | Former England and Surrey bowler |
| Sunil Kothari | Dance historian |
| Pierre Cardin | French fashion designer |
| Indira Joseph Venniyoor | Veteran broadcaster |

Nikhil Nandy

Former Indian footballer

IMPORTANT STATIC & CURRENT INFO

INDIAN STATES, CAPITALS, CHIEF MINISTERS & GOVERNORS

| STATE | CAPITAL | CHIEF MINISTER | GOVERNOR |
|-------------------|--------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Andhra Pradesh | Amaravati | Y. S. Jaganmohan Reddy | Biswa Bhusan Harichandan |
| Arunachal Pradesh | Itanagar | Pema Khandu | Brigadier BD Mishra (retd) |
| Assam | Dispur | Sarabananda Sonowal | Jagdish Mukhi |
| Bihar | Patna | Nitish Kumar | Phagu Chauhan |
| Chhattisgarh | Raipur | Bhupesh Baghel | Anusuiya Uikey |
| Goa | Panaji | Pramod Sawant | Bhagat Singh Koshyari |
| Gujarat | Gandhi Nagar | Vijaybhai R. Rupani | Acharya Devvrat |
| Haryana | Chandigarh | Manohar Lal Khattar | Satyadev Narayan Arya |
| Himachal Pradesh | Shimla | Jai Ram Thakur | Bandaru Dattatraya |
| Jharkhand | Ranchi | Hemant Soren | Draupadi Murmu |
| Karnataka | Bengaluru | B S Yediyurappa | Vajubhai Rudabhai Vala |
| Kerala | Thiruvananthapuram | Pinarayi Vijayan | Arif Mohammed Khan |
| Madhya Pradesh | Bhopal | Shivraj Singh Chauhan | 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 | Tamilisai Soundararajan |
| 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 |

UNION TERRITORIES, LIEUTENANT GOVERNORS & ADMINISTRATORS

| Union Territory | Lt. Governor & Administrator |
|---|--|
| Andaman and Nicobar Island (UT) | Admiral D K Joshi (Lieutenant Governor) |
| Chandigarh (UT) | V.P. Singh Badnore (Administrator) |
| Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu (UT) | Praful Patel (Administrator) |
| Delhi (NCT) | Anil Baijal (Lieutenant Governor) |
| Jammu and Kashmir (UT) | Manoj Sinha (Lieutenant Governor) |
| Lakshadweep (UT) | Praful Patel (Administrator) |
| Puducherry (UT) | Kiran Bedi, IPS, (Retd.) (Lieutenant Governor) |
| Ladakh (UT) | Radha Krishna Mathur (Lieutenant Governor) |



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UNION MINISTERS, PORTFOLIO & CONSTITUENCY

| Union Minister | Portfolio | Constituency |
|----------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Narendra Modi | Ministry of personnel, public grievances and pensions | Varanasi, UP |
| Rajnath Singh | Ministry of Defence | Lucknow, UP |
| Amit Shah | Ministry of Home Affairs | Gandhinagar, Gujarat |
| Nitin Gadkari | Ministry of Road Transport and Highways Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium enterprises | Nagpur, Maharashtra |
| DV Sadananda Gowda | Ministry of Chemical and Fertilizers | Bangalore North, Karnataka |
| Nirmala Sitharaman | Ministry of Finance Ministry of Corporate Affairs | Rajya Sabha |
| Piyush Goyal | Ministry of Commerce and Industry Ministry of Railways Ministry of Consumer affairs, food and public distribution | Rajya Sabha (Maharashtra) |
| Narendra Singh Tomar | Ministry of agriculture and Farmers welfare Ministry of Rural Development Ministry of Panchayati Raj Ministry of Food Processing Industries | Morena, M. P |
| Ravi Shankar Prasad | Ministry of Law and Justice Ministry of communications Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology | Patna Sahib, Bihar |
| Thaawar Chand Gehlot | Ministry of Social justice and empowerment | Rajya Sabha (M.P) |
| Dr Subrahmanyam Jaishankar | Ministry of External Affairs | Rajya Sabha (Gujarat) |
| Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' | Ministry of Human Resource Development | Haridwar, Uttarakhand |
| Arjun Munda | Ministry of Tribal Affairs | Khunti, Jharkhand |
| Smriti Zubin Irani | Ministry of Women and child Development Ministry of Textiles | Amethi, UP |

| | | |
|-------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| Dr Harsh Vardhan | Ministry of Health and Family Welfare Ministry of Science and Technology Ministry of Earth Sciences | Chandni Chowk, Delhi |
| Prakash Javadekar | Ministry of environment, forest and climate change Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprise | Rajya Sabha (M.P) |
| Dharmendra Pradhan | Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas Ministry of Steel | Rajya Sabha (M.P) |
| Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi | Ministry of Minority Affairs | Rajya Sabha (Jharkhand) |
| Pralhad Joshi | Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs Ministry of coal Ministry of Mines | Dharwad, Karnataka |
| Dr Mahendra Nath Pandey | Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship | Chandauli, UP |
| Giriraj Singh | Ministry of Animal Husbandry, dairying and fisheries | Begusarai, Bihar |

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