

January 2021

BOLT

Monthly Current Affairs



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Banking & Finance

1. IFSCA becomes associate member of global lobby group International Organization of Securities Commissions(IOSCO)

Membership will provide IFSCA (regulator of financial institutions at IFSC) the platform to exchange information & learn from best practices of the regulators of other well established financial centres. IOSCO brings together world's securities regulators. GIFT IFSC: 1st international financial services centre in India.

2. RBI launches Digital Payments Index(DPI) to capture extent of digitisation of payments; DPI grew 2x in March 2020 v March 2018.

RBI-DPI has 5 broad parameters: Payment Enablers, Payment Infrastructure – Demand-side factors, Payment Infrastructure –Supply-side factors, Payment Performance and Consumer Centricity; March 2018 is the base period, with a DPI score of 100. DPI for March 2019 & March 2020 work out to 153.47 & 207.84.

3. RBI makes Legal Entity Identifier mandatory for large-value transactions in RTGS/NEFT from April

Mandatory LEI system for all payment transactions of value ₹50 crore & above undertaken by entities (non-individuals) using RBI-run Centralised Payment Systems. LEI is a 20-digit number used to uniquely identify parties to financial transactions worldwide. In India, it can be obtained from LEI Ltd, subsidiary of CCIL

4. RBI unveils guidelines for Payments Infrastructure Development Fund (PIDF) scheme to boost digital payments

An advisory council (AC) under RBI deputy governor BP Kanungo has been constituted for managing the fund. It will be operational for 3 years effective from January 1, 2021 & may be extended for 2 more years. Fund has a corpus of ₹345 crore. Fund aims to create payment points in Tier-3 to Tier-6 centres

5. CMS Info Systems to set up 3,000 ATMs for SBI by March; to invest Rs 200 crore

The outsourced model or Brown Level ATM (BLA) is managed by the service provider on behalf of bank. Most of these ATMs are offsite ATMs. CMS provides end-to-end ATM management service. Rs 200 crore will be for setting up & hire 2000 employees for managing. CMS Info Systems President Manjunath Rao

6. SMCB: First Urban Cooperative Bank in India to receive a commercial banking license under voluntary transition scheme

Shivalik Small Finance Bank (SSFB) will start its banking operations from April 2021. It has received the commercial banking license from banking regulator Reserve Bank of India (RBI). 22 year old Shivalik is the first & largest multi-state UCB in UP. SMCB: MD&CEO:Suveer Kumar Gupta; HQ:Saharanpur,UP

7. Bandhan Bank signs MoU with Indian Army to provide banking services to Army personnel

Bandhan Bank Shaurya Salary Account will have zero balance facility with 6% interest on balance above Rs.1 Lakh, unlimited free ATM transactions, waiver of issuance & annual charge on Shaurya Visa Platinum Debit Card, offers protection for self & assets etc. Bandhan Bank: MD & CEO:Chandra Shekhar Ghosh; HQ:Kolkata

8. RBI fully operationalised College of Supervisors to strengthen supervision

CoS will have a full-time Director supported by a 6 member Academic Advisory Council (AAC). N S Vishwanathan is the chairperson to the council. Rabi Narayan Mishra is the director. CoS was functioning in a limited way in virtual mode since May 2020.

9. IDFC Mutual Fund unveils new pan India campaign #PaisoKoRokoMat, Investor Awareness initiative

IDFC Mutual aims to shift the conversation regarding wealth creation from the traditional to the contemporary. Urges savers to overcome their inertia and become investors by exploring

the smart and modern mutual fund vehicle for their investments. IDFC Mutual is managed by IDFC AMC; CEO & MD: Vishal Kapoor

10. RBI to conduct Variable Rate Reverse Repo auction on Jan 15 for notified amount of Rs 2 lakh crores

In order to restore normal liquidity management operations in a phased manner, RBI to conduct variable rate reverse repo auction of Rs 2 lakh crore on Jan 15. Repo rate is the rate of interest rate at which the central bank lends short term money to banks. Usual duration of variable-rate term repo is 7, 14 & 28 days.

11. RBI cancels the licence of Osmanabad's Vasantdada Nagari Sahakari Bank; 99% depositors to get full deposits back

Continuance of bank is prejudicial to the interests of its depositors & it would be unable to pay its present depositors in full. It is now prohibited from conducting business of 'banking' as defined in Section 5(b) read with Section 56 of BRA, 1949. Every depositor will get deposits up to Rs.5 lakh from DICGC.

12. NSE launches futures & options contracts for Nifty Financial Services index, third index which has its own equity derivatives.

Index consists of 20 stocks & is designed to reflect behaviour & performance of Indian financial market, which includes banks, financial institutions, etc. This is the 1st time that the exchange has made available weekly futures for stock index derivatives. Currently NSE offers only Nifty 50 & Nifty Bank Index.

13. RBI's 22nd Financial Stability Report: Banks gross NPA may rise to 22 years high of 13.5% by September 2021

Report reflects an assessment of Sub-Committee of the Financial Stability and Development Council on risks to financial stability in country. CRAR of SCBs improved to 15.8% in Sep 2020 from 14.7% in March 2020; GNPA ratio declined to 7.5% from 8.4%. Under severe stress scenario, GNPA ratio may escalate to 14.8%

14. RBI slaps ₹2 crore fine on Deutsche Bank AG for breach of norms on deposit rates

Non-compliance with certain provisions of directions issued by RBI contained in RBI (Interest Rate on Deposits) Directions, 2016. Penalty imposed under provisions of Section 47 A(1)(c) read with Section 46 (4)(i) of Banking Regulation Act, 1949. Deutsche Bank AG/India: HQ: Mumbai; CEO: Kaushik Shaparia

15. IDFC First Bank enters credit card business with lowest finance charges of 9% on revolving credit for eligible cardholders.

Interest of 36% annually (40% by other lenders) on revolving credit & nil interest on cash withdrawal for first 45 days. But cardholders will have to pay a nominal fee of Rs 250 per cash withdrawal against Rs.500 charged by others. IDFC First Bank: MD&CEO: V. Vaidyanathan; HQ: Mumbai.

16. IIFL Finance, Standard Chartered enter into co-lending partnership

Fairfax & CDC-backed IIFL Finance's wholly-owned subsidiary IIFL Home Finance Ltd & SCB co-lending arrangement is for extending MSME loans. Under Co-Lending Model (CLM) scheme banks can provide loans along with NBFCs to priority sector borrowers. IIFL Finance is retail-oriented NBFC with 90% loan under retail.

17. Axis Bank launches 'Aura'- a credit card exclusively loaded with affordable health and wellness solutions

Aimed at health conscious individuals, these features will be powered by Poshvine and other specialists such as Decathlon, Practo (4 free online consult/month), Fitternity, IndushealthPlus, 1MG etc., to offer a complete and unique health & wellness solution. Axis Bank: CEO: Amitabh Chaudhry; HQ: Mumbai.

18. YES Bank launches new initiative for MSMEs, offers Rs 5 crore loan without collateral to startups

Offers: linkages to over 700 industry associations via YES BizConnect; YES Spark offers collateral-free funding up to Rs.5 crore; advisory & wealth management solutions; easy borrowing channels; insurance products; sweep-in facility etc. 5 elements of proposition: borrow, save, simplify, partner & protect

19. 2020 'Too big to fail' list: SBI, ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank remain as domestic systemically important banks (D-SIBs)

According to analysts, too big to fail is a phrase used to describe a bank or company that's so entwined in the economy that its failure would be catastrophic. D-SIB framework requires RBI to disclose names of banks designated as D-SIBs from 2015. D-SIBs have additional CET1 requirement. It is 0.6% for SBI.

20. In its first, ICICI Bank launches 'InstaFX' mobile app to help customers obtain Forex Prepaid Card swiftly

The InstaFX app enables the authorised money changers, who are partners of the Bank, to complete the KYC verification and validation of customers digitally and on a real-time basis. 'ICICI Bank Forex Prepaid Card' gets activated swiftly within a few hours. ICICI is first in India to offer such facility to money changers

21. Bajaj Finance to enter payment solutions market with Bajaj Pay

'Bajaj Pay' will be an integrated payment platform comprising of UPI, PPI, EMI card and credit card options & will be launched in the fourth quarter of FY21. Would also be launching 'Bajaj Pay for Merchants' app, which will cater to over 100,000 merchants. Bajaj Finance: HQ:Pune; CEO:Sanjiv Bajaj

22. Mastercard launches one-stop resource site to support digital transformation of SMEs in Asia Pacific

As COVID-19 drives a rapid and lasting shift to e-commerce & contactless payments, the one-stop center features guides on digital transformation, e-learning courses, information about Mastercard products and services for SMEs, cyber security insights etc. Microsite: Digital Acceleration for Small Businesses

23. NSE remains world's largest derivatives exchange for 2nd consecutive year in 2020.

According to Futures Industry Association, NSE was largest in terms of number of contracts traded. It was also fourth in the world in cash equities by number of trades by the World Federation of Exchanges (WFE) for calendar year 2020. Vikram Limaye is MD & CEO of NSE

24. Airtel Payments Bank introduces Safe Pay to curb online frauds

When customers transact through UPI or net-banking using Airtel Payments Bank, Airtel Safe Pay is an additional wall that will prevent online frauds. It is free of cost, offers protection against phishing, stolen credentials or passwords and phone cloning. Airtel Payments Bank: MD & CEO:Anubrata Biswas; HQ:New Delhi.

25. RBI imposes Rs 2 crore monetary penalty on Standard Chartered Bank

This pertains to directions contained in frauds classification and reporting rule by commercial banks. Penalty imposed under provisions of Section 47A(1)(c) read with Section 46 (4)(i) of the Banking Regulation Act for delays in reporting of frauds to RBI. SCB India: HQ: Mumbai; CEO:Zarin Daruwala

26. RBI proposes 4-tier structure for tighter regulation of NBFCs

In its discussion paper on revised regulatory framework for NBFCs, the RBI has said the regulatory and supervisory framework of NBFCs should be based on a four-layered structure: Base Layer, Middle Layer, Upper Layer and a possible Top Layer NBFCs are licensed under Section 45 IA of RBI Act, 1934

27. UAE central bank slaps over Rs 13 cr monetary sanction on Bank of Baroda for violating anti-money laundering law.

The monetary sanction on Bank of Baroda, GCC Operations, Dubai for deficiencies in compliance of Federal Decree Law of 2018 on Anti Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism and Financing of Illegal Organisations. Bank of Baroda GCC Operations CEO is Ananda Kumar.

28. HSBC inaugurates International Banking Unit (IBU) at GIFT City near Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

HSBC is one of earliest global financial institutions setting up a branch at GIFT City and first bank to get a licence from the newly set up International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA). UK based HSBC has been present in India for 160 years. HSBC Bank India: CEO: Surendra Rosha; HQ: Mumbai.

29. Repco Bank bags three awards at the Frontiers In Cooperative Banking Awards (FCBA) 2020.

Repco Bank renders services to rehab & upliftment of repatriates from Burma and Sri Lanka. The awards include women leader of the year award for Repco Bank MD RS Isabella, Best Digital Bank Award, and Best Fraud Control Initiative among co-operative banks. Repco Headquarters T. Nagar, Chennai. Founded in 1969.

30. RBI extends Rs 7,000-crore special liquidity assistance to DBS Bank

Funds will be used by DBS Bank India to meet its short-term funding needs after the acquisition of Lakshmi Vilas Bank (LVB). This funding may be charged with interest rates close to or linked to the repo rate, at which the RBI usually lends to banks. DBS Bank India: CEO: Surojit Shome; HQ: Mumbai.

31. RBI cancels licence of Kolhapur-based Shivam Sahakari Bank

Licence of Maharashtra-based Shivam Sahakari Bank has been canceled by the RBI as it does not have adequate capital and earning prospects. With cancellation of licence the process of paying the depositors as per the DICGC Act, 1961 will be set in motion. Each depositor in bank is insured upto a maximum of Rs. 5,00,000



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Economy

1. Govt extends benefit of RoDTEP scheme (tax refund scheme) to all export goods from Jan 1, 2021 to boost export

It will now refund to exporters embedded central, state & local duties or taxes that were not being rebated or refunded. Rates would be based on G K Pillai committee recommendation. RoDTEP launched in 2020 was expected to be limited to 3 sectors initially. RoDTEP replaced MEIS scheme that was not WTO compliant.

2. FSSAI's new policy limits trans fats to 2% in all oils & fats by Jan 2022

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India announced that all edible refined oils, vanaspati, bakery shortening, margarines, vegetable fat spreads and mixed fat spreads may only contain 3% or less trans fats by Jan 2021 & 2% or less by Jan 2022. Partially hydrogenated vegetable oils (PHVOs) source of trans fat

3. Bajaj Auto now world's most valuable two-wheeler brand: Crosses Rs 1 lakh crore market cap mark

It became the first two-wheeler company globally to cross a market capitalisation of Rs 1 lakh crore (around USD 13.6 billion). Bajaj Auto has achieved this milestone as it celebrates the 75th year of its operations. Bajaj Auto: HQ - Pune; Chairman - Rahul Bajaj; Founded - 1945.

4. Madhya Pradesh & Andhra Pradesh rewarded for completing three out of four citizen centric reforms.

Financial assistance of ₹1,004 crore given by Fin Min under Scheme of "Special Assistance to States for Capital Expenditure" as they completed the One Nation, One Ration Card Reforms, Ease of Doing Business Reforms, and Urban Local Bodies Reforms. Power Sector Reform is the other reform.

5. India's 2020-21 GDP seen contracting 7.7%: Govt's first advance estimate by National Statistical Office (NSO)

Contraction from a growth rate of 4.2% in 2019-20 mainly due to Covid-19 impact. Contraction in almost all sectors except agri & electricity generation. Advance estimates of GDP are released before Union Budget & aids in budget-making process. Agri & elec gen growth rate estimated at 3.4% & 2.7%.

6. Indian economy to rebound with 8.9% growth in fiscal 2022: IHS Markit

According to IHS Markit, Indian economy is likely to rebound with 8.9% growth in the FY beginning Apr '21. The National Statistical Organisation predicted that the economy would contract 7.7% in the current FY. Economy suffered a severe contraction in 2020. IHS Markit CEO: Lance Uggla. HQ: London, UK.

7. Indian Railways to operate trains at speed of 130 Kmph along the Golden Quadrilateral and Golden Diagonal sections

1,280 km length out of 1,612 Km in GQ-GD route enhanced. This covers the entire GQ-GD route over South Central Railway, except Vijayawada - Duvvada section, where signaling up-gradation work is in progress. GQ-GD connects 4 major metros Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai & Chennai.

8. India's GDP to record 10.1% expansion year-on-year in FY22, monetary policy to be neutral from accommodative in August 2021: ICRA

FY22's value of GDP will only mildly surpass the 2019-20 level. It also sees inflation exceeding the mid-point of MPC's medium target of 4% for third consecutive year. ICRA pegged the GDP fall at 7.8% this financial year. ICRA: HQ: Gurugram; CEO: N. Sivaraman.

9. Kyrgyzstan election: Sadyr Japarov wins presidency with landslide

The Central Election Commission said Mr Japarov had won 79% of votes cast. He was serving as acting prime minister of Kyrgyzstan in the interim government following the resignation of Sooronbay Jeenbekov amidst electoral protests. Kyrgyzstan: Capital: Bishkek; Currency: Kyrgyzstani som

10. Kerala becomes 8th State to complete ease of doing business reforms; Additional borrowing permission of Rs. 2,373 crore granted

Reform includes completion of first assessment of 'District Level Business Reform Action Plan', elimination of various requirements by businesses & implementation of computerized central random inspection system. 8 States have been granted Rs.23149 crore. Kerala: CM:Pinarayi Vijayan; Governor:Arif Mohammad Khan.

11. Digit Insurance becomes first start-up to enter the unicorn club in 2021 with \$1.9 billion valuation

Digit is an insurance start-up, founded with the aim of making insurance simple. It has a portfolio of products across motor, travel, property and health insurance. The insurer uses technology to simplify processes for their customers. It is a part of the sandbox initiative of IRDA

12. India's forex reserves up by \$758 million to lifetime high of \$586.082 billion

foreign currency assets (FCAs), a major component of the overall reserves, rose by \$150 million to \$541.791 billion. The country's reserve position with the IMF rose by \$35 million to \$5.181 billion. The gold reserves climbed by \$568 million to \$37.594 bn. Special drawing rights with the IMF increased by \$5M to \$1.515Bn

13. General Motors To Invest C\$1 Billion In Canada Plant To Manufacture Electric Vans

General Motors Co & labor union Unifor have reached a tentative deal for the automaker to invest nearly C\$1 billion (\$785.42 million) in its CAMI Assembly Plant in Ingersoll, Ontario, to manufacture commercial electric vans (EV600). Capital: Ottawa; Currency: Canadian Dollar; PM:Justin Trudeau

14. PM announces Startup India Seed Fund Scheme of Rs 1000 cr for startups

The government will launch a Rs 1,000-crore seed fund for startups called Startup India Seed Fund will help startups with the initial capital for growth and operations. The new seed fund for startups comes after the Ministry of Electronics&Information. Union minister of MeitY-Ravi Shankar Prasad

15. CARE lowers Centre's fiscal deficit projection to 7.8% of GDP

CARE Ratings has revised downwards its projection of the Centre's fiscal deficit to 7.8 % of GDP during FY21 against its earlier estimate of 9-9.5 %. Combined effect of lower revenues & higher expenditure is likely to push the fiscal deficit to 7.8% of GDP Care Ratings HQ: Mumbai; CEO:Ajay Mahajan

16. FM Nirmala Sitharaman launches the Union Budget Mobile App as India gears up for first paperless budget

The government has launched the app for all Budget 2021-related documents that will be made available after the Finance Minister's speech on February 1, to provide easy & hassle-free access to all Budget 2021-related information, documents Article 112 prescribes for Annual Financial Statement

17. Overseas investment by Indian companies dips 42% to \$1.45 billion in December: RBI data

In the year-ago period, companies in India had invested \$2.51 billion in their foreign firms (joint ventures / wholly-owned units). In November 2020, the total outward foreign direct investment (OFDI) was \$1.06 billion, down by 27% from a month-ago period. \$775.41 million was in the form of equity infusion.

18. Centre releases 2nd basic grants instalment of Rs 12,351 crore to 18 states for Rural Local Bodies (RLBs).

Grants are released as per recommendations of 15th Finance Commission. It recommended two types of grants basic and tied -to the RLBs. First instalment of basic grants worth Rs.18199 was released in June 2020 & tied grants worth Rs.15187.50 as well. States should transfer this to RLBs within 10 working days.

19. India to become Fastest Growing Economy in next 2-years as per IMF

While presenting the Economic Survey 2021, Chief Economic Adviser Krishnamurthy Subramanian stated that India will become the fastest growing economy in the world in the next two years as per the International Monetary Fund. India is to have Current Account Surplus of 2% of GDP in FY 2021

20. India's real GDP to record a 11 per cent growth in Financial Year 2021-22: Economic Survey

The Economic Survey tabled in the Parliament projects India's real GDP to record a 11 per cent growth in Financial Year 2021-22 and nominal GDP to grow by 15.4 per cent, the highest since independence, as nation is witnessing a V-Shaped Economic Recovery. V-shaped recovery is characterized by quick & sustained recovery

21. National Statistical Office released 1st Revised Estimates of National Income, Consumption Exp, Saving & Capital Formation

NSO has released 1st Revised Estimates(RE) for FY 2019-20 along with 2nd RE for FY 2018-19. Nominal GDP- estimated at ₹203.51 lakh cr for 2019-20; ₹188.87 lakh cr for 2018-19. Real GDP - ₹145.69 lakh cr for 2019-20; ₹140.03 lakh for 2018-19. GNI = GDP + Net primary income from ROW (Receipts less payments).



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The advertisement features a dark blue background on the left with the OliveBoard edge logo and text. On the right, there is an illustration of two people, a man and a woman, standing next to a large digital screen. The screen displays a man working on a laptop and a woman holding a smartphone. The screen also shows a pie chart and some text, suggesting a data analysis or educational interface.

National

1. PM reviews projects worth over Rs 1 lakh crore in 34th PRAGATI meeting.

Programmes and grievances pertaining to UP, MP, Rajasthan, J & K, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Delhi, Haryana, Gujarat and Dadra and Nagar Haveli and two centrepiece government programmes - Ayushman Bharat and Jal Jeevan Mission were reviewed. PRAGATI - Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation.

2. Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah released inaugural issue of "National Police K-9 Journal"

First such publication in the country on the subject of Police Service K9s (PSKs) i.e. Police Dogs. It is a step in creating an ecosystem in the country to train & learn on augmenting this vital resource. The biannual journal will be released in April & Oct. A special 'Police K9 Cell' was established in November 2019.

3. IOC launches India's first Remote Monitoring & Operation Centre for Tracking of Indian Oil's Refinery Gas Turbines

Set up in Hyderabad by BHEL-GE Gas Turbine Services (BGGTS), a joint venture of BHEL and General Electric. It will analyse operational data from 27 gas turbines at 8 Indian Oil Corporation refineries across the country. IOC chairman S.M.Vaidya

4. TRIFED initiates Marketing & Logistics intervention for promoting products of North – Eastern region

TRIFED under Ministry of tribal Affairs has formulated a proposal in which it will collaborate with Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) & India Post to implement a successful marketing and logistic intervention for promoting the NER. Tribal Co-operative Marketing Federation of India formed in 1987

5. Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways starts Sagarmala Seaplane Services (SSPS) project with potential airline operators.

Started under a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) framework, which will be implemented & executed through Sagarmala Development Company Ltd. It will be initiated on select routes, including Delhi, Mumbai & Surat. Services will soon begin at Yamuna riverfront. Seaplane service in operation at Kevadia & Sabarmati riverfront.

6. Denmark's Oscar nominee 'Another Round' to be opening movie at 51st International Film Festival of India in Goa.

Thomas Vinterberg's Another Round, starring Mads Mikkelsen, will be the opening film at 51st IFFI. It will close with India Premier of historical drama 'Wife of a Spy' by Kiyoshi Kurosawa, who bagged Silver Lion for Best director at Venice film festival. The festival will also mark world premier of "Mehrunisa"

7. Ramesh Pokhriyal, Smriti Irani launch 'Toycathon 2021' to promote manufacturing of indigenous toys

Conceptualize new & innovative toys using local material which are economical, affordable, safe & environment friendly; 2 categories: for online toys & another for physical toys. Students & faculty members participating can get reward up to Rs.50 lakhs. Toy market in India is \$1 bn but India imports 80% of toys.

8. Boris Johnson cancels Republic Day visit to India over COVID-19 crisis in U.K.

It is cancelled in view of the pandemic which has escalated in UK because of the new variant of coronavirus. An invitation to be Republic Day chief guest is symbolic from the Indian government's perspective. UK was chosen for ties post-Brexit. Johnson would have been the 6th leader from UK to be Chief Guest

9. Indigenously designed ballastless tracks to be used for high-speed RRTS trains

National Capital Region Transport Corporation will use these tracks for India's first Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS). Will be suitable for high-speed trains (up to 180 kmph) ; require

low maintenance. To be first used on 17 km Sahibabad-Duhai section. India's first RRTS corridor between Delhi and Meerut.

10. Argentine filmmaker Pablo Cesar to head 51st IFFI's International jury

Known for his contribution to African cinema with films like: Equinox, the Garden of the Roses, Los dioses de agua & Aphrodite, the Garden of the Perfumes. Other jury members: Sri Lanka's Prasanna, Austria's Abu Bakr, Bangladesh's Rubaiyat Hossain & Priyadarshan IFFI will be held from January 16 to January 24.

11. Bureau of Indian Standards celebrated the 74th foundation day.

Union Minister Shri Piyush Goyal inaugurated the toy testing facility at BIS central laboratory and announced the launch of Certificate courses on Assaying & Hallmarking & quality control personnel. BIS(1986): DG: Pramod Kumar Tiwari; HQ: New Delhi

12. PM Modi to inaugurate & dedicate to the nation 306 km New Rewari - New Madar Section of Western Dedicated Freight Corridor

The new section situated in Haryana & Rajasthan consists of 9 newly built stations. PM Modi will also flag off world's first Double Stack Long Haul 1.5km container train hauled by electric traction from Haryana's Ateli to Kishangarh in Rajasthan. Western DFC (1504 Route km) and Eastern DFC (1856 route km).

13. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh Launches Online Portal for Items to be Purchased Against Firm Demand (AFD) from CSD

It (<https://afd.csdindia.gov.in/>) aims to enable about 45 lakh Canteen Stores Department beneficiaries including Serving & Retired persons from Armed Forces and Serving Civilian Defence employees to purchase AFD-I items from the comfort of their homes. The portal was developed by National Informatics Centre.

14. India's 'Institutions Of Eminence' Can Now Set Up Campuses Overseas.

The new UGC guidelines have been issued in line with the new National Education Policy (NEP) as per which foreign universities will be allowed to set up campuses in India and top Indian institutes in foreign countries. Education Ministry had launched the IoE scheme in 2018

15. PM to address valedictory function of 2nd National Youth Parliament Festival.

Objective of NYPF is to hear the voice of youth between 18 & 25 years of age, who are allowed to vote & will join various careers in coming years, including public services. First NYPF was organised from from 12 January to 27 February 2019 The finals of 2nd NYPF is held in Central Hall of Parliament.

16. Bangladesh to be Country in Focus of 51st International Film Festival

Country in Focus is a special segment that recognizes the cinematic excellence & contributions of the country. 51st IFFI will showcase four films in this section: Jibondhuli, Meghmallar, Under Construction and Sincerely Yours, Dhaka. IFFI founded in 1952, is a significant film festival in Asia.

17. Air India creates a record, Longest direct flight with all-woman cockpit crew lands in Bengaluru

Air India's inaugural San Francisco-Bengaluru flight, with an all-women cockpit crew at the helm, landed in India on January 11. Crew: Capt Zoya Aggarwal, Capt Papagari Thanmai, Capt Akansha Sonaware & Capt Shivani. The 17-hour flight is AI's longest direct route.

18. 24th National Youth Festival

National Youth Festival is celebrated every year from 12th to 16th January to commemorate the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. Objective is to bring youth of country together to showcase talents. 'YUVAAH - Utsah Naye Bharat Ka' is theme of this year. Organized by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports

19. Union minister Nitin Gadkari to launch eco-friendly, non-toxic 'Vedic paint' developed by KVIC

Called "Khadi Prakritik Paint" is a first-of-its-kind product, with anti-fungal & anti-bacterial properties, free from heavy metals. Based on cow dung as its main ingredient, it is cost-

effective, odorless & is certified by Bureau of Indian Standards. Kumarappa National Handmade Paper Institute, Jaipur developed it.

20. First time in history, Union Budget 2021 to be paperless

The decision has been taken as several people (approximately 100) would be required to stay at the printing press for around a fortnight amid the COVID-19 fear. Budget papers are usually printed at the ministry's in-house printing press in the North Block. The traditional 'Halwa' ceremony is not likely to take place.

21. Tesla sets up India subsidiary in Bengaluru, names 3 directors ahead of India launch

Tesla registered its Indian subsidiary "Tesla India Motors and Energy Private Ltd" in Bengaluru. Vaibhav Taneja, Venkatrangam Sreeram, and David Jon Feinstein are directors of the new entity. Its authorized share capital is INR 15.00 lakh. Tesla: CEO: Elon Musk; HQ: Palo Alto, California, USA.

22. Harsh Vardhan inaugurates first Grand Finale of Red Ribbon Quiz competition organized by the NACO and MoHFW

National and State AIDS control societies have been conducting quiz competitions to actively engage members of the Red Ribbon Clubs (RRCs) in disseminating the information related to HIV/AIDS, adolescent health, mental health etc. The finals were inaugurated. NACO has established 12500 RRCs.

23. International Film Festival of India (IFFI) 2021 to celebrate the work of legendary filmmaker Satyajit Ray

Five of his classics—Charulata (1964), Ghare Baire (1984), Pather Panchali (1955), Shatranj Ke Khilari (1977) and Sonar Kella (1974) will be showcased. 12 films for Festival Kaleidoscope & 50 films for World Panorama section were unveiled too. A total of 224 films will be screened at 51st IFFI

25. CSIR-National Institute of Science Communication and Policy Research: new institution to further strengthen science communication

Harsh Vardhan inaugurated CSIR-NIScPR formed after merging CSIR-NISCAIR & CSIR-NISTADS. CSIR-NISCAIR publishes popular science magazines & journals; CSIR-NISTADS has long journey in Policy research. Merger will lead to becoming globally respected Think Tank. CSIR-NISCAIR manages largest & oldest National Science library.

26. UGC asks universities to set up International Affairs office on campus to promote India as a global study destination

Establishment of the office for International affairs in each university will be an indispensable part of the internalisation of higher education in India. National Education Policy 2020 emphasized developing a global outreach of higher education. Chairman of UGC: Dhirendra Pal Singh

27. PM Narendra Modi flags off 8 trains to Statue of Unity in Gujarat's Kevadiya

Trains will connect Kevadiya to Varanasi, Dadar, Ahmedabad, Delhi's Hazrat Nizamuddin, Rewa, Chennai & Pratapnagar. It will facilitate seamless connectivity, increasing tourism & help in changing the lives of the tribal community of the region.

Gujarat: CM: Vijay Rupani; Governor: Acharya Devvrat

28. Cochin International Airport commissions floating solar power plants.

With a capacity of 452 KWh plants over two artificial lakes, airport's total installed capacity has risen to 40 MWp helping it to produce around 1.60 lakh units of power a day.

Technical assistance was provided by French company CIEL TERRA. CIAL became the world's first solar-powered airport in 2015.

29. Railways renames 12311/12312 Howrah-Kalka Mail as 'Netaji Express' ahead of Netaji's 125th birth anniversary.

Indian Railways renamed one of its oldest trains, Howrah-Kalka Mail (started in 19th century), as 'Netaji Express' ahead of Jan 23 birth anniversary. It is said that Bose took this

train from Gomoh in Bihar after he escaped from his house in Kolkata in 1941. Center had announced Jan 23 will be celebrated as Parakram Diwas

30. India's largest multi-modal logistic park to come up at Virochan Nagar in Ahmedabad district of Gujarat

Gujarat government and Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd (APSEZ) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on Friday for setting up India's largest multi-modal logistics park, the completion is expected within three years by 2023. the park will have textiles, bulk, e-commerce and BTS facilities

31. NTPC declares 150 MW unit of Kameng Hydro-Electric Project commercially operational

State-run power producer NTPC said 150 mega watt (MW) unit of Kameng Hydro-Electric Project of its subsidiary North Eastern Electric Power Corporation is commercially operational. commissioned and commercial capacity of NTPC group has become 63,785 MW NTPC Ltd Founded: 1975 Headquarters: New Delhi, India

32. National Girl Child Day | Haridwar teen Shrishti Goswami to be one-day CM of Uttarakhand on January 24

Shristi Goswami, a 19-yr-old Haridwar-based student, is set to become Chief Minister of Uttarakhand for 1 day on National Girl Child Day, which falls on January 24.

She will administer from Gairsain, the summer capital of state, reviewing various schemes Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat Governor: Baby Rani Maurya

33. Amit Shah Chairs North Eastern Council Plenary Meeting In Shillong

Union Home Minister Amit Shah chaired the 69th plenary meeting of the North Eastern Council in Shillong, Meghalaya. The meeting is to be held over 2-days period. NEC is the nodal agency for the economic and social development of the North Eastern Region Meghalaya Chief Minister: Conrad K Sangma

34. ISRO to launch customised space-themed t-shirts, mugs, other merchandise

Along the lines of American space agency NASA, ISRO too is mulling to come out with customised keepsakes based on ISRO missions, as such items are the most sought-after by space enthusiasts. ISRO through these collectibles hopes to create awareness.

ISRO: Chairman: Kailasavadivoo Sivan; Headquarter: Bengaluru

35. Ministry of Tribal Affairs resumes Aadi Mahotsav with a 10 Days National Mini Aadi Mahotsav,

The first Aadi Mahotsav post the pandemic is taking place between January 20-January 30, 2021 at GPRC Complex, New Moti Bagh, New Delhi. The Aadi Mahotsav – A Celebration of the Spirit of Tribal Culture, Crafts, Cuisine and Commerce – begun in 2017. Mega Aadi Mahotsav will take place at Dilli Haat from 1-15 Feb.

36. SpiceJet begins Delhi to Sikkim's Pakyong daily flight under RCS-UDAN

SpiceJet will be the first and only airline to offer daily direct air connectivity between Delhi and the northeastern state & will use a Bombardier 400 aircraft on the new route, which is offered under the government's regional connectivity scheme UDAN.

SpiceJet: CMD: Ajay Singh; HQ: Gurugram.

37. Nation celebrates 72nd Republic Day

Main function will be organized at Rajpath in National Capital where President Ram Nath Kovind will take salute of the parade. There will be no chief guest this year. Rafale aircraft to feature for first time. Parade distance has been curtailed due to Covid. In a first, Bangladesh army to take part in Republic Day parade

38. Virtual Bharat Parv 2021 to be inaugurated by Lok Sabha Speaker Shri Om Birla.

Being organised on www.bharatparv2021.com from 26 to 31 Jan, showcasing India's rich tourism destinations, cuisine, handicrafts, cultural performances etc. Ministry of Tourism from 2016 has been organising this in front of the ramparts of the Red Fort.

Minister of Culture and Tourism: Prahlad Singh Patel

39. TCS surpasses Reliance to become most valued domestic firm; briefly beats Accenture to become most-valued IT company in world.

Market capitalisation of companies changes daily with movement in their stock prices. TCS' market valuation on BSE soared beyond \$170 billion on Monday, holding the position of the world's most valuable IT company for a short period. TCS in March 2019 also reclaimed status as most valued firm

40. UP becomes India's 1st state with 2 expressway airstrips for fighter planes

With the completion of construction of a 3,300-metre-long airstrip near Kurebhar on Purvanchal Expressway, Uttar Pradesh has become the first state in India with two airstrips on expressways to facilitate emergency landing and take-off of fighter planes. The Lucknow-Agra Expressway in UP also has an airstrip.

41. Election Commission rolls out digital voter ID cards ' e-EPIC (Electronic Electoral Photo Identity Card)'

The e-EPIC is a secure portable document format (PDF) version of the EPIC which can be downloaded on mobile or in a self-printable form on the computer. Voter can store the card on his/her mobile, upload it as a PDF on Digi locker or print it & self-laminate 'PV' physical voter card would continue to be in use.

42. Bullet train project: Consortium of L&T, Japanese IHI Infrastructure Systems bags Rs 1,390 crore contract for steel bridges

It is estimated that about 70,000 MT of steel will be used for the fabrication of the 4.5km bridges for the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Rail Corridor. In total, 28 steel bridges with individual spans varying from 60 metre to 130 metre will be constructed. The bullet train will be India's first high-speed rail line

43. PM chairs 35th PRAGATI interaction

It is the ICT based multi-modal platform for Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation, involving Central and State governments. Nine projects worth Rs.54,675 crore concerning 15 states and PM Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Pariyojana were reviewed. Till 34th PRAGATI, 283 projects of Rs.13.14 lakh crore reviewed

44. Bharti Airtel emerges as first telecom operator in country to demonstrate 5G readiness

Since 5G spectrum bands in 3.5 GHz is yet to be auctioned, what Bharti did was that it used spectrum sharing technologies and operated 5G technology using its existing spectrum bands like 1800/2100/2300 MHz and sub-GHz bands 800/900 MHz.

Demonstrated 5G service over a commercial network in Hyderabad.

45. President of India launches countrywide Pulse Polio Programme for 2021

President of India launched the Pulse Polio Programme for 2021 by administering polio drops to children less than 5 years old. Around 17 crore children of less than 5 years of age will be given polio drops to sustain polio free status of the country. Polio National Immunization Day is observed on 31st January 2021

46. 14 new minor forest produce items included under minimum support price scheme to provide fair prices to tribal gatherers

Govt has decided to include 14 new minor forest produce items under the mechanism for marketing of minor forest produce through MSP. Newly included items are Tasar Cocoon, elephant apple dry, bamboo shoot, malkangani seed and wild dry mushroom among others. It aims to provide a social safety net and to aid empowerment.

47. Prime Minister addressed 125th Anniversary celebrations of Prabuddha Bharata

Prime Minister addressed 125th Anniversary celebrations of Prabuddha Bharata. It is a monthly journal of the Ramakrishna order started by Swami Vivekananda in 1896. The event was organized by Advaita Ashrama situated at Mayavati, Uttarakhand. Its publication was started from Chennai.

International

1. U.S. Congress passes 'Malala Yousafzai Scholarship Act' for Pakistani women

The bill requires the USAID to award at least 50% of scholarships under a Pakistan-based higher education scholarship program to Pakistani women from 2020 to 2022. Bill requires USAID to consult with & leverage investments by the Pakistani private sector United States Agency for International Development formed in 1961

2. Central African Republic president Touadera wins reelection; elected for 2nd term.

Faustin-Archange Touadera was reelected with more than 53% votes. He has been in power since 2016, but has struggled to seize control of vast parts of the nation from armed militias. CAR, a producer of gold and diamonds, has a population of 4.7 million. CAR: Capital: Bangui; Currency: Central African CFA Franc

3. Pakistan successfully test-fires indigenously developed weapons rocket system

Pakistan conducted test-flight of an indigenously developed Guided Multi Launch Rocket System, capable of delivering conventional warheads, with a range of 140 km. The Weapon System can give capability of precision target engagement deep in enemy territory Pakistan President: Arif Alvi. PM: Imran Khan.

4. Indian-American Raj Iyer becomes U.S. Army's first CIO

Indian-American Dr. Raj Iyer became 1st Chief Information Officer of the US Army, after the Pentagon created the position in July '20. Equivalent in rank to a 3-star General, he will supervise an annual budget of \$16 bn for the US Army's IT operations. Previously, he was the MD at the Deloitte Consulting LLP.

5. Joe Biden appoints Indian-American Sumona Guha as senior Director for South Asia

Biden – Harris transition team announced the appointment of Indian American Sumona Guha, a former Foreign Service officer, to the role of Senior Director for South Asia at the National Security Council. She will succeed Trump administration's Lisa Curtis. Joe Biden will be the 46th President of the United States.

6. Donald Trump becomes first U.S. President to be impeached twice

President Donald Trump was impeached by the U.S. House for a historic second time on January 13, charged with "incitement of insurrection" over the deadly mob siege of the Capitol in a swift and stunning collapse of his final days in office.

He was first impeached in 2019 over his Ukraine dealings.

7. Nepali climbers 1st to scale K2, world's 2nd highest mountain, in winter

K2 with its daunting 8,611 meters height is located in Gilgit-Baltistan side of the Karakoram range. It was the only one among 8,000-meter high peaks that was never scaled in winter. 10 Nepali climbers led by Nirmal Puja & Mingma Gyalje Sherpa made history. 367 climbers in summer completed ascent of K2 (Savage Mountain)

8. Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni re-elected for sixth term; extends 35-year rule.

76 year old Museveni is one of the world's longest-serving leaders and has been in the top job since seizing control in 1986 when he helped to end years of tyranny under Idi Amin and Milton Obote.

Uganda: Capital: Kampala; Currency: Ugandan shilling.

9. India supplies two mobile harbour cranes (MHC) of value over \$25 million to Iran's Chabahar port

This step is per the bilateral contract between Iran & India signed on May 23, 2016 with value of USD 85 million aims to equip, mechanise and start operations at port under phase-I. An SPV India Ports Global Limited was incorporated to achieve the same. This 2 MHC is part of a contract to supply 6 MHC.

10. Joe Biden sworn in as 46th President of the United States, delivers message of unity

Joe Biden was sworn in as the 46th President of the United States. Kamala Harris, the daughter of immigrants from Jamaica and India, also took oath as the new Vice President, becoming the first woman, Black person, and first Asian-American in the post. Democrat Biden from 2009 to 2017, served as the 47th VP.

11. Lloyd Austin Confirmed As Defense Secretary, Becomes 1st Black Pentagon Chief of USA

Lloyd Austin, a retired four-star Army general, has been confirmed by the Senate, making him the first Black defense secretary in U.S. history.

The Senate approved President Biden's nomination for Pentagon chief in a near-unanimous 93-2 vote. Joe Biden has been elected as the 46th US President.

12. Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa re-elected as Portugal's president

Centre-right incumbent won a second and final five-year term in an election marked by record abstentions (turnout was less than 40%) as the country battles a third wave of coronavirus cases. The 72-year-old is a former leader of the Social Democratic Party. Portugal: Currency: Euro; Capital: Lisbon; PM: António Costa

13. Elon Musk's SpaceX creates new world record; launches 143 satellites on single rocket

SpaceX has beaten ISRO's record of deploying 104 satellites in a single launch in February 2017. Launch vehicle used was the Falcon 9 rocket and marks 1st dedicated mission for SpaceX's SmallSat Rideshare Program. Mission was designated as Transporter-1.

10 Starlink satellites onboard-first to be placed in polar orbit

14. Kaja Kallas to become Estonia's first female prime minister

Kaja Kallas, the leader of the Reform Party will become Estonia's first female prime minister; Estonia would thus currently become the only country in the world where both the president (Kersti Kaljulaid) and the prime minister are women.

Estonia: Capital: Tallinn; Currency: Euro

15. Dhaka International Film Festival concludes

The 19th Dhaka International Film Festival concluded recently. Kyrgyz film 'The Road to Eden' jointly directed by Bakyt Mukul and Dastan Zhapar won the best film award at the festival. A new section this year: 'World Leaders who changed society'. 226 films from 73 countries were shown

16. Archaeologists find world's oldest animal cave painting in Indonesia

World's oldest known animal cave painting in Indonesia - a wild pig - believed to be drawn 45,500 years ago. The picture was found in the Leang Tedongnge cave in a remote valley on the island of Sulawesi. It provides the earliest evidence of human settlement

President: Joko Widodo; Capital: Jakarta; Currency: Indonesian rupiah



Ankit Kumar
SSC CGL (AIR 32)



Oliveboard mock tests were a great help for me. They play a crucial role in your selection; so you should take tests regularly. You need to *figure out why some questions you couldn't solve* and resolve the issue behind it to make sure next time you don't make the same mistake and do similar questions without fail.



States/UTs

Andhra Pradesh

1. NDB, Government sign 2 loan pact for \$646 million for State Highway & District Road Network in Andhra Pradesh

For Andhra Pradesh Roads & Bridges Reconstruction Project and Andhra Pradesh Mandal Connectivity & Rural Connectivity Improvement Project; Increase roads' daily traffic capacity to 15,000 passenger car units & meet projected traffic growth over next 20 years NDB (2014): HQ: Shanghai, China; President: Marcos Prado Troyjo

2. Andhra Pradesh CM Jagan Mohan Reddy launches Mobile Dispensing Units for door delivery of ration supplies

As many as 9,260 vehicles will supply ration, including quality rice, at the door steps of ration cardholders providing relief from long queues. Scheme will employ 9,260 unemployed youth & govt spent Rs 539 crore to procure the vehicles.

Biswabhusan Harichandan is the governor of Andhra Pradesh.

Assam

1. ADB, India sign \$231 million loan to enhance power generation capacity in Assam

It is to construct 120MW HEP plant (Kopili river) & will enhance availability of electricity supplied from clean energy by 469 GigaWatt Hour by 2025. This is 3rd tranche loan for Assam Power Sector Investment Programme approved by ADB Board in July 2014. ADB: Members - 68 members; President - Masatsugu Asakawa.

2. Shri Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia appointed as Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court

The President of India, in exercise of the power conferred by clause (1) of Article 217 of the Constitution of India, appointed Shri Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia, Judge of the Uttarakhand High Court, as Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court. Minister of law and justice: Ravi Shankar Prasad

3. Assam State Transport Corporation (ASTC) launches 'Pink Bus' service in Guwahati for women and senior citizens

Assam chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal flagged off 25 pink buses earmarked under 'Bhraman Sarathi' Scheme for women and senior citizens to travel within Guwahati city. These free & dedicated bus service for women and senior citizens will ply in 5 routes. Assam Governor: Jagdish Mukhi.

Bihar

1. Bihar's first state-level bird festival 'Kalrav' held at Nagi- Nakti bird sanctuaries in Jamui district.

Fest aims at raising awareness on birds, especially migratory. Spread over 2.1 sq km area in the lap of rocky hillocks, Nagi bird sanctuary is winter home for more than 133 bird species every year. Nakti bird sanctuary is located around 5-6 km from Nagi. Nagi Bird Sanctuary is a protected area & Important Bird Area.

Chhattisgarh

1. GPS, Panic button mandatory in public passenger vehicles in Chhattisgarh

In Chhattisgarh, GPS and panic buttons will be installed in all public passenger vehicles for the safety of women passengers. Transport Minister Mohammad Akbar said that a tracking device and command center will be set up to monitor the vehicles Central Govt released about Rs 4 cr from Nirbhaya fund for this

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Goa

1. M/o Tribal Affairs and Goa Government jointly launch Shramshakti portal for migrant workers

This National Migration Support Portal and Shram-Saathi, a training manual for migrant workers launched will effectively help in the smooth formulation of State and National level programs for migrant workers. A dedicated migration cell also launched. Approximately 4 lacs migrants come from different States to Goa.

Gujarat

1. Adani Green Energy Limited (AGEL) commissions 100-MW solar power project at Khirsara, Gujarat

The commissioning was as per its 25-year power purchase agreement (PPA) at Rs 2.44 per kilowatt-hour with the Gujarat Urja Vikas Nigam India (GUVNL). AGEL's total operational renewable power capacity is now 2,950 MW.

AGEL has a total renewable capacity of 14 GW.

2. Gujarat CM decides to create new Bagasara Prant in Amreli district

Gujarat has announced to create new Bagasara Prant in Amreli district with a view to take the state's revenue services nearer to the people and provide services faster. It will come into effect on January 26 and will include Bagasara and Vadiya talukas. Gujarat Capital: Gandhinagar. Governor: Acharya Devvrat.

3. Gujarat CM Vijay Rupani announces 'Mukhyamantri Bagayat Vikas Mission' (Horticulture Development Mission)

The aim is to accelerate agriculture, horticulture and promote farming of herbal plants in infertile & fallow lands of government. It will also create employment opportunities through an increase in the export of such products & double farmers income. Gujarat Governor is Acharya Devvrat

Himachal Pradesh

1. ADB, India sign \$10 million project readiness financing (PRF) to support projects to expand horticulture in Himachal Pradesh

PRF for Himachal Subtropical Horticulture, Irrigation, and Value Addition Readiness Project will finance piloting activities, and design & capacity building for an ensuing project that aims to expand horticulture production & farm household income.

ADB: HQ -Mandaluyong, Manila, Philippines Established - 1966.

2. Power Grid Corporation signs agreement with Himachal Electricity Board for telecom network in hilly remote areas.

It is for utilisation of 500 km of optical ground wire (OPGW) telecom network. This is in addition to existing 350 km of OPGW laid on HP State Electricity Board Ltd Extra High Voltage lines. This 850 km long network will enable PGCIL to reach remote areas. PGCIL Maharashtra: HQ:Gurgaon; CMD:Kandikuppa Sreekant.

Karnataka

1. South runway of Bengaluru Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) now CAT III B compliant

CAT III B is an instrument landing system which helps to guide pilots to land during difficult visibility. KIA is 6th airport in India & only one in South India with CAT III B runway. Aircrafts can now land even under 50-m visibility & take-offs at 125m. Permissible range were 550m (landing) & 300m (takeoff) earlier.

2. South Western Railway commences DEMU rail services connecting Bengaluru City Railway Station to Kempegowda International Airport

This will help the airport workers (28000 of them) & passengers to commute by paying just 10 to 15 rupees while BMTC Vayu Vajra fare from Majestic to KIA is Rs.235 and cab ride costs Rs.800. SWR is operating 10 trains a day to and fro KIA halt station. South Western Railway Zone: HQ: Hubballi, Karnataka; Created: 2003

3. Karnataka CM launches Krishi Sanjeevani vans to test soil, water & suggest remedies for pest control

Karnataka launched Krishi Sanjeevani vans in Bengaluru. These vans will reach out to agriculture fields to test soil, water & suggest remedies for pest control to improve yield. Agriculture Dept proposed to attach 1 van for every Farmers Assistance centres The dept received assistance under National Krishi Vikas Yojana.

4. Wonderla Bangalore, theme park receives COV-safe certification from Bureau Veritas

First theme park chain in India to receive this highly coveted certification that will help to reduce the risk of the pandemic for visitors and park employees.'COV-SAFE Hygiene Assessment' is based on leadership, risk management, personal hygiene, etc. Wonderla Bangalore awarded a DIAMOND grade certification.

5. Union Minister Nitin Gadkari lays foundation stone virtually for construction of elevated corridor at in Hubballi, Karnataka

The foundation stone for the construction of an elevated corridor at Rani Chennamma Circle in Hubballi. The Minister announced that a decision is taken for 13 highway projects of 847 kilometres at a cost of Rs 21,000 crore in North Karnataka. Union Minister for Road Transport, Highways and MSMEs

6. Panju Gangolli, noted cartoonist compiles first dictionary of Kundapra Kannada, a unique dialect of Kannada.

Panju Gangolli toiled for nearly two decades to come up with first ever dictionary of his native tongue Kundapra Kannada, spoken in and around Kundapura taluk of Udupi district. Dictionary has over ten thousand words & 1,500 idioms in use in Kundapra Kannada The dialect which faced threat is resurging in recent years.

7. Karnataka CM Yediyurappa launches Avalokana software

This transparent e-governance tool will enable the government to access data on sanctions and expenditures incurred by 39 departments on 1,800 programmes implemented by them. Provides focused eye view on SDG, SC/ST sub-plan & Centrally Sponsored Schemes. Vajubhai Vala is governor of Karnataka.

8. In a first-of-its-kind, Karnataka puts pension payments on auto-pilot using the 'Navodaya' app.

All persons above 60 years will be automatically selected as beneficiaries of old-age pension based on their annual income & Aadhaar using the app and pension will be paid through Direct Benefit Transfer. It was piloted in Udupi & Ballari districts. Khajane is the online treasury software system of the state.

Kerala

1. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will dedicate 450 kilometre Kochi (Kerala)-Mangaluru (Karnataka) Natural Gas Pipeline

The event marks an important milestone towards the creation of One Nation One Gas Grid. It has been built by GAIL (India) Limited. It will carry natural gas from the LNG Regasification Terminal at Kochi. The pipeline will supply environment-friendly PNG. It has transportation capacity of 12 Million Metric ton per day

2. India's first Labour Movement museum to come up in Kerala

Labour Movement museum, that is opening up in Alappuzha (the cradle of the labour movement in the country), Kerala, will showcase the history of world & Kerala's labour movement through huge repository of documents and exhibits.

Alappuzha is Kerala's houseboat tourism hub.

Madhya Pradesh

1. Exhibition 'Raag-Bhopali' organized to promote Zari-Zardozi crafts of Bhopal

It is part of "Ek Zila- Ek Shilp" campaign of MP govt focusing on local traditional art of each district in the state & making efforts to promote it. The first of such exhibitions was organized

to promote Zari-Zardozi crafts of Bhopal. Zari zardozi is a form of embroidery, which came from Persia.

2. TRIFED signs MoU with Akhil Bhartiya Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram for setting up TRIFOOD Parks in 5 districts in Madhya Pradesh.

Two organisations will work together by undertaking various initiatives all aimed at improving livelihood of tribal people & implementation of Van Dhan Yojana through mobilization of SHGs/ Van Dhan Vikas Kendra (VDVKs)/TRIFOOD Parks/VPCs TRIFOOD are food processing centres adding value to MFP.

3. World's largest floating solar project at Omkareshwar dam in Madhya Pradesh to begin power generation by 2022-23

600 MW solar energy project is to be constructed at Omkareshwar dam(Narmada river),Khandwa.Electricity will be produced in about 2000-hectare water area.International Finance Corporation, World Bank & Power Grid have granted in-principle consent for aid. Estimated investment in this project stands at Rs 3,000 crore.

4. Madhya Pradesh rolls out 'Launch Pad Scheme' to make youth self-reliant

Launched by Women&Child Development Dept for boys & girls coming out of child care institutions & having completed 18 years;52 districts divided into 5 clusters with HQ at Indore,Sagar,Gwalior,Jabalpur&Bhopal;District Admin will provide space to open shops 6 lakh will be provided for each launch pad installation.

5. Madhya Pradesh takes lead in power sector reforms;Gets FinMin permission to mobilise Rs. 1,423 cr through Open Market Borrowings

State has started Direct Benefit Transfer of electricity subsidy to farmers in one district of from December, 2020. Thus,it has successfully implemented one out of the three stipulated reforms in the power sector & 4 such sectors are stipulated by FinMin

0.25% GSDP additional fund on reform completion in each sector.

6. WIPRO group gears up to act as knowledge partner of Madhya Pradesh govt

In Madhya Pradesh, WIPRO group is all set to act as knowledge partner of the State Government. Azim Premji Foundation has been allotted 50 acres of land for the proposed university in Bhopal. They will also set up a Software Development Centre in Bhopal MP Governor: Anandiben Patel

7. Madhya Pradesh CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan launched 'PANKH Abhiyan' on National Girl Child Day

'PANKH Abhiyan' was launched under the 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' scheme in order to aid in empowerment and growth of the girl child.'P' stands for protection,'A' for awareness of their rights, 'N' for nutrition, 'K' for knowledge and 'H' for health.

Scholarships worth Rs6.47cr announced under Ladli Laxmi Yojana.

8. MP becomes first state to get additional funds(Rs.660 crore) for capital projects

Department of Expenditure,Min of Finance allocated additional funds for undertaking One Nation,One Ration Card Reforms,Ease of Doing Business Reforms & Urban Local Bodies Reforms under scheme of Special Assistance to States for capital expenditure. Scheme was announced by Finance Minister on October 12, 2020.

Maharashtra

1. DRDO signs MoU with MAHA-METRO(JV of GoI & Govt of Maharashtra) for implementation of Advanced Biodigester Technology.

DRDO will render technical support for implementation of its advanced biodigester(a non-sewered sanitation technology) Mk-II technology for treatment of human waste (night soil) in metro rail network.The technology has been revamped to save water & space. Indian Railways already installed about 2.40 lakh biodigesters.

2. Nagpur's Gorewada Zoo renamed as Balasaheb Thackeray Zoological Park ahead of inauguration.

Maharashtra government renamed it. Aiming to protect forests and promote tourism MoEFCC had announced setting up of this 1900 hectares 'international-standard' bio park in August 2019. Park will offer different kinds of safaris and will have a rescue centre

The park is situated near the Gorewada lake

3. Maharashtra launches 'jail tourism' initiative from Pune's Yerawada jail

The initiative was launched in a move to help students learn about historical experiences. Yerawada jail is 150 years old where several freedom fighters, including Mahatma Gandhi, Lokmanya Tilak were imprisoned, Pune-pact was signed within the premises etc.

Maharashtra: CM: Uddhav Thackeray; Governor: B S Koshiyari.

Manipur

1. mPension Manipur App launched to ease inconvenience faced by pensioners

Provides facilities such as sending feedback to the Treasury office, making queries online & notifying pensioners on status of photographs submitted. App uses AI to detect whether the pensioner is alive or dead from the updated photographs. Manipur: CM: N. Biren Singh; Governor: Najma Heptulla.

2. Newmai launched Community-based Sustainable Forest Management for Water Resource Conservation in Manipur (COSFOM) website.

COSFOM is a component under Indo-German Programme 'Climate Change Adaptation in the Himalaya' with a focus on sustainable community forestry, soil & water conservation. It is supported by Government of Germany through KfW, a development bank in Frankfurt.

Forest, Environment and Climate Change Minister Awangbow Newmai

3. CM N Biren Singh Virtually Inaugurated Cherry Blossom Festival at Mao, Senapati district of Manipur.

Launched in Nov 2017 as part of Manipur Sangai Festival, Cherry Blossom Festival Mao was introduced under theme 'Celebrating Nature's Abundance'. Popularly known as Sakura in Japan, the flowers are considered as symbol of peace & prosperity. The festival is annually celebrated at Mao Gate, a hill station.

4. Manipur becomes the 4th State to complete urban local bodies reforms; Additional borrowing permission of Rs.75 crore issued

Manipur has now joined 3 other States namely, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Telangana, who have completed this reform. On completion of Urban Local Bodies reform, these four States have been granted additional borrowing permission of Rs.7,481 crore. Reforms stipulated by Department of Expenditure, Finance Ministry

Meghalaya

1. North East's first-ever specialized "Ginger" Processing Plant in Meghalaya to be revived

The plant located at the Export Promotion Industrial Park, Ri-Bhoui district is being revived through PPP mode & is likely to become functional in the beginning of 2021. It was established around the year 2004.

Minister of Development of North Eastern Region: Jitendra Singh

2. Meghalaya CM Conrad Sangma inaugurates India's longest road arch bridge at Sohbar

India's longest road arch bridge, the Wahrew Bridge inaugurated at Sohbar in East Khasi Hills district connects Bholaganj and Sohbar to Nongjri in East Khasi Hills, bordering Bangladesh, constructed at a cost of Rs 49.395 crore under NLCP of DoNER Ministry Capital: Shillong Governor: Satya Pal Malik

3. Meghalaya wins National Award for Best Electoral Practices 2020

The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Meghalaya was selected for a Special Award for Information Technology (IT) applications in Elections by the Election Commission of India (ECI), in the National Best Electoral Practices Awards 2020. President conferred it to Meghalaya CEO F.R. Kharkongor.

4. Meghalaya CM Conrad Sangma Inaugurates India's Longest Road Arch Bridge- "Wahrew Bridge"

169-metre Wahrew suspension bridge at Sobhar, East Khasi Hills district has been constructed at a cost of Rs 49.395 crore under Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources of Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region. The bridge is over Wahrew river. Bridge connects Bholaganj & Sohbar to Nongjri.

Nagaland

1. IAF choppers, NDRF teams try to extinguish wildfire in Dzukou Range of Kohima district in Nagaland

Operations to extinguish the fire were carried out by Nagaland Police, NDRF, SDRF etc.. The fire broke out in the Dzukou range in Southern Angami region of the district. The scenic Dzukou valley, a tourist hot spot in Nagaland, is located in the Dzukou range.

Nagaland CM: Neiphiu Rio; Governor: RN Ravi

Odisha

1. Union Petroleum Minister Pradhan flags off equipment for Indian Oil's MEG (mono-ethylene glycol) Plant at Paradip

3 super critical equipment (Ethylene Oxide Reactor, Wash Tower & De-ethyleniser) indigenously manufactured from L&Ts Hazira plant will be delivered to MEG plant being setup (an investment of Rs 5,654 crore) at refinery-cum-petrochemical complex at Paradip. MEG is used as raw material in textile yarn industries.

2. Bhubaneswar AIIMS Receives Kayakalp Award For Third Time

AIIMS Bhubaneswar adjudged as best central government hospital under B category (less than 1000 beds) and will get an award of Rs 2 crore. Awards promote cleanliness, hygiene and infection-control practices in public health-care facilities. JIPMER won 2nd in category A

3. CM Naveen Patnaik inaugurated India's first Fire Park comes up in Odisha

Park is a first of its kind initiative in the country, to bring awareness on fire safety measures. 'Agnishama Seva' portal of Odisha Fire Service was also launched through which 16 fire related services can be availed in a hassle-free manner. Governor of Odisha: Ganeshi Lal

4. In a first, Odisha to provide free access to state budget document 2021-22 through National e-Vidhan Application (NeVA)

Speaker Surjya Narayan Patro said Odisha will be the first state in the country to present budget on digital mode. Entire budget proceedings will be paperless from this year & question and answers in the Assembly will also go paperless. e-Vidhan is a Mission Mode Project in Digital India Programme.

Punjab

1. Punjab CM unveils mobile app 'Digi Nest' to ensure Digital Access to state Government Directory

'DigiNest' will enable citizens to check department-wise contact numbers of various officers, help them reach out with ease by calling or via E-mail. Previously 'PR Insight' was launched to monitor feedback & improve delivery of citizen centric services.

Punjab Chief Minister - Captain Amarinder Singh

Rajasthan

1. School of Public Health launched in Rajasthan

It has been launched to make policy intervention for building public health capacity and skills & bridge gaps between education & practices in Rajasthan. The school will provide technical

support to health systems & render help to state govt with new tech. Named after IIHMR chairperson S.D. Gupta.

2. Rajasthan launches new phase of Ayushman Bharat Mahatma Gandhi Health Insurance Scheme

Rajasthan CM launched new phase of Ayushman Bharat Mahatma Gandhi Health Insurance Scheme. Under the scheme, 1 crore 10 lakh families will get the benefit of health insurance. Health insurance cover has been increased from 3,30,000 to 5,00,000 annually. CM: Ashok Gehlot; Governor: Kalraj Mishra; Capital: Jaipur.

Telangana

1. Justice Hima Kohli becomes first woman Chief Justice of Telangana HC

Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan has administered the oath of office to Justice Hima Kohli. She is the first woman Chief Justice of Telangana HC which was carved out of the Hyderabad HC for the States of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh on January 1, 2019. Tamilisai Soundararajan is state's first woman governor.

2. Telangana becomes the 3rd State to complete Urban Local Bodies reforms; Additional borrowing permission of Rs.2,508 crore issued

Additional borrowing permission of Rs.7,406 crore granted so far to 3 States(Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh & Telangana) for urban local bodies reforms. Reforms in ULB include financial strengthening & enable them to provide better public health & sanitation. Telangana has done EODB reforms & ONORCS implementation as well.

Uttar Pradesh

1. Cabinet approval: Multi Modal Logistics Hub & Multi Modal Transport Hub at Greater Noida, UP (estimated cost Rs. 3,883.80 crore)

MMLH will provide efficient storage/transitioning of goods to/from the Dedicated Freight Corridors (DFC) & MMTH will act as transport hub with provisioning of rail, road & MRTS accessibility. Employment estimated is about 1,00,000 persons by 2040.

MMTH located near Indian Railways station of Boraki

2. PM Modi releases ₹2,691 crore for over 6 lakh PMAY-G beneficiaries in UP

Under PMAY-G launched in 2016, each beneficiary is given 100% grant of ₹1.20 lakh in plain areas, ₹1.30 lakh in hilly states, North Eastern States, difficult areas, Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, among others. Unskilled labour wages under MGNREGS also given.

Union Rural Development Minister Narendra Singh Tomar

3. Udyam Sarathi: UP launches app for youth to explore self-employment; free coaching for competitive exams announced as well.

This application will provide all information related to self-employment and the job industry at one click. Under vision of 'Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas and Sabka Vishwas', this App is poised to benefit women and farmers looking for avenues of self-employment. Abhyudaya, free coaching facility for competitive exams launched.

4. Republic Day parade: Uttar Pradesh wins best tableau award

Uttar Pradesh was adjudged the best tableau among the 32 tableaux, 17 from States/UTs, 9 from various ministries, departments and paramilitary forces and 6 from Defence Ministry. It was based on the theme Ayodhya: Cultural Heritage of Uttar Pradesh. Tripura was adjudged second and Uttarakhand third best.

5. Lucknow Metro becomes first metro to use UV rays to sanitise train coaches

Lucknow Metro has become the 1st metro in the country to use ultraviolet rays to sanitise train coaches. DRDO approved the equipment in October last year which reduces the cost by 40 times less than what comes in sanitizing the coach by sodium hypochlorite UP Capital: Lucknow; CM: Yogi Adityanath.

Uttarakhand

1. L&T's construction arm bags up to Rs 5,000 cr order from Rail Vikas Nigam Limited in Uttarakhand

It is for package 4 of the new broad-gauge line between Rishikesh and Karanprayag in Uttarakhand. The scope of the project includes construction of tunnels, formation, construction shaft, and other ancillary works between Rishikesh and Karanprayag RVNL is a Mini-Ratna-1 status PSU. Pradeep Gaur is its CMD.

2. Uttarakhand government increases MGNREGA working days from 100 to 150

This decision is a push to encourage employment opportunities and the entire cost will be borne by the state. On the same day, the 'Uttarakhand Aajeevika App' was also launched with the aim to help unemployed people with employment opportunities.

Uttarakhand: CM: Trivendra Singh Rawat; Governor: Baby Rani Maurya

West Bengal

1. GoI, West Bengal Govt & World Bank Sign \$105 Million Project to Improve Waterways in West Bengal

West Bengal Inland Water Transport, Logistics & Spatial Development Project will facilitate passenger & freight movement across the Hooghly river; undertake spatial planning to improve accessibility in Kolkata Metropolitan Area; improving logistics sector. This IBRD loan has maturity of 17 yrs

2. West Bengal CM Inaugurates 26th Kolkata International Film Festival

West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee inaugurated the 26th Kolkata International Film Festival (KIFF). The inaugural ceremony was also virtually attended by Bollywood superstar and West Bengal's brand ambassador Shah Rukh Khan from Mumbai. It is the 26th edition of KIFF.

3. In a first, Kolkata gets boat library cruising on the Hooghly river.

The 3 hour trip will start at Millennium Park, and the boat will travel to Belur Math jetty & return. Children will be able to choose from a selection of 500 titles in English and Bengali on the Young Readers' Boat Library.

Launched by WB Transport Corporation in collab with a book store

Andaman and Nicobar Island

1. Andaman Lt Governor flags off 14 electric buses to control pollution

The project for 40 electric buses is being executed by NTPC Vidyut Vyapar Nigam Limited (NVVN Limited), a 100% subsidiary of NTPC Limited, a PSU under Ministry of Power. The buses will help cut down tailpipe emissions & provide comfortable public transport. LG of Andaman is D K Joshi.

Chandigarh

1. Hisar airport inaugurated under Udan scheme to boost air connectivity in tier-1, 2 towns

First flight to the newly constructed Hisar airport in Haryana from Chandigarh was flagged off under the Regional Connectivity Scheme – Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik (RCS-UDAN). This marks the operationalization of 54th airport under the UDAN scheme. Haryana: CM: Manohar Lal Khattar; Governor: Satyadeo Narain Arya.

Delhi

1. Delhi govt. sets up academy to promote Tamil culture to promote the South Indian language and culture in the Capital.

Appointed former municipal councillor and member of the Delhi Tamil Sangam N. Raja as vice-chairman of the academy. It will provide language courses. It will also celebrate and organise cultural festivals for the people of Tamil Nadu.

Delhi: CM: Arvind Kejriwal; Deputy CM Manish Sisodia

2. New Delhi Municipal Council launches Automated Mask-Dispensing Kiosk at Khan Market

Plastic Lao -Mask Pao" kiosk inaugurated as the target of collecting 80-100kg Plastic waste every day 2 Metric tons of plastic waste collected at the Connaught Place kiosk. Where citizens can come & deposit their plastic waste in exchange for masks. Partnership with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Jammu and Kashmir

1. J&K Govt signs historic MoU with National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd for High Density plantation

NAFED to invest Rs.1700 Crore for plantation of Apple, Walnut, Cherry, etc covering 5500 Hectares in next 5 years; set up 20 Farmer Producer Organisations, one in each District, in next 3 months; 3 Clusters of Cold Storage in J&K at a cost of Rs. 500 Crore etc. NAFED: Chairman - Bijender Singh; Founded - 1958; HQ -New Delhi

2. MoUs signed between Power Development Department (PDD), J&K; NHPC & J&K Power Development Corporation to make J-K power surplus

Projects include 850 MW Ratle HEP & 930 MW Kirthai-II HEP, besides execution of long pending Sawalkot HEP (1856 MW), Uri-I (Stage-II) (240 MW) and Dulhasti (Stage-II) (258 MW). MoUs signed would attract investments worth Rs 35,000 cr for J&K power sector. Manoj Sinha, Lieutenant Governor of J&K

3. Jammu & Kashmir admin signs MoU with NBCC to set up IT towers in Jammu, Srinagar

Signed between NBCC & J-K IT Infrastructure Development Company for establishing the two IT towers at a cost of Rs 50 crore each. IT infrastructure in J&K would go a long way in creating a conducive environment for startups economic growth & job creation. NBCC Navratna CPSE: HQ: New Delhi; CMD: P K Gupta.

4. J&K LG, Manoj Sinha launches Mobile Application 'Satark Nagrik' and Departmental Vigilance Officers Portal of ACB

App purpose to facilitate seamless flow of information about corruption and enable citizens to submit their grievances with ease and mobility; Portal has been designed to enable an online communication channel with the DVOs of various departments. Anand Jain, Director Anti Corruption Bureau, J&K

5. Cabinet approves Rs 28,400-cr industrial development scheme for J&K upto the year 2037.

Scheme while encourage new investment by providing GST incentive & interest subvention; nurture existing industries in J&K by providing working capital support at the rate of 5% for 5 years; boost economy & generate employment in manufacturing & services. J&K LG: Manoj Sinha

6. North East Cane & Bamboo Development Council (NECBDC) sign MoU with J&K on Bamboo Entrepreneurship & Infrastructure Development.

J&K govt to set up 3 bamboo clusters in Jammu, Katra & Samba districts with the aim of generating employment for 25,000 people. Focus would be on bamboo basketry, agarbatti and bamboo charcoal. Mega Bamboo Industrial Park & Technology Training Centre to come up India is world's 2nd largest cultivator of bamboo after China.

7. J&K Bank board decides to transfer 8.23% stake to UT of Ladakh.

Board decided gave 'In-principle approval' for implementation of General Administration Department, Govt. of J & K..in terms of which ownership of 8.23% out of its (J&K Govt.) shareholding in J&K bank as on October 31, 2019, shall be transferred to Ladakh. One post of director on J&K Bank board is earmarked for Ladakh.

8. Cabinet approves Rs 5281.94 crore investment for 850 MW Ratle Hydro Power Project

Approval given to a new Joint Venture Company (JVC) to be incorporated between NHPC and Jammu and Kashmir State Power Development Corporation Ltd with equity contribution of 51% & 49%. Govt to provide grant of Rs 776.44 to JKSPDC & NHPC to invest on own. Ratle HEP is located on Chenab in Kishtwar district

9. J&K Skill Development Department inks MoU with IIT Jammu to enhance skill, employability with exposure to latest technologies.

Purpose of this MoU is revamping & rejuvenation of polytechnic & ITI sector in collaboration with IIT Jammu by introducing new area specific training skills keeping in view demand of skills in forthcoming projects like tunnels, railways, power projects etc J & K Lieutenant Governor is Manoj Sinha

10. Industrial growth gets push in J&K as govt clears J&K Industrial Land Allotment Policy 2021-30

Under the policy, land will be leased to investors within 30-45 days for a period of 40 years, which can be extended to up to 99 years. Govt has already transferred 24,000 kanals (1 kanal = 0.125 acre) to Industries & Commerce dept to setup industrial estates Policy which will create a structured industrial land bank.

Ladakh

1. Government clears eight hydropower projects on Indus in Ladakh

The government has cleared eight hydropower projects of 144 MW on the Indus river and its tributaries in Ladakh. The projects have been cleared by the Central Water Commission as well as the Indus Commissioner after a separate UT of Ladakh was announced. These projects to come up in Kargil and Leh districts of Ladakh.

2. Dhaka Marathon 2021: Jigmet Dolma from Ladakh wins 4th position

The marathon was organized to commemorate the return of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman from Pakistan jail to Bangladesh in 1972. Jigmet Dolma is an SPO of Ladakh police. Among SAARC & local runners, Bahadur Singh of India won in men's

3. First ever Ice climbing festival celebrated in Nubra valley

In Leh, first ever Ice climbing festival was celebrated in Nubra valley. The Seven Day event was organized by Nubra Adventure Club with the help of Social activist Dr. Nordan Otzer. Ice climbing is a popular winter sport abroad. 18 participants took part. Thoise Airfield is located in Nubra.

4. 1st Khelo India Zaskar Winter Sports and Youth Festival flagged-off in Ladakh.

For 13 days (18 to 30 Jan) various activities- Chadar Trek on Zaskar river, meditation, yoga, ice skating, hockey, snow skiing, climbing, traditional Archery, snow scooter, biking, Yak & horse riding, snow sculpting & food and cultural festivals will be conducted.

Organiser: Dept of Youth Services & Sports with Dept of Tourism.

5. 1st Khelo India Zaskar Winter Sports Festival underway in Ladakh

Union Sports & Youth Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju launched the 1st ever Khelo India Zaskar Winter Sports Festival at Padum in Zaskar of Kargil district. It is being organised by the Ladakh UT Administration to promote Zaskar as tourists' destination. Lt Governor: R. K. Mathur M.P.: Jamyang Tsering Namgya

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Sports

1. Goa's 14-year-old Leon Mendonca becomes India's 67th Grandmaster

He achieved his first GM norm at the Rigo Chess GM Round Robin in October while the 2nd came at the 1st Saturday event in Budapest in November and the final one at the Vergani Cup in Italy. Mendonca achieved the feat at 14 years, 9 months and 17 days. He is the second GM from Goa.

2. Target Olympic Podium Scheme sanctions specialised equipment for Para Table Tennis player Bhavina Patel

Mission Olympic Cell sanctioned Rs.7.04 Lakhs as part of TOPS for Bhavina Patel. She is ranked 8th in world & by virtue of her current world ranking is well positioned to qualify for Tokyo Paralympics & thus become 1st Indian to do so in Para Table Tennis. Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports started TOPS in Sept 2014.

3. Assam Rifles Public School, Shillong becomes the first Khelo India Sports School from North-East

The Government shall now bear the expenses for Talented Sports Students of the school in terms of lodging, boarding, education expenses, competition exposure, insurance & medical, sports training & support, salary of coaches & support staff etc. 9 Sports Schools have been approved across the country.

4. Claire Polosak becomes first female match official in men's Test match

Australia's Claire Polosak became the first female match official to officiate a men's Test match when she took up the fourth umpire's role in the third Test between Australia and India. She was also the 1st woman on-field umpire in a men's ODI match. Australian Cricket Men's Captain: Aaron Finch.

5. Viktor Axelsen, Carolina Marin win singles titles at Thailand Open badminton

Spain's Carolina Marin, reigning Olympic champion beat top seed Tai Tzu-ying in the final while the Denmark shuttler saw off Hong Kong's Angus Long. Thailand Open is first of three consecutive tournaments in Bangkok culminating in the World Tour Finals. Marin is first non-Asian women's player to win Olympic gold.

6. ITBP wins national ice hockey championship

ITBP won the 10th national ice hockey championship held in Jammu and Kashmir's tourist town of Gulmarg. The team of the border-guarding force defeated Ladakh 5-1 at the Gulmarg ice rink located at a height of 8,694 feet. championship was organised by Ice Hockey Association of India

7. ICC announces introduction of 'ICC Player of the Month'

An independent ICC Voting Academy comprising former players, broadcasters & journalists from around the world will team up with fans to vote for the ICC Men's Player of the Month and ICC Women's Player of the Month across all forms of international cricket. ICC: Chairman: Greg Barclay; CEO: Manu Sawhney; HQ: Dubai, UAE

8. BCCI not to hold Ranji Trophy for first time in 87 years

The BCCI will not be conducting its premier first-class domestic tournament Ranji Trophy for the first time in 87 years as the parent body opted for the Vijay Hazare Trophy as per the wishes of the majority of the state units.

BCCI president: Sourav Ganguly; Formed: December 1928.

9. Sports Minister Rijiju launches anti-doping reference material

A reference material jointly synthesised by the NDTL and the NIPER, Guwahati, for use in the anti-doping field was launched by Union Sports Minister. It would be used to strengthen anti-doping measures in all World Anti-Doping Agency accredited labs. World Anti-Doping Agency HQs: Montreal, Canada; Founded: 1999

10. Zaskar Winter Sports and Youth Festival, 2021 concludes

In Kargil Ladakh, 1st ever Zaskar Winter Sports and Youth Festival, 2021 concluded at Munskit Chumik Zaskar. 13 days Zaskar Winter and Youth Festival 2021 featured various cultural and sports activities. Next year this event will be for around 70 days.

The inaugural ceremony of next year event will be held in Delhi.

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Agreements & MoUs

1. Cabinet approval : MoU between India and Bhutan on Cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

Impetus to explore cooperation possibilities in the field of remote sensing of the earth; satellite communication; satellite navigation; space science and exploration of outer space by setting up a Joint Working Group. Bhutan: Currency - ngultrum; Capital - Thimphu

2. RuPay, RBL Bank roll out 'RuPay PoS', a cost effective payment solution, in collaboration with PayNearby

Shopkeepers can accept contactless payments upto Rs.5000 with their NFC-enabled phones that work as Point of Sale terminals by simply updating their PayNearby app. Customers can make purchases using RuPay cards or have tokenized their RuPay Cards.

CEO: PayNearby - Anand Kumar Bajaj; RuPay - Dilip Asbe.

3. Defence Ministry signs Rs.1355 crore contract with BEL for procurement of 10 Lynx U2 Gun Fire Control systems for Indian Navy.

LYNX U2 GFCS is designed to acquire, track & engage targets amidst sea clutter. It will be installed on NOPV, Talwar & Teg class of ships. The 4th generation system has been completely designed and developed by BEL.

Minister of Defence - Rajnath Singh

4. BEL signs contract with Indian Navy for Initial supply of 20 indigenously developed Laser Dazzlers

Indigenously designed and developed for the first time, it is a non-lethal weapon for warning and stopping suspicious vehicles, boats and aircraft/UAVs (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles). These weapons would be manufactured in the BEL's plant in Pune.

BEL: HQ - Bengaluru; Established - 1954

5. BHEL bags orders worth Rs 3,200 crore for hydro projects in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana

It is to supply India's highest unit-rating Kaplan hydro turbines for Polavaram Hydro Electric Project (East Godavari, AP) & 15 Pump-Motor sets for Kaleshwaram & 13 sets for Palamuru Rangareddy Lift Irrigation Schemes (Telangana). BHEL: Established - 1964; HQ - New Delhi ; CMD - Nalin Shinghal

6. Indian Coast Guard (ICG) signs pact with 7 Asian countries Japan, Philippines, Thailand, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Indonesia & Vietnam.

MoU is for cooperation in Maritime Search and Rescue (M-SAR) operations. SAR in India controlled & co-ordinated by ICG through 3 Maritime Rescue Co-ordinating Centres (MRCC) at Mumbai, Chennai & Port Blair. ICG-Karnataka is coordinator for M-SAR. ICG: DG - Gen Krishnaswamy Natarajan; Founded - 1978.

7. TRIFED Signs MoU with Deen Dayal Antyodaya- National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM) to boost tribal livelihood development.

It is to work together in synergizing various programmes that are implemented already & enhance livelihoods especially that of women SHGs including those from tribal populations. Scope of work outlined 2 broad areas: MFP & Handloom/ Handicrafts.

NRLM, Ministry of Rural Development renamed DAY-NRLM in 2015.

8. Oakridge Energy signed agreements to solarize 1000 Kendriya Vidyalayas, Delhi govt. schools

Company is aiming to solarise 1000 institutions by 2022. In 2020 it solarised over 15 schools of Department of Education in Delhi, along with recently commissioned largest solar power project of 217 KW in Delhi University at Lady Irwin College. Oakridge Energy: CEO : Shraavan Sampath; HQ - New Delhi.

9. Government implementing Rs 320-crore project for 5 ports to enable digital ecosystem

According to the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways five ports are Mumbai, Chennai, Deendayal, Paradip, and Kolkata (including Haldia). Enterprise business system (EBS) is being implemented at five major ports with a project cost of about Rs 320cr.

Major ports in the country have an installed capacity of 1,534MT

10. L&T Hydrocarbon Engineering (LTHE) bags over Rs 7,000 crore order from HPCL Rajasthan Refinery

L&T said the engineering, procurement, construction & commissioning (EPCC) contract is for setting up a dual feed cracker unit (DFCU) for Rajasthan Refinery Project at Barmer. DFCU is the biggest EPCC contract awarded in the country to date in this sector

LTHE, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Larsen & Toubro

11. Chinese firm bags contract to develop Delhi-Meerut Rapid Rail Transit System tunnel

The National Capital Region Transport (NCRTC), which is executing India's first RRTS project, has awarded the contract to the Chinese firm, Shanghai Tunnel Engineering Company Limited (STEC) to construct a 5.6-km underground stretch. Rapid Rail corridor connecting Delhi, Ghaziabad, Meerut.

12. ADB, India sign \$100 million sovereign loan to upgrade Bengaluru's power distribution system to enhance quality & reliability.

Over 2,800 km of fibre optical cables will be installed, moving some 7,200km of distribution lines underground reducing technical & commercial losses by 30%, install 1,700 automated ring main units to monitor & control distribution line switch gears etc. ADB also to offer \$90 million loan without sovereign guarantee.

13. Tata Power partners with SIDBI to offer easy & affordable financing scheme for MSME customers in the rooftop solar segment.

A financing solution without any collateral at an interest rate of less than 10% exclusively for MSME customers of Tata Power for both off-grid & on-grid connections will be provided. It will enable them to adopt sustainable energy for their businesses. CEO & MD, Tata Power: Praveer Sinha

14. Tech Mahindra's R&D arm 'Makers Lab' partners with College of Military Engineering, Pune for defence solutions.

Makers Lab will be set up at CME & CME will leverage the partnership to address critical military problem statements and be future-ready using next-generation technologies of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Robotics. Tech Mahindra: CEO&MD: C. P. Gurnani; HQ: Pune.

15. Cabinet approves Memorandum of Cooperation between India and Japan on Partnership in "Specified Skilled Worker"

It will enhance people-to-people contacts, foster mobility of workers & skilled professionals from India to Japan. Skilled Indian workers from 14 sectors including nursing care, construction, aviation etc would have enhanced job opportunities to work in Japan. A new status of residence, Specified Skill Worker, will be given.

16. Khadi and Village Industries Commission Signs MoU with ITBP for supply of 1,72,000 cotton durries every year

The total value of 1.72 lakh durries is Rs 8.74 crore. It aids to big Swadeshi drive in paramilitary forces. The cotton durries will be produced by Khadi artisans in Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Punjab. KVIC Chairman: Vinai Kumar Saxena; ITBP DG: Surjeet Singh Deswal

17. IAF Academic Collaboration with Institute of Defence Studies and Research (IDSR), Gujarat University: MoU signed.

MoU will enable Officers of IAF to undertake Doctoral Research, PG Programme & PG Diploma covering various areas of interest that includes Defence studies, Defence Management,

National Security, Aerospace & Aviation Science & other Defence Technology areas. As part of Project Akashdeep, IAF enters such partnership.

18. Axis Bank ties up with Hyundai Motor India for auto retail financing

Axis Bank through this partnership will allow Hyundai Motor India Ltd (HMIL) customers to get auto loan sanctioned directly on the car maker's end-to-end online retail platform "Click to Buy" (CTB). Axis bank: CEO: Amitabh Chaudhry; HQ: Mumbai

19. Bank of Baroda inks MoU with SIDBI to help MSMEs apply online for one-time restructuring

With the MoU, the MSME customers of the bank can now access SIDBI's DIY web-based portal, 'Asset Restructuring Module for MSMEs (ARM-MSME)', which enables customers to self-create their restructuring proposal with financial viability projections. Indian Bank & Central Bank of India signed similar MoU.

20. PNB collaborates with IIT Kanpur & Foundation for Innovation & Research in Science & Technology to set up Innovation Cen

Fintech Innovation Centre (FIC) at IIT Kanpur campus will act as a vehicle to research and develop technological solutions to address challenges and explore opportunities in the BFSI space. PNB will get access to the pool of Fin-Techs incubated by IIT-K. PNB: MD&CEO: S S Mallikarjuna Rao; HQ: New Delhi.

21. L&T Hydrocarbon Engineering bags up to Rs 5,000-cr order from ONGC

LTHE, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Larsen and Toubro secured the engineering, procurement, construction, installation and commissioning (EPICC) contract for ONGC's new living quarter and revamp at NQ Complex in ONGC's Mumbai High Asset. LTHE CEO & MD: Subramanian Sarma.

22. IREDA signs MoU with NHPC for providing its technical expertise in developing renewable energy projects

IREDA signed an MoU with NHPC (under Ministry of Power) for providing its technical expertise in developing renewable energy projects. IREDA will assist NHPC in developing an action plan to create and acquire Renewable Energy projects for the next 5 years. Chairman of IREDA: Pradip Kumar Das. CMD of NHPC Abhay Kumar Sin

23. NHAH ties up with Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), to set up EV charging network in India

EESL, a venture under power ministry will set up EV charging infrastructure works at toll plazas and buildings, and provisioning of electric vehicles to NHAH. EESL is world's largest public energy service company. EESL(2006): Chairman: Rajeev Sharma HQ: New Delhi

24. Universal Sompo General Insurance Company Ltd partners with Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh State Finance Corporation

It is to provide comprehensive insurance covers at competitive prices. J&K and L SFC provides financial assistance to various MSMEs besides others. Sompo General: JV of Indian Bank, IOB, Karnataka Bank, Dabur Investment Corp & Sompo Japan SFC MD: Rajesh Kumar Shavan; Sompo MD, CEO: Sharad Mathur.

25. National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC), Airtel team up to drive digital transformation of MSMEs

Airtel's solutions for MSMEs include connectivity, landline, mobile, conferencing, cloud, security solutions for businesses, IoT & cloud communication suite to transform customer engagement. Alliance with NSIC would give it a much deeper distribution reach.

NSIC, Mini Ratna PSU: HQ: Delhi; CMD: Vijayendra.

26. Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank (KVGB) inks pact with Jai Kisan, a rural fintech platform

Bank intends to extend its services to small and micro enterprises (SME), joint liability groups (JLG), self-help groups (SHG), and to farmers through Kisan Credit Card (KCC) and credit for

farm mechanisation efforts through its partnership with Jai Kisan. KVGB:
Chairman:P.Gopikrishna; HQ: Dharwad,Karnataka.

27. Financial Software and Systems(FSS) and India Post Payments Bank join hands to promote financial inclusion

IPPB will use FSS' Aadhaar Enabled Payment System (AePS) & serve all customer segments, including nearly 410 million Jan Dhan account holders.IPPB has now become single largest platform for providing interoperable banking services to customers of any bank. FSS: HQ: Chennai; CMD: Nagaraj Mylandla

28. Mahindra Lifespace Developers ties up with SBI for faster home loan approvals, discounts

As per the MoU which includes various co-promotional activities & outreach initiatives, customers and employees of SBI and Mahindra Lifespaces will be able to avail the benefits of faster home loan processing and approvals, and special discounts & schemes. SBI Chairman:Dinesh Kumar Khara

29. Flipkart, NITI Aayog collaborate to enhance Women Entrepreneurship Platform(WEP)

WEP is a unified access portal bringing together women to realise their entrepreneurial aspirations.New version will include mentorship through a dedicated online mechanism facilitated under FICCI-FLO's Empowering the Greater 50% mission. The platform was formally launched on 8 March 2018.

30. MoU approved on scientific & technical cooperation between National Centre of Meteorology,UAE & Ministry of Earth Sciences,India

It enables sharing of knowledge,data &operational products for meteorological, seismological &oceanic services: radar,satellite,tide gauges,seismic & met stations;cooperation to support Tsunami Early Warning Centre,early warnings of sand & dust storms etc Minister of Earth Sciences: Dr.Harsh Vardhan

31. Flipkart partners Logistics Skill Sector Council, KSDC to set up Centre of Excellence in Bengaluru

It is for building skilled & trained workforce for e-commerce industry.Flipkart has co-developed training module along with LSC & KSDC to train candidates on various nuances & certification under National Skill Qualification Framework will be given. Certificate is recognised across 7 countries including Australia

32. Bharat Biotech inks deal with Precisa Medicamentos for supply of COVAXIN to Brazil

Brazil govt will procure Covaxin directly while supply to private market will be subjected to authorisation from Brazilian regulatory authority ANVISA.Bharat Biotech,ICMR & NIV developed Covaxin. It is a highly purified and inactivated 2-dose vaccine. Bharat Biotech: CMD Dr.Krishna Ella; HQ:Hyderabad

33. Tech Mahindra to acquire Payments Technology Services Ltd for Rs 66 cr

Tech Mahindra will get access to IPs and licenses for two products - Open Payment Framework (OPF) and Multi-Bank System (MBS).Hong Kong based PTSL is a payments solutions provider with focus on banking and financial Services.

Tech Mahindra: CEO&MD: C. P. Gurnani; HQ:Pune.

34. NHPC signs definitive agreement for takeover of 120 MW Rangit-IV HE Project in Sikkim.

The agreement is for implementation of the approved resolution plan for takeover of 120 MW Rangit-IV hydro power project of Jalpower Corporation Ltd (JPCL) in Sikkim.National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT),Hyderabad bench approved NHPC's resolution plan. JPCL is 2nd company acquired through insolvency process by NHPC.

35. ICICI Bank ties up with fintech Niyto to issue prepaid cards to MSMEs

MSMEs can avail 'ICICI Bank Niyto Bharat Payroll Card' powered by Visa to send salaries for their blue-collar workers, who are mostly unbanked. It allows an individual to receive funds upto Rs.1 lakh into the card account & offers convenience and safety. Niyto Co-founder and CEO Vinay Bagri.

36. Indian Army signs \$20 mn contract with ideaForge to procure SWITCH unmanned aerial vehicles.

This fixed-wing drone, capable of vertical takeoff and landing, can be deployed at high altitude and harsh environments for day-and-night surveillance. It is man-portable and has the highest time on target compared to any other UAV in its class. ideaForge: CEO: Ankit Mehta; HQ: Mumbai.

37. Yes Bank partners with Aditya Birla Wellness to launch wellness themed credit card

'YES BANK Wellness' & 'YES BANK Wellness Plus' Credit Cards is aimed at holistic health, self-care & wellness of consumers. It can be availed by simply registering on Aditya Birla Multiply App. Benefits include reward points, diet plans, consultations etc

YES bank: HQ: Mumbai; MD&CEO: Prashant Kumar.

38. CSIR institutes sign MoU with Russian centre for collaboration on marine sciences and technology

The National Institute of Oceanography and the National Geophysical Research Institute have signed MoU with Russia's V.I. Il'ichev Pacific Oceanological Institute, the largest research institution in Far Eastern branch of Russian Academy of Sciences. Headquarters: CSIR-NIO: Goa; CSIR-NGRI: Hyderabad;

39. CBSE with NIC, Niti Aayog introduce CollabCAD software for engineering graphics for Class XI and XII

CollabCAD provides a total engineering solution from 2D drafting & detailing to 3D product design for students and faculty of engineering graphics curriculum. It is first indigenous tool created by NIC in partnership with BARC and VSSC. Comprehensive e-book on CollabCAD 3D modeling was released too.

40. India and Japan sign MoU to enhance cooperation in Information and Communications Technologies field

The MoU was signed by Minister for Communications, Electronics & IT Ravi Shankar Prasad & the Japanese Minister for Internal Affairs & Communications Takeda Ryota. enhance mutual cooperation in the field of 5G technologies, telecom security, etc. Capital: Tokyo; Currency: Japanese yen; PM: Yoshihide Suga

41. GRSE bags \$12.7m deal to build ferry for Guyana

The 1,700-tonne-vessel will be used by Guyana in its coastal and riverine areas. It will be equipped with two Caterpillar marine diesel engines coupled with twin-disc reduction gearboxes to achieve speeds of 15 knots GRSE is a Kolkata based Miniratna. CMD is Vipin Kumar Saxena.

42. Kotak Mahindra AMC signs up with Climate Action 100+

Climate Action 100+ drives focus on clean energy transition & helps achieve Paris Agreement's goals. In April 2018, KMAMC became first domestic AMC to sign up with the Principles for Responsible Investment supported by the United Nations.

KMAMC: HQ: Mumbai; MD: Nilesh Shah

43. TRIFED exchanges MoU with Indian Farm Forestry Development Co-operative Limited (IFFDC) to promote livelihood generation.

TRIFED & IFFDC have agreed to organise training programmes for tribal artisans in the area of entrepreneurship skill and business development. Will create sustainable market, new business opportunities, CSR, Skill dev & collection and marketing of MFPS etc. IFFCO is the promoter organization of IFFDC.

44. Madhya Pradesh signed MoU with Kerala for replicating Kerala's pioneering Responsible Tourism (RT) initiative.

The MoU was exchanged by Tourism Minister Kadakampally Surendran and his Madhya Pradesh counterpart Usha Thakur. Kerala will extend a series of services under a 16-point programme. Kerala model involves local communities & makes tourism a tool for rural dev. CM: Kerala: Pinarayi Vijayan; MP: Shivraj Singh Chouhan

45. BSE signs MoU with Maharashtra govt to encourage SME listing

Maharashtra government will help in mobilizing SME representatives, state & regional associations to encourage their SME members to attend capacity building programmes & also to create awareness about benefits of listing & raise equity capital.

Ashishkumar Chauhan is the MD & CEO of BSE.

46. Adani group signs concession agreement with AAI for developing Jaipur, Guwahati, Thiruvananthapuram airports

The concession period is 50 years from the commercial operation date for the management, operations and development of the airports. Centre in February 2019 privatised 6 major airports and Adani group won the rights to run all of them for 50 years.

Chairman and founder of Adani Group is Gautam Adani.

47. American Express announces ₹1 crore grant to Dastkar to support women artisans

The grant to Dastkar's (a society of crafts and craftspeople) Artisan Support Fund, will support over 12,000 women artisans from 19 states in the country in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is part of its CSR initiative. American Express: HQ: New York; CEO: Stephen Squeri

48. Amazon partners with Startup India, Sequoia Capital India & Fireside Ventures to boost e-commerce exports from India

An accelerator programme will help early-stage startups take their brands to global audiences. It will feature a 6-week 1:1 mentorship module & startups will showcase proposition to VC partners. Amazon to give total equity free grant of \$50k to 3 startups. Amazon's Global Selling programme will help with global launch.

49. KVIC, Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) ink pacts aimed at procurement of Khadi fabric, job creation

1. MoTA will procure over 6 lakh meters of Khadi fabric worth Rs 14.77 crore in 2020-21, for students in Eklavya Residential Schools run by the ministry. 2. MoTA's NSTFDC will be roped in as partner with KVIC to implement PMEGP Scheme, increasing the coverage. NSTFDC, a MoTA agency responsible for economic dev of tribes.

50. Universal Sompo General Insurance partners with NPCI to offer Health Cover to RuPay Cardholders, UPI Users

The health policy provides special coverage for cancer and heart-related ailments along with features like cashless hospitalization in over 5,000 hospitals across India and tax benefits. The cover can be purchased digitally. CEO: NPCI: Dilip Asbe; Universal Sompo: Sharad Mathur.

51. In a first, Telangana and Gujarat join hands to support women entrepreneurs & support in raising capital.

Telangana's WE Hub has partnered with Gujarat government's I-Hub, to support women entrepreneurs. Around 240 women entrepreneurs will be selected for the pre-incubation programme and a total of 20 will be shortlisted for the co-incubation programme.

WE Hub: India's first state-led incubator for women entrepreneurs

52. MeitY to set up Quantum Computing Applications Lab in partnership with Amazon Web Services (AWS)

Will provide quantum computing as a service to government ministries and departments, researchers, scientists, academia, and developers to enable advances in areas such as manufacturing, healthcare, agriculture, and aerospace engineering.

AWS will provide hosting with technical and programmatic support

53. MoRTH, DRDO sign pact to collaborate in sustainable geo-hazard management

Initiative will ensure safety of road users on NHs against adverse effects of landslides & other natural calamities. Will cooperate in planning and designing of various avalanche and landslide control structures, pre-feasibility of tunnels & viaducts etc. DRDO's Defence Geo Informatics Research Establishment will aid.

54. Paytm Payments Bank Ltd (PPBL) ties up with Suryoday Small Finance Bank to offer fixed-deposit services

With a minimum investment of Rs 100, PPBL has already been offering fixed-deposits services in alliance with IndusInd Bank. PPBL has become first payment bank to launch multi-partner FD service where an account holder can select any partnered bank. MD & CEO: PPBL: Satish Gupta; SSFB: Baskar Babu.

55. Cabinet approves MoU between India, Uzbekistan for cooperation in solar energy

Main area of work is to identify research, demonstration & pilot projects between National Institute of Solar Energy, MNRE & International Solar Energy Institute, Uzbekistan in mutually identified areas including solar PV, storage tech & transfer of tech. Uzbekistan: Capital: Tashkent; Currency: Uzbekistani som

57. Indian Army Signs MoU with Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers (SIDM) on Indigenisation and Innovation Partnership

MoU was signed on occasion of 25 years of Army-Industry Partnership with CII. MoU signed will provide further impetus to indigenisation under 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' and to achieve strategic independence by reducing dependence on foreign origin equipment. SIDM formed to be the apex body of the Indian defence industry.

58. L&T construction arm bags orders worth up to Rs 5,000 crore in Bangladesh

The power transmission and distribution business of Larsen & Toubro has won a slew of transmission line orders in Bangladesh. It involves design, supply, installation, testing and commissioning of extra high voltage transmission lines on turnkey basis. S N Subrahmanyam is the CEO & MD of Larsen & Toubro

59. MoU signed between Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, IIT Roorkee

The MoU was signed for the continuation of Ministry of Road Transport and Highways Professorial Chair focusing on research and development, teaching and training in the area of Development of Highway Infrastructure. Mansukh L. Mandaviya: Minister of State Ministry of Road Transp.

60. Central Bank of India ties up with NABFOUNDATION to provide loans to self-help groups

Collateral free credit support will be provided by the bank to all SHGs which have an account with it & undertake Nabard-sponsored 'My Pad My Right' project. One pad making machine will be sponsored per district across country & grant support: Rs. 5 lakh/unit. NABFOUNDATION is a section 8 company fully owned by NABARD.

61. Infosys, TCS, Cognizant join World Economic Forum coalition to tackle workplace racism

Indian IT majors joined global giants like Microsoft, FB, Google & Bank of America in an international coalition by WEF. Founding members include 48 organizations representing 13 industries, with more than 55 lakh employees worldwide & HQ in 3 continents. Announced during week-long online Davos Agenda Summit.

62. Education Minister inaugurated IIT Kharagpur's Agri-Food Techathon in collaboration with NABARD.

Foundation for Agri-Business Incubation Centre at IIT was laid too. IIT aims to incubate 125 entities in the next five years through ABIC. The agri-food techathon will identify new ideas for startup incubation in the region & help them become Agripreneurs. Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank'

63. India inks MoU with International Energy Agency for global energy security, stability and sustainability.

This Framework for Strategic Partnership will lead to an extensive exchange of knowledge and would be a stepping stone towards India becoming a full member of IEA. IEA Secretariat will be responsible for implementation of cooperative activities in India. IEA: Executive Director: Fatih Birol; HQ: Paris, France.

64. India and Denmark launch Green Strategic Partnership that will enable Denmark in delivering sustainable solutions to India.

It is a mutually beneficial arrangement to advance political cooperation, expand economic relations & green growth, create jobs and strengthen cooperation on addressing global challenges and opportunities; with focus on implementing Paris Agreement & UN SDG. Denmark: PM: Mette Frederiksen; Currency: Danish krone.

65. Indo-Bangladesh sign MoU to design, make & launch a satellite fabricated by students from both countries.

The project celebrates 50 years of Indo-Bangladesh friendship, and the 100 birth anniversary of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the founder of Bangladesh. MoU represented by Chennai-based Space Kidz India in India & Global Law Thinkers Society on Bangladesh side. A 10cmx10cmx10cm satellite will be launched by ISRO's PSLV.

66. Reliance signs \$ 15 million deal with Israeli firm to distribute COVID-19 breath test kit

Reliance will purchase hundreds of breath testing systems from the Israeli company Breath of Health (BOH) and will use them to conduct millions of tests a month at a cost of USD 10 million per month. Reliance will also lead research of the system in India. BOH kit identifies Covid-19 at a success rate of over 95%

67. Textiles Committee, Ministry of Textiles signs MoU with M/s Nissenken Quality Evaluation Centre, Japan to boost export

The main objective of the MoU is to provide required support to textile's trade & industry for ensuring quality as per the requirement of Japanese buyers through Testing, Inspection & Conformity Assessment, Training & Capacity Building, R&D and consultancy. Japan is 3rd largest export destination of Textile and Apparels.

68. India, France joint initiative to boost ties in sustainable development, work towards environment protection

Prakash Javadekar & French Minister for Ecological Transition Barbara Pompili launched Indo-French Year of the Environment. Will focus on 5 main themes including environmental protection, climate change, biodiversity conservation, energy efficiency etc. Prakash Javadekar is Union Environment Minister.

69. US food major Cargill collaborates with UN World Food Programme & CRB to launch nutrition program in Rajasthan.

It will address nutritional challenges leading to stunting, underweight & anemia amongst children and women & improve nutrition status in Jaipur, Rajasthan. Dept of Women & Child Development, Rajasthan supports it as it aligns with national nutrition strategy. Aims to address nutrition intake in first 1,000 days of a child.

70. HDFC Bank, CSC partner to launch EMI collection service for business correspondents

The initiative is aimed at making payments convenient for bank's customers, who can now visit their nearest CSC, to deposit overdues. CSC-HDFC Bank Correspondent will match loan account with registered phone number to cross check amt payable & issue receipt. CSC is a SPV under Ministry of Electronics & IT.

71. India, World Bank sign 500 million dollar Programme to improve quality of school education in India

India & the World Bank signed a \$500mn Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States Programme (STARS) to improve the quality & governance of school education in 6 Indian states. These include HP, Kerala, MP, Maharashtra, Odisha, and Rajasthan. Founded: July 1944; HQs: Washington, U.S.

72. Council of Scientific and Industrial Research Signs an MoU for S&T-led Development of Union Territory of Ladakh

An agreement was signed b/w CSIR & Ladakh to establish knowledge partnership b/w the Ladakh & CSIR, aimed at development in areas like bioresource utilization endemic to Ladakh, introduction of cash crops in the region and exploration of natural resources. Ladakh became an Union Territory on 31st of October 2019.

73. Karnataka signs Memorandum of Understanding with Amazon India to help MSMEs export goods

Karnataka signed an MoU with global e-commerce giant Amazon India to help drive e-commerce exports from the state. Amazon will train & onboard MSMEs from the state on Amazon Global Selling, its Exports Program, enabling them to sell their products globally. Karnataka CM: B. S. Yediyurappa; Governor: Vajubhai Vala.

74. Central Reserve Police Force, IIM sign MoU to empower jawans' families

Central Reserve Police Force and Indian Institute of Management, Lucknow have partnered to create a plan to empower families of CRPF personnel. A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed by both to undertake a pilot project on domestic empowerment. CRPF is the largest central armed police force in the country.



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The advertisement features a red background on the right side with a white silhouette of a person sitting at a desk, working on a computer. A desk lamp is visible behind the person. The text is white and black, providing details about the course and a promotional offer.

Schemes

1. PM lays foundation stone of Light House projects (LHPs) at 6 sites across six states

The LHPs are constructed at Indore, Rajkot, Chennai, Ranchi, Agartala & Lucknow under Global Housing Technology Challenge (GHTC)-India, a programme that seeks to build over 1,000 houses each in these cities in 12 months.

GHTC was launched by Union Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs.

2. RoDTEP scheme extended to all export goods from January 1

Benefit of Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP) scheme will be extended to all export goods from January 1, 2021. Under the scheme, the embedded central, state and local duties or taxes will get refunded and credited in an exporter.

RoDTEP scheme will replace the popular Merchandise Exports.

3. Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs introduces flagship Liberalised Authorised Economic Operator(AEO) Package for MSMEs

It is in recognition of critical contribution of MSMEs in supporting economy; to become AEOs CBIC has relaxed compliance criteria provided MSMEs have a valid certificate from their line-Ministry; MSMEs can avail faster clearances & related benefits. CBIC(1944): Chairman: M.Ajit Kumar; HQ: New Delhi

4. First direct flight between Kalaburagi to Tirupati flagged off under UDAN

Taking another step in boosting regional aerial connectivity in India, Star Air today commenced direct daily flight operations from Kalaburagi, Karnataka to Tirupati, AP under the RCS-UDAN (Regional Connectivity Scheme – Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik) scheme. 305 UDAN routes & 53 airports have been operationalized till date

5. Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 3rd phase: Rs 948 crore outlay, PMKVY launched in 600 districts; 8 lakh people to benefit.

PMKVY is flagship scheme of MSDE implemented by NSDC. This phase will focus on new-age and COVID-related skills. 729 Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendras, empaneled non-PMKK training centres & more than 200 ITIs under Skill India will be rolling out PMKVY 3.0. MSDE Union Minister Mahendra Nath Pandey.

6. Govt notifies modified scheme on 1 G ethanol production to assist distilleries

Financial assistance to distilleries producing first-generation ethanol from feedstocks, including cereals. Assistance will be given for capacity expansion, setting up of new ethanol distilleries or converting molasses-based distilleries to dual feedstock. The scheme will attract an investment of about Rs 40,000 crore.

7. PCRA launches month-long mass awareness campaign 'SAKSHAM' to spread awareness about 'Green and Clean Energy'

To create awareness among the consumers of fossil fuels, Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA), Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas. launched it for highlighting the adverse health & environmental impacts of increasing carbon footprints. SAKSHAM's idea to conceive consumers to switch to cleaner fuels

8. First set of five bulk drug, pharma input projects, worth a total committed investment of ₹3,761 crore, under PLI scheme cleared

Projects cleared: Aurobindo Pharma's subsidiaries 15,000 tonne per annum of Penicillin G, 2,000 tpa of 7-ACA & 1,600 tpa of erythromycin thiocyanate; Karnataka Antibiotics & Pharmaceuticals' 1,000 tpa of 7-ACA & Kinvan Pvt Ltd's 300 tpa of clavulanic acid. PLI scheme: promoting domestic manufacture of bulk drugs & APIs.

9. Nitin Gadkari approves proposal to slap green tax on old, polluting vehicles

Under the scheme, transport vehicles older than 8 years could be charged green tax at renewal of fitness certificate at 10 to 25% of road tax. Vehicles like strong hybrids, electric

vehicles,those running on alternate fuels,vehicles used in farming exempted. Revenue collected will be used for tackling pollution.



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The advertisement features a dark blue background on the left and a light grey background on the right. On the right side, there is an illustration of two people, a man and a woman, standing next to a large, stylized laptop. The laptop screen shows a man working on a laptop, a pie chart, and some text. The man is wearing a yellow shirt and the woman is wearing a pink shirt. There are also some floating icons like a speech bubble and a document around the laptop.

Appointments & Resignations

1. Suneet Sharma appointed new Railway Board Chairman and CEO

He succeeds V K Yadav, who was the first CEO of Railway Board. Sharma, a former Eastern Railway General Manager, is a Special Class Railway Apprentice Officer of the 1978-batch. Sharma is known for introducing various administrative reforms.

Indian Railways Minister - Piyush Goyal

2. Senior IAS Umesh Sinha named deputy election commissioner after cabinet extends his tenure

The Appointments Committee cleared extension in the term of reemployment of Sinha as deputy election commissioner on contract basis for a period of 6 months. He is secretary-general in the commission currently.

Sunil Arora - current & 23rd Chief Election Commissioner.

3. Four Judges elevated as Chief Justices of Odisha, Telangana, Madras and J& K and Ladakh High Courts.

S. Muralidhar from Punjab & Haryana HC, Hima Kohli from Delhi HC, Sanjib Banerjee from Calcutta HC and Pankaj Mithal from Allahabad HC were appointed by the President as per clause (1) of Article 217.

Chief Justice of India - Justice Sharad Arvind Bobde

4. Soma Mondal takes over the reins of SAIL as its first woman chairperson

Soma Mondal took over from Anil Kumar Chaudhary as SAIL Chairman. A veteran in metal sector, Mondal joined SAIL in 2017 from another state-run firm Nalco as its director commercial. She was instrumental in introducing new marketing strategies & products.

SAIL: HQ - New Delhi; Founded - 1954.

5. Sanjay Kapoor elected All India Chess Federation (AICF) President, Bharat Chauhan retains secretary's post.

Kapoor, representing Uttar Pradesh Chess Association won in online elections. Naresh Sharma was elected as treasurer. It was the first time since 2005 that AICF elections saw a contest as candidates were chosen unanimously in the last 15 years.

AICF: HQ - Chennai; Founded - 1951.

6. Indian army appoints Major General Gautam Chauhan as head of its newly created Human Rights cell.

Gen Chauhan took charge as first Additional Director General Human Rights in the Indian Army & will work under India Army Vice Chief Lieutenant General SK Saini. The cell will also have an IPS officer for better coordination with state police forces.

Chief of Army Staff - General Manoj Mukund Naravane.

7. Alexander Ellis appointed as new British High Commissioner to India

Alexander Ellis has been appointed as new British High Commissioner to India in succession to Sir Philip Barton. He was holding the portfolio of Deputy National Security Adviser in the UK. High Commissioner is ambassador equivalent in Commonwealth Nations

United Kingdom: Capital: London; Currency: Pound Sterling.

8. GJC appoints Ashish Pethe as chairman and Saiyam Mehra as vice chairman.

All India Gem & Jewellery Domestic Council (GJC), the national apex body of the gems and jewellery industry has appointed Ashish Pethe as Chairman & Saiyam Mehra as its Vice Chairman for a period of two years. GJC represents over 6 lakh players. GJC HQ: Mumbai.

9. Karan Bajwa to head Google Cloud in Asia Pacific

Google Cloud's India MD Karan Bajwa will be its new leader for Asia-Pacific. He will lead all regional revenue & go-to-market operations for Google Cloud, including on Google Cloud Platform (GCP) & Google Workspace.

He succeeds Rick Harshman.

10. Former India striker Abhishek Yadav appointed as AIFF's first Deputy General Secretary

The 40-year-old former international has been serving as national team's director since January 2018. Served as COO of the 2017 U17 Indian World Cup team. He was one of the brains behind Sports Authority of India (SAI)-AIFF international scouting project. AIFF: HQ: New Delhi; President: Praful Patel.

11. Aviva India appoints Amit Malik as Chief Executive Officer & Managing Director.

Amit succeeds Trevor Bull whose 6 yr term ended on Dec 31,2020.With over 21 yrs of experience in financial services industry,Amit has been part of Aviva Leadership Team since Dec 2012.Aviva India is JV between Aviva plc, a British assurance company & Dabur Aviva India HQ: Gurugram.

12. Intel appoints Pat Gelsinger as new CEO

Bob Swan, who became the company's chief executive in early 2019, will be replaced in mid-February by industry veteran Pat Gelsinger. Gelsinger has been the CEO of VMware and has more than four decades of experience in the tech industry. Intel: HQ:California,US; Founder:Robert Noyce,Gordon Moore.

13. Sandeep Aggarwal appointed as chairman of Telecom Equipment and Services Export Promotion Council(TEPC)

Aggarwal,who is the Managing Director and Promoter of Delhi-based Paramount Communications Ltd., cable manufacturer, was elected TEPC's new Chairman. He will take over from Shyamal Ghosh, ex-Telecom Secretary.

TEPC setup by GoI to promote export. It is based in New Delhi.

14. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw selected as one of US-India Business Council's vice-chair

US Chamber of Commerce's USIBC announced three vice-chairs to its 2021 Global Board of Directors. The two other business executives joining Shaw as vice-chairs are Amway CEO Milind Pant and Edward Knight who is the vice-chair at Nasdaq

She is the founder,chairperson & MD of Biocon Limited

15. UN Human Rights Council picks Fiji in first-ever presidential vote

UN Human Rights Council elected Fiji's ambassador Nazhat Shameem Khan as its president in 2021, following an unprecedented secret ballot after a diplomatic standoff blocked the usual consensus decision.She served as the council's vice president in 2020.

She replaced Elisabeth Tichy-Fisslberger.

16. RBL Bank board approves re-appointment of Vishwavir Ahuja as MD and CEO

It is for a period of three years, with effect from June 30, 2021 to June 29, 2024.Ahuja was MD & CEO of Bank of America, India from 2001 to 2009 and has been for RBL Bank since June 30,2010. Reappointment is subjected to RBI approval now. Tagline of RBL Bank is Apno Ka Bank

17. Siddhartha Mohanty appointed MD of LIC, Sanjeev Kumar to head Telecommunications Consultants India Ltd (TCIL)

Siddhartha Mohanty is currently CEO of LIC Housing Finance Limited & will replace Suseel Kumar.Sanjeev Kumar has been appointed Chairman and Managing Director of TCIL for five years.Kumar is Director (Technical) of MTNL now.

LIC has four MDs and one chairman

18. Sundaram Finance appoints Rajiv Lochan as next MD, effective from April 1

Lochan will be replacing the current MD TT Srinivasaraghavan, who will be completing his term of office on March 31.Lochan has worked as a partner in the consulting firm McKinsey & Company and most recently, as Managing Director of Kasturi & Sons.

Sundaram Finance is Chennai headquartered NBFC.

19. Sports Minister Kiren Rijju gets additional charge of AYUSH Ministry

The temporary move was necessitated as Shripad Yesso Naik, the Minister of State (Independent Charge) for the Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy (AYUSH) is undergoing treatment after he met with an accident. Kiren Rijju constituency: Arunachal West of Arunachal Pradesh.

20. Justice Gita Mittal appointed new chairperson of BCCC

Indian Broadcasting Foundation (IBF) has appointed Justice Gita Mittal, former Chief Justice of Jammu & Kashmir High Court, as the new chairperson of Broadcasting Content Complaints Council (BCCC) replacing Justice Vikramajit Sen. IBF is a unified representative body of the tv broadcast in 1999

21. S Gopalakrishnan Appointed As Next High Commissioner Of India To Malawi

S Gopalakrishnan has been appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Malawi, according to the Ministry of External Affairs. He is presently Counsellor in the Embassy of India, Washington. Malawi Capital: Lilongwe; Currency: Malawian kwacha

22. IDBI Intech names Suresh Khatanhar as New Chairman of the Board

Suresh Khatanhar takes on the new role in addition to his position as the Deputy Managing Director at IDBI Bank. IDBI Intech incorporated in March 2000, is a wholly owned subsidiary of IDBI Bank Ltd offering & serves BFSI sector with IT related services.

IDBI Intech: MD & CEO: Surajit Roy; HQ: Mumbai

23. D. Janakiram is new Director of the Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology (IDRBT).

IDRBT is an arm of Reserve Bank of India. Prior to joining IDRBT, he was a senior professor at the Department of Computer Science and Engineering, IIT Madras. He was also a visiting professor at the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) in USA. IDRBT: Established: 1996; Location: Hyderabad.

24. Jayati Ghosh named by UN to high-level advisory board on economic, social affairs

Indian development economist Jayati Ghosh is among 20 prominent personalities appointed by UN to a high-level advisory board that will provide recommendations for UN Secretary-General to respond to current and future socio-economic challenges post COVID-19. Ghosh has taught economics at JNU for nearly 35 years.

25. Dhanlaxmi Bank Board approves appointment of Shivan J K as MD and CEO

Shareholders of the Kerala-based bank had voted against MD & CEO Sunil Gurbaxani on September 30, 2020 & appointed Shivan J K but RBI had asked the Bank Board to get shareholders' approval before appointing Shivan J K as the next chief of the bank. The bank is currently managed by a committee of directors.

26. Swaminathan Janakiraman & Aswini Kumar Tewari appointed SBI MDs

Both are currently serving as Deputy Managing Directors of the bank. Appointments are for a period of three years. SBI traditionally has four MDs. Two of the MD positions were vacant. The other two serving MDs of the bank are C S Setty and Ashwani Bhatia.

Dinesh Kumar Khara is Chairman of SBI.

27. Lieutenant General Chandi Prasad Mohanty to take over as 42nd vice-chief of Army staff on February 1.

He is presently the Southern Army Commander & will be succeeding Lt General SK Saini on his superannuation. He is an alumnus of Rashtriya Indian Military College, Dehradun & National Defence Academy & a June 1982 batch Infantry Officer from Rajput Regiment. He commanded a Corps in the Eastern Theatre post-Doklam incident

28. Surgeon Vice-Admiral Naveen Chawla Takes Over As The New DG Medical Services Of Navy

Prior to this, the Flag Officer held the coveted appointment of Director General Hospital Services (AF) in the office of DGAFMS. An alumnus of Armed Forces Medical College, Pune he

was commissioned on December 17, 1983 in the Armed Forces Medical Services. He was awarded Vishisht Seva Medal in 2015.

29. Rama Mohan Rao Amara takes charge as new MD & CEO of SBI Card

Rama Mohan Rao Amara has taken charge as the new MD & CEO of SBI Cards and Payment Services w.e.f. January 30, 2021 for a period of 2 years subject to all the requisite approvals including that of the shareholders.

He takes over from Ashwini Kumar Tewari. SBI HQs: Mumbai; Chairperson: Dinesh Kumar Khara.



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Awards

1. Patna Meteorological Observatory gets centennial observing station status

154-year-old Observatory is among the earliest observatories set up in 1867 by the then British Corps of Engineers. World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) has awarded the status recognising its long-term meteorological observation. WMO: HQ: Geneva; President: Gerhard Adrian; Established: 1950.

2. Suriname President, Curacao PM, NZ minister among 30 Pravasi Bharatiya Samman awardees

Suriname President Chandrikapersad Santokhi, Curacao Prime Minister Eugene Rhuggenaath and New Zealand minister Priyanca Radhakrishnan were among 30 NRIs, and Indian-origin people and organisations that were conferred the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award. Highest honour conferred by President as part of PBD conventions

3. Indian Railways bags 13 awards in 3 categories at 'National Energy Conservation awards 2020', organized by BEE

Awards are given by Bureau of Energy Efficiency to those organisations that put in special efforts to reduce energy consumption. 13 prizes were awarded to multiple zones & workshops of railways. In the "transport category", Western Railway got 1st prize.

BEE is an agency of the GoI under Ministry of Power.

4. 2nd edition of Janaagraha City Governance Awards

5 categories: Odisha won Best State & Best Civic Agency; Gujarat, Best State Election Commission; Kerala Best State Finance Commission; Indore for its PPP Based Integrated Solid Waste Management won Best Municipality; Maharashtra won runners-up in 4 categories. Held in memory of Mr V Ramachandran, a doyen of decentralisation

5. Italian cinematographer Mr. Vittorio Storaro to be honoured with the prestigious Lifetime Achievement award at the IFFI

The 51st edition of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) will honour the Italian cinematographer. He is well-known for the film Apocalypse Now (1979), Reds (1981), Dick Tracy, The Last Emperor (1987), Café Society (2016) and Wonder Wheel (2017). He has received three Oscar Awards for Best Cinematography

6. SKOCH Challenger Award to Ministry of Panchayati Raj for Transparency in Governance

This category of award for IT-led initiatives and transformational reforms leading to outcome-based performance improvement, better transparency, and strengthening of the e-Governance in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) across the country. Minister of Panchayat Raj: Narendra Singh Tomar

7. Veteran Actor and Director Biswajit Chatterjee has been conferred the Indian Personality of the Year Award, at 51st IFFI, Goa

Shri Biswajit Chatterjee, veteran actor, producer, director, and singer of Hindi and Bengali cinema, conferred with the Indian Personality of the Year Award. He is known for his roles in Bees Saal Baad, Kohra, Mere Sanam, etc. Minister for Information & Broadcasting, : Prakash Javadekar

8. Federal Bank's Shyam Srinivasan is Business Standard Banker of the Year for 2019-20

The unanimous decision was taken by a high-profile jury of five, chaired by former RBI deputy governor S S Mundra. He was chosen for his bank's consistent healthy performance at a time when most of its peers witnessed losses or other issues. Business Standard is one of India's largest English dailies.

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9. Mahatma Award to recognize and honour Impact Leaders and Organizations for their CSR efforts, Sustainable Business Practices

Mahatma Award is founded and constituted by Amit Sachdeva, more famously known as 'The CSR Man of India', is supported by the Aditya Birla Group to honour the winners every year. Mrs. Rajashree Birla along with Mr. Amit Sachdeva present the award each year Award ceremony is hosted annually by Liveweek, a social company

10. Rajendra Kumar Bhandari selected for Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar

Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society and Dr. Rajendra Kumar Bhandari have been selected for the Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar for their excellent work in Disaster Management. Union Home Ministry announced the award. The award carries a cash prize of 51 lakh rupees

11. Indian mathematician Nikhil Srivastava named joint winner of Michael and Sheila Held Prize

Nikhil Srivastava, a young Indian mathematician, has been named winner of the prestigious 2021 Michael and Sheila Held Prize along with two others for solving long-standing questions on the Kadison-Singer problem and on Ramanujan graphs. Prize was established in 2017

12. 32 Children Awarded Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar- 2021

The Government of India has been awarding the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar to the children with exceptional abilities and outstanding accomplishments, in the fields of innovation, scholastics, sports, arts & culture, social service and bravery. Awardees are from 32 districts of 21 States and UTs

13. Padma Awards 2021 announced; Shinzo Abe, SP Balasubrahmanyam awarded Padma Vibhushan

The Awards are given in various disciplines/ fields of activities. This year the list comprises 7 Padma Vibhushan, 10 Padma Bhushan & 102 Padma Shri Awards. Among the awardees are 29 women and 1 transgender. 16 awards have been conferred posthumously. No Bharat Ratna was announced this year as well.

14. Bhanu Kapil's 'How To Wash A Heart' wins TS Eliot poetry prize

This is Bhanu Kapil's sixth book, in which she depicts the uncomfortable dynamics between an immigrant and her white, middle-class host. TS Eliot poetry prize is one of Britain's most renowned literary awards, run by TS Eliot Foundation. £25,000 is prize amt. Kapil was one of 8 recipients of Windham Campbell prize, 2020.

15. IFFI 2021: Danish film 'Into the Darkness' wins Golden Peacock Award

The award consists of a cash prize of Rs. 40 lakh. Mandarin drama "The Silent Forest", bagged best actor male (Tzu-Chuan Liu) and best director (Chen-Nien Ko). ICFT UNESCO Gandhi Award was awarded to Ameen Nayfeh's 2020 Arabic film "200 Meters".

Poland's Zofia Stafiej won Silver Peacock for best female actor.

16. Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival held; Tamil translation of French book 'Le mariage de plaisir' wins Romain Rolland Book Prize

Winners are translator Dr SA Vengada Soupraya Nayagar & publisher Amutharasan Paulraj of Thadagam Publishers. Romain Rolland Book Prize, started in 2017, aims at awarding best translation of a French title into any Indian language, including English.

This is 12th edition of the Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival.

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Ranks & Reports

1. Indian economy expected to contract by 9.6% in FY21: Global Economic Prospects report of World Bank

6.4 percentage points lower than its June 2020 forecast. Contraction reflects a sharp drop in household spending & private investment; Informal sector has been subject to severe income losses. Growth is expected to recover to 5.4% in 2021 & South Asia by 3.3% World Bank: HQ: Washington, USA; President: David Malpass

2. Dr. Harsh Vardhan releases Longitudinal Ageing Study of India (LASI) Wave-1, India Report

LASI is a full-scale national survey of scientific investigation of the health, economic, social determinants & consequences of population ageing in India. National Programme for Health Care of Elderly (MoHFW) did the survey through IIPS, Mumbai. LASI data will assist in broad aims of Decade of Healthy Ageing.

3. Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos tops list of biggest charitable donations in 2020 With \$10-Billion Climate Change Donation

He used the contribution to launch Bezos Earth Fund, which supports non-profits involved in the climate crisis & has paid out \$790 million to 16 groups so far. The Chronicle of Philanthropy's list are based on the 10 largest publicly announced gifts. Zuckerberg & his wife were 4th on the list.

4. Digital Evolution Scorecard 2020: India ranks 4th in 'Break Out Economies', China No.1

Break Out Economies are those that are digitalising very quickly & yet have a lot of room to grow before matching those in the developed economies. Mobile Internet access has been a strong driver of momentum with India doubling its connectivity in last 4 yrs Scorecard by Tufts University's Fletcher School with Mastercard.

5. World's Most Powerful Passports 2021 List: Japan tops the list, India On No. 85, Pakistan in Worst Category.

India ranks at 85 with a score of 58 as per Henley Passport Index. Pakistan & Nepal have a visa-free score of 32 & 38. Index is original ranking of all world's passports according to the number of destinations their holders can access without prior visa. Japan has 191 score & Singapore 190.

6. Online transactions grew 80% in 2020 driven by strong uptake from tier II, III cities: Razorpay report.

The report pointed that UPI transactions outgrew cards, netbanking and wallets with 120% growth in 2020 & became the most preferred mode of payment, especially for tier II and III cities. Tier II & III cities contributed 54% of digital transactions in 2020. Digital payments for utilities/bill payments grew 357% in 2020.

7. 11 domestic companies in Hurun's top 500 list, India ranked 10th

The total value of these 11 companies grew 14% & has been pegged at \$805 billion or nearly a third of the Indian GDP. Reliance Industries topped among the local enterprises with a rank of 54rd then followed by TCS (73rd), HDFC (105rd). Apple topped in the list, followed by Microsoft, Amazon.

8. Indian diaspora largest in the world, 18 million living outside India according to International Migration 2020

Other countries with a large diaspora population included Mexico and Russia (11 mi each), China (10 m), Syria (8M). According to a report by the UN, which says the UAE, the US, and Saudi Arabia host the largest number of migrants from India.

UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) released.

9. What Works to Advance Women and Girls in the Economy (IWWAGE) India's Report:- How India Fared In 2020

Share of women in the labour force is extremely low in urban areas (around 10.3%), which suggests that around 90% of women who are aged 15 or more in urban India are not employed either are they actively seeking employment. This jointly commissioned by The Quantum Hub

10. 2nd NITI Innovation Index: Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu top 3 states in innovation

India Innovation Index 2020, ranks the states and union territories based on their relative performance of supporting innovation on 36 indicators. Telangana & Kerala were other two in top 5. Delhi topped among UTs & HP among North-Eastern and Hill States. Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Bihar were ranked at the bottom.

11. The Global Risks Report 2021: World Economic Forum

Infectious diseases, employment crises, youth disillusionment & digital divide are among the risks to tackle in the next two years. Threats in the next five to 10 years include state collapse, biodiversity loss & adverse outcomes from technological advances. Report draws upon data from Global Risks Perception Survey.

12. Telecom Regulatory Authority has released the "Indian Telecom Services Performance Indicator Report" for sept quarter end

The telephone subscribers in urban areas increased from 636.83 million at the end of Jun-20 to 644.26 million at the end of Sep-20 while The rural telephone subscribers increased from 523.69 million at the end of Jun-20 to 524.39 million at the same period TRAI is a statutory body, established in 1997

13. Gross enrolment ratio of girls in schools improved from 2014 to 2018: WCD Ministry

Gross enrolment ratio of girls in schools at secondary level has improved from 77.45 (2014-15) to 81.32 (2018-19) as per UDISE-data.

Percentage of schools with functional separate toilets for girls has shown improvement to be at 95.1% in 2018-19 Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao Yojana launched in 2015 by WCD Ministry

14. Ageing dams in India, U.S., other nations pose growing threat: UN report 'Ageing water infrastructure: An emerging global risk'

Over 1000 large dams in India will be roughly 50-years-old in 2025 & 3.5 million people could be at risk in Kerala if its Mullaperiyar dam built over 100 years ago were to fail. The dam is in a seismically active area & shows significant structural flaws. More than 85% of U.S. dams operating beyond life expectancy

15. China was largest recipient of FDI in 2020; FDI in India rose by 13% in 2020: UNCTAD Report

China received \$163 billion in inflows last year, compared to \$134 billion attracted by US. Overall, global FDI had collapsed in 2020, falling by 42% to an estimated \$859 billion, from \$1.5 trillion in 2019. East Asia accounted for third of global FDI in 2020

UNCTAD: Head: Mukhisa Kituyi; HQ: Geneva, Switzerland.

16. Indian economy estimated to contract by 9.6% in 2020, grow at 7.3% in 2021: UN

The World Economic Situation and Prospects 2021 by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) said the world economy is expected to make a modest recovery of 4.7% this year after shrinking 4.3 percent in 2020. Global economy shrank 2.5 times in 2020 than 2009 crisis.

17. Richest Indian's wealth rose 35% during pandemic to ₹ 3 trillion, lakhs lost jobs, lives: Oxfam's 'Inequality Virus Report'

Rise in fortunes for top 100 billionaires since lockdown in March is enough to give 13.8 cr poorest Indians a cheque for ₹94,045 each. Mukesh Ambani earned ₹90 cr. an hour during

pandemic when 24% of people in India were earning under ₹3,000 a month. 170,000 people lost their jobs every hour in April 2020.

18. IMF projects 11.5% growth rate for India in 2021, only country with double digit growth

As per IMF's latest World Economic Outlook Update, China is next with 8.1% growth in 2021 followed by Spain 5.9% & France 5.5%. India's economy is projected to grow by 6.8% in 2022 and that of China by 5.6%. In 2020, Indian economy contracted by 8%.

IMF: MD: Kristalina Georgieva; Chief Economist: Gita Gopinath.

19. India among top 10 countries most affected by climate change: Germanwatch's Global Climate Risk Index 2021

Eight of the 10 countries most affected between 2000 and 2019 are developing countries with low or lower middle income per capita. India ranked as the seventh worst-hit country in 2019. Due to cyclone 'Idai' Mozambique and Zimbabwe topped the list. Germanwatch is Bonn-based environmental think tank.

20. TCS brand value rises by \$1.4 billion in 2020; highest among IT services globally -Brand Finance 'IT Services 25 2021' report

TCS grew in a challenging year when the brand value of IT services companies collectively dropped by 3%. Also ranked TCS at 3rd position among the top 25 IT companies globally. TCS CEO Rajesh Gopinathan was ranked 5th in Brand Guardianship Index 2021. TCS showed 10% growth over the prior year.

21. India's GDP to contract 8% in FY21: FICCI's latest Economic Outlook Survey

The annual median growth forecast by FICCI is based on responses from leading economists representing industry, banking and financial services sector. Median growth forecast for agriculture and allied activities has been pegged at 3.5 per cent for 2020-21. Industry and services sector to contract by 10% & 9.2%

22. India ranks 10th out of 11 Asia-Pacific countries in Economist Intelligence Unit report 'Asia-Pacific Personalised Health Index'

Measures performance against 27 different indicators of personalised health across 4 categories called "Vital Signs". It includes Policy Context, Health Information, Personalised Technologies and Health Services. India ranked 5th, 10th, 9th and 11th in each.

Singapore (1st), Taiwan (2nd), Japan (3rd) and Indonesia (11th).

23. India slips six positions to 86th in Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index

India scored 40 points in the index which uses a scale of 0 to 100, where 0 is 'highly corrupt' and 100 is 'very clean'. A total of 180 countries were featured in the index. New Zealand and Denmark rank at the first position with scores of 88.

Somalia, South Sudan rank lowest at 179th position with score 12.

24. Reliance Jio ranked fifth strongest brand globally: Brand Finance's Global 500 ranking

Brand strengths were determined through metrics of marketing investment, stakeholder equity and business performance. According to these criteria, Chinese mobile app WeChat usurped Ferrari to become the world's strongest brand. Russian bank Sber is third. As per this 2021 ranking, Apple is the most valuable brand.

25. India ranks 86 of 98 countries in Covid response index, New Zealand, Vietnam, Taiwan in top 3

China was excluded from due to lack of data. Index used data on daily figures like confirmed cases, confirmed deaths, confirmed cases per million people etc & scored countries from 0 (worst) to 100 (best). India's score was 24.3 & lowest was Brazil at 4.3. Index by Sydney based policy think tank Lowy Institute

26. Investment in upskilling can boost global GDP by \$6.5 trn by 2030: World Economic Forum report

As per the World Economic Forum report "Upskilling for Shared Prosperity", Investment in upskilling has potential to boost the global GDP by USD 6.5 trillion by 2030, including by \$570 billion in India alone 3rd highest after China and the US. The report is authored in collaboration with PwC.

27. Maharashtra tops justice delivery in India: India Justice Report 2020

Maharashtra once again at the top of the 18 Large and Mid-sized states (with a population of over one crore each) in the 2nd Edition of the India Justice Report, an initiative of Tata Trusts, followed by Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Punjab, and Kerala. The list of seven Small States was topped by Tripura.

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Important Days

1. World Braille Day observed on 4 January

The day commemorates the birth anniversary of Louis Braille, the man who invented the braille language. The day aims to raise awareness about Braille- a form of communication and written language for people who are blind and visually challenged. Louis Braille was a French educator who invented braille in 1809

2. World Day Of War Orphans 2021: January 6

It was started by French body, SOS Enfants en Detresse to bring attention to plight of children who are left distraught in events of a war & other conflict. UNICEF defines an orphan as a child under 18 who has lost one or both parents to any cause of death. Acc to UNICEF, almost 10,000 children become orphans everyday.

3. 16th edition of Pravasi Bhartiya Divas: January 9, 2021. Theme: "Contributing to Atma-Nirbhar Bharat"

The Pravasi Bhartiya Diwas (Non-Resident Indian (NRI) Day) is held in the country every year to sustain and nurture the symbiotic relationship between India and its diaspora, and to address the development challenges that the country faces. The Pravasi Bhartiya Diwas (Non-Resident Indian (NRI) Day) is held

4. World Hindi Day

On Jan 10, 2006, First World Hindi Conference was held in Nagpur & since then, every year 10th January is being observed as the World Hindi Day. Hindi is the country's most-spoken language & 3rd most spoken in the world after English and Mandarin, as per UN. There are 615 million speakers of Hindi language.

5. National Youth Day - January 12

National Youth Day has been celebrated annually on 12 January since 1985. It marks the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. One of the main objectives of day is to promote rational thinking among the youth, who are the future of the nation.

National Youth Festival is celebrated from 12-16 Jan every year.

6. 14 January: Armed Forces Veterans Day

Since 2017, Armed Forces Veterans Day is observed each year on 14 January as a mark of respect & recognition of services rendered by Field Marshal KM Cariappa OBE-the first Indian Commander-in-Chief of Indian Armed Forces who retired on this day in 1953.

2021 is Swarnim Vijay Varsh to recognise veterans in 1971 war.

7. 73rd Army Day: 15 January

Army Day is celebrated on January 15 every year to mark the day when (then) Lieutenant General KM Cariappa took over from General Sir Francis Butcher as Commander-in-Chief of India on January 15, 1949. Tribute to those who sacrificed their lives are paid. Marathon 'Vijay Run' held in view of the 'Swarnim Vijay Varsh'.

8. National Road Safety Month 2021(January 18-February 17) launched.

During this month, awareness about causes of road accidents and measures to prevent them will be highlighted by organising various activities. As a signatory to Brasilia Declaration(2015), India is committed to reducing road accident deaths by half. NCRB data: 4,37,396 road accidents were recorded in 2019.

9. NDRF celebrates 16th Raising Day: 19 January

It is celebrated to mark its formation on January 19, 2006. It was constituted for special response to a threatening disaster situation or a disaster. NDMA is its parent body. There are 12 NDRF battalions at 12 locations & 13,000 NDRF personnel. Shri Satya Narayan Pradhan is DG of NDRF.

10. Parakram Diwas - January 23

The government has decided to observe January 23 as 'Parakram Diwas' to commemorate the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, who was born on this day in 1897. This year is his 125th birth anniversary.

Kalka Mail was Renamed as Netaji Express to honour him.

11. International Day of Education | January 24

United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 24 January as International Day of Education, in celebration of the role of education for peace & development. Sustainable Development Goal 4, aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education by 2030 Theme: Recover & Revitalize Education for COVID-19 Generation

12. 11th National Voters' Day - January 25

It has been celebrated on January 25 every year since 2011 which is foundation day of the Election Commission of India on January 25, 1950. Purpose is to encourage, facilitate & maximise enrolment especially of new voters; spread awareness among voters etc. Theme: Making Our Voters Empowered, Vigilant, Safe and Informed

13. National Tourism Day - January 25

National Tourism Day is celebrated on January 25 every year across the country. This day is observed by the government to encourage tourism and explain the essential role of tourism in the growth of the country. This year, the theme is 'Dekho Apna Desh'.

In FY20, 39 million jobs were created in the tourism sector.

14. Statehood days celebrated this month.

Jan 21 - 49th statehood day of Manipur, Tripura, and Meghalaya. In 1972, the 3 states became full-fledged states under North Eastern Region (Reorganisation) Act; Jan 24 - 71st foundation day of Uttar Pradesh & Jan 25 - Himachal Pradesh's 51st (golden jubilee)

Himachal Pradesh became the 18th state of India in 1971.

15. International Customs Day 2021 - 26th January.

This year will be dedicated to united efforts of Customs to emerge from coronavirus crisis & support people & businesses. Slogan: Customs bolstering Recovery, Renewal and Resilience for a sustainable supply chain. It is instituted by World Customs Organisation WCO:

HQ: Brussels, Belgium; Secretary General: Kunio Mikuriya.

16. 27 January: International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust

The theme guiding Holocaust remembrance and education in 2021 is "Facing the Aftermath: Recovery and Reconstitution after the Holocaust". Since 1996, survivors of Nazi regime and world leaders are invited to address the German Bundestag each year on Jan 27. Holocaust Remembrance Day marks 25 years this year.

17. Martyrs' Day / Shaheed Diwas: 30th January

Martyrs' Day is observed every year on January 30 to mark the death anniversary of the father of the nation Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. He was assassinated on this day in 1948. He was conferred the title 'Mahatma' posthumously around 1915.

18. World Leprosy Day in India: 30th January

World Leprosy Day takes place on the last Sunday of January worldwide to raise awareness about leprosy (Hansen's disease) and teach people about it. In India, World Leprosy Day is celebrated on 30 January, the anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's death.

Theme: Beat Leprosy, End Stigma & Advocate for Mental Well-Being

Summit & Conferences

1. 4th Meeting of the India-Sri Lanka Joint Working Group on Fisheries

Meeting covered issues related to fishermen, status of cooperation between the Navy & Coast Guard of both countries, initiatives taken to diversify and reduce fishing pressure in the Palk Bay etc.

Minister of Fisheries - Giriraj Singh

2. PM Modi to inaugurate National Metrology Conclave 2021 CSIR-National Physical Laboratory, New Delhi

He will also dedicate National Atomic Timescale (generates IST with an accuracy of 2.8 nanosecond) & Bhartiya Nirdeshak Dravya to the nation and also lay the foundation stone of the National Environmental Standards Laboratory. Theme of conclave: Metrology for the Inclusive Growth of Nation

3. A Marathon of Focused Webinars for Promoting Quality and Productivity in Indian Industry "Udyog Manthan" begins

DPIIT, Ministry of Commerce & Industry is organizing it with Quality Council of India, National Productivity Council & Industry bodies from Jan 4 to Mar 2, 2021. Webinar series comprises 45 sessions for reps from industry, testing & standardization bodies. Shri Piyush Goyal, Minister for Commerce and Industry.

4. "Accelerating Quality Production, Post-Harvesting, Value Addition & Export of Coriander from India" webinar held.

Spices Board & DBT-SABC Biotech Kisan Hub in partnership with key stakeholders prepared a roadmap to boost export of coriander & minimize import to increase farmers' income. Exploring value added products were suggested as way forward. Spices Board: HQ: Kochi; Chairman: D Sathiyam

5. CSIR-CMERI, Durgapur along with MSME-DI, Ahmedabad organised Webinar on Water Purification Technologies for MSMEs

CMERI focuses upon Development of Green Water Purification Innovations, Decentralised in Nature and is Effective in Outcome. MSME-DI will assure MSMEs in the region were assured with access to such technologies of CSIR-CMERI. CMERI: Established: 1958; Director: Harish Hirani.

6. Education Minister Dr. Ramesh Pokhriyal inaugurates two-day Virtual International Akhand Conference 'EDUCON-2020'

Theme: Envisioning Education for Transforming Youth to Restore Global Peace; Organized by Central University of Punjab in collaboration with Global Educational Research Association; first of its kind conference in India with nonstop marathon sessions. Scholars across world will be discussing the theme for 31 hours.

7. CPCB organizes 33rd Analytical Quality Control exercise of 145 Environmental Laboratories for 9 trace metal parameters.

AQC evaluates performance of participating 145 labs in terms of analytical activities, robustness of instruments used & expertise of manpower. 9 metals: As, Cd, Cr, Cu, Fe, Mn, Ni, Pb & Zn assessed for pollution in air and water. Instrumentation Laboratory, CPCB, Delhi organised this 33rd AQC.

8. Natural Capital Accounting and Valuation of the Ecosystem Services (NCAVES) India Forum-2021

Organised by MoSPI, to advance knowledge on environmental-economic accounting, particularly ecosystem accounting. NCAVES Project, funded by EU, has been jointly implemented by UN Statistics Division, UNEP & Secretariat of Convention of Biological Diversity. 5 countries taking part: Brazil, India, China, S. Africa and Mexico

9. AYUSH Ministry's webinar on Nidra and Yoga highlights the role of sleep in promoting good health

"NIDRA- A webinar on Yoga and Sleep" hosted by Central Council for Research in Yoga & Naturopathy (CCRYN), an Autonomous Body under the Ministry of AYUSH succeeded in focussing attention on a critical, but often neglected factor of health, namely, sleep. Union AYUSH Minister: Shripad Yesso Naik

10. The first delegation-Level virtual Police Chiefs' Dialogue held between the Police chiefs of India and Bangladesh

It was said 'nodal points' would be established for timely and effective handling and response to existing as well as emerging security and counter-terrorism challenges, Bangladesh: Capital:Dhaka; Currency: Taka

11. 4th 'One Planet Summit' organized, aims to advance the protection of nature

Organized by France, in cooperation with the United Nations and the World Bank, the 'One Planet Summit' for biodiversity was held on 11 January 2021. Focus on biodiversity to mobilize commitments to protect ecosystems and make links to human health. Theme of "Let's act together for nature!"

12. Shri Piyush Goyal inaugurates the 'Prarambh: Startup India International Summit'.

The two-day summit begins in New Delhi with members of BIMSTEC. The Summit is being organized by the Department for Promotion of Industry & Internal Trade, M/o Commerce & Industry. It is a demonstration of neighbourhood first policy to booster partnership Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical & Economy.

13. Dr. Harsh Vardhan chairs 148th session of WHO Executive Board

Annual Board meeting is held in January where members agree upon agenda for World Health Assembly & resolutions to be considered. WHO's Executive Board comprises of 34 members elected for 3 year term. Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan is current chairman.

WHO designated 2021: International Year of Health & Care Workers

14. 15th India Digital Summit 2021 begins.

The flagship event of Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) is one of biggest conference for digital industry. Theme for this year summit is 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat – Start of New Decade' in line with government's 'Make for the World' initiatives. India Digital Awards will be given as well.

15. First India-EU IPR dialogue held to strengthen relation

In the co-chaired meeting, India provided an overview of IPR developments, with an aim to meet the objectives set forth in the National IPR policy [2016.EU](#) Co-Chair provided a brief overview of DG trade and the various activities being undertaken by them. Meeting was jointly hosted by EU Commission and DPIIT

16. 3 day Ports Review Meeting named Chintan Baithak held at Kutch to boost India's Maritime sector

Chairpersons of all Major Ports of India and Senior Officials of the ministry will participate. It includes sessions on exploring new vistas of urban transportation, effective implementation of SAROD-Ports, issues related to International Arbitrations etc. Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways Mansukh Mandaviya.

17. Union Minister Piyush Goyal addresses 1st National Conference of States on Logistics

Minister said Logistics is all about 5R's: Getting the Right product - In the Right condition - At the Right place - At the Right time - To the Right customer. Also said National Logistics Policy, under consultation, will enhance the Ease of Doing Business

India has \$200 billion logistics ecosystem

18. 7th Edition of "MASCRADE 2021"- Movement against Smuggled & Counterfeit Trade organised by FICCI Cascade.

Vardhan who inaugurated it said "vocal for local" will be a potent tool in India's fight against illicit trade & noted aim of MASCRADE '21 is to foster healthy discussion on newer & practical strategies to mitigate challenges especially in a post-COVID era. Union Health Minister: Harsh Vardhan

19. India- Bangladesh hold Joint Steering Committee meeting on power sector

19th meeting of the Joint Steering Committee (JSC) on India- Bangladesh cooperation in the energy sector was held in Dhaka. The meeting also discussed the status of 1320 MW Maitree Super Thermal Power Project, Rampal Bangladesh Capital: Dhaka Currency: Bangladeshi

20. Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik Inaugurates 15th Toshali National Crafts Mela

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Thursday inaugurated the famous Toshali National Crafts Mela 2021. Patnaik inaugurated the 15th edition of the mela, which is the biggest fair in the Eastern Indian, through video conferencing. Odisha Governor: Ganeshi Lal

21. 'AYU SAMVAD' public awareness campaign on AYURVEDA and COVID 19 organized by All India Institute of Ayurveda, New Delhi.

AYU SAMVAD(My Health My Responsibility)'s main objective is to create awareness through lecture series to make common people aware of "Ayurveda for COVID 19" theme. More than 5 lac lectures will be organized across nation by Ayurveda Physicians for citizens Kiren Rijju got additional charge of Ayush Ministry recently.

22. Climate Adaptation Summit 2021: India targeting 450 gigawatt of renewable energy capacity by 2030, says PM Narendra Modi

Also stated that India is promoting LED lights and is saving 38 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions annually and that India is going to restore 26 million hectares of degraded land by 2030. CAS saw the launch of a comprehensive Adaptation Action Agenda Online CAS 2021 was hosted by Netherlands.

23. Dr. Harsh Vardhan addresses the event "Family Planning 2020: Celebrating Progress, Transforming for the future"

He spelled out India's vision: Every Child is Wanted, Every Birth is Safe, and Every Girl and Woman is treated with Dignity. Purpose of this event was to celebrate Family Planning-2020 partnership. India invested more than \$3 bn by 2020 for FP services. Adoption of modern contraceptive use reached an estimated 55%

24. Dr. Harsh Vardhan presides over Foundation Day Celebrations and Launch of Decadal year of ICMR-NCDIR

National Non-communicable Disease Monitoring Survey (NNMS) & Framework for Telemedicine use in Management of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Disease and Stroke in India was released. Awareness on reducing Physical Inactivity to combat NCDs was stressed.

ICMR-NCDIR: HQ: Bengaluru; Director: Dr. Prashant Mathur.

25. Dr. Harsh Vardhan addresses the 4th edition of Future Investment Initiative Forum

The purpose of the forum being hosted in Riyadh was to find solutions on how business and government can expand access to healthcare, train healthcare workers, remove regulatory barriers and encourage investment in advanced health technologies. Dr. Harsh Vardhan is Minister of Health and Family Welfare

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Science & Technology

1. CSIR-National Institute for Interdisciplinary Science and Technology (NIIST) develops alternative to single-use plastic

Biodegradable tableware from agricultural residues and byproducts were developed. Products developed have a shelf-life of upto six months and heat resistance up to 100 degree celsius.

CSIR NIIST: Location: Trivandrum; Established - 1975

2. Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomic Consortia (INSACOG) launched to monitor genomic variations in SARS-CoV-2 virus.

High level inter-ministerial steering committee guided INSACOG will monitor genomic variations through the multi-laboratory network. Knowledge generated will also assist in developing diagnostics and potential therapeutics and vaccines. Consortium comprises 10 research labs.

3. India becomes first country to culture U.K. variant of SARS-CoV-2.

It was isolated and cultured at the National Institute of Virology (NIV) from the clinical specimens collected from UK-returnees. Culture is the process by which cells are grown under controlled conditions, generally outside their natural environment.

Vero cell lines were used by scientists of ICMR-NIV to culture.

4. India approves COVID-19 vaccines Covishield and Covaxin for emergency use

COVISHIELD- Pune-based Serum Institute of India has sought approval for its version of the vaccine developed by Oxford University and AstraZeneca. COVAXIN- Bharat Biotech company which is developing in collaboration with National Institute of Virology, Pune. Neither Covishield nor Covaxin has completed phase-3 trials

5. DBT-BIRAC supported indigenously developed DNA Vaccine Candidate by Zydus Cadila, approved for Phase III clinical trials

The Nation's first indigenously developed DNA vaccine candidate against COVID-19, ZyCoV-D has been approved by DCGI for the conduct of Phase III clinical trials. It has support by National Biopharma Mission under BIRAC & Department of Biotechnology, GOI

Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council formed : 2014

6. 40th Indian scientific expedition to Antarctica launched

The chartered ice-class vessel MV Vasily Golovnin will begin this journey from Goa on Jan 5 & will reach Antarctica in 30 days. After leaving team of 40 members, it would return to India in April 2021 bringing back the winter team of preceding trip. Indian Antarctic expeditions began in 1981.

7. Swasth Vayu Non-invasive Ventilator developed by CSIR-NAL receives regulator nod; commercialized with 6 private companies

CSIR-NAL scientists along with medical professionals from CSIR-IGIB indigenously designed & developed the non-invasive bilevel positive airway pressure ventilator, with additional features to treat Covid-19 patients and make the country self-reliant. CSIR-NAL(1959): HQ: Bangalore; Director: Jitendra J Jadhav

8. India's CEPI centralised network lab to assess immunogenicity of COVID-19 vaccine candidates

One of 7 designated labs globally & established at Translational Health Science & Technology Institute, Faridabad. All COVID-19 vaccine developers can use the network for free to assess immunogenicity of their vaccine candidate against a common protocol. CEPI was launched at Davos in 2017.

9. Japan Plans To Create Wooden Satellites to cut down on Space Junk

Japanese start-up Sumitomo Forestry teamed up with researchers from Kyoto University, to work on a wooden satellite. It aims at tackling the increasing threat of space debris. The teams plan to launch the world's first satellite made out of wood in 2023. Around 60% of satellites are defunct according to WEF.

10. 'Sagar Anveshika': Harsh Vardhan dedicates new coastal research vessel to nation at Chennai Port.

Sagar Anveshika is a research vessel that is equipped with advanced navigation systems as well as research and exploration apparatus. Can accommodate about 15-20 scientists for research purposes & has labs similar to research vessel 'Sagar Thara'. Union Science and Technology Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan

11. ISRO to adopt 100 Atal Tinkering Labs to promote education in the field of space technology, STEM.

ISRO will facilitate coaching and mentoring of students in advanced 21st century cutting-edge technologies, including those related to space. Atal Innovation Mission and NITI Aayog have established over 7,000 ATIs across the country so far. ISRO Chairman Dr K. Sivan; NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant.

12. Fiat Chrysler partners with Wipro to establish its first global digital hub in Hyderabad, India

Digital hub called Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA). It supports Information & Communication Technology operations to focus on delivering premium mobility services & help FCA to achieve its goal to enhance customer centricity through digital transformation. Wipro HQ: Bengaluru; Formed: 1945; Founder: M.H. Hasham Premji

13. Rajnath Singh unveils Bemi's driverless metro cars for Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA)

The cars will operate on 25 kV AC traction power and equipped with CCTV surveillance and with the provision to carry passenger bicycles in the coaches. Cars are made up of stainless steel body with a capacity of carrying 2280 passengers. Union Defence Minister: Rajnath Singh

14. The International Coordinating Group creates global Ebola vaccine stockpile

This is the ICG's fourth stockpile, a new tool to combat Ebola, ICG consists of WHO, UNICEF, International Federation of Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), and Médecins Sans Frontières (a.k.a., Doctors Without Borders or MSF). Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, provided additional funding.

15. DRDO lab develops bike-based ambulance Rakshita for medical aid in remote areas

Institute of Nuclear Medicine and Allied Sciences (INMAS), Delhi based DRDO lab, handed over this casualty transport emergency vehicle to CRPF. It has customised reclining casualty evacuation seat, dashboard mounted LCD to monitor vitals, air splint etc. Secretary, Department of Defence R&D Dr G Satheesh Reddy.

16. CSIR-CMERI unveils 'Aqua Rejuvenation Plant' (ARP) to facilitate an Organic Farming Model through treated Waste Water

The first ever ARP, Integrated Waste Water Rejuvenation Model which has 6-Stage purification profile for comprehensive treatment of wastewater. 24,000 litres of water that can be rejuvenated using ARP will be sufficient for almost 4 acres of agri land. CSIR-CMERI: Location: Durgapur, WB; Director: Harish Hirani.

17. New supercomputer in NCAR-Wyoming Supercomputing Center to rank among world's 25 fastest; will accelerate scientific discovery.

The HPE-Cray EX supercomputer will theoretically be able to perform almost 20 quadrillion calculations per second, roughly equivalent to each person on Earth completing a math equation every second for an entire month. It is 3.5 times faster than Cheyenne. The facility's current supercomputer is named Cheyenne.

18. NASA finds 'Lost Galaxy' shining out of Virgo's bosom

NGC 4535, a hazy spiral galaxy is one of the largest in Virgo cluster—a collection of more than 2,000 galaxies located about 50 million light-years from Earth. When viewed through NASA's Hubble Space Telescope, it vanishes to reveal a vibrant sea of stars.

In 1950s astronomer Leland S. Copeland dubbed it The Lost Galaxy

19. ISRO to launch 'SriShakthiSat' developed by Sri Shakthi Institute of Engineering and Technology in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu.

The satellite can detect fire and leaks on underground pipelines and collect info on bank thefts. ISRO is expected to launch this satellite, along with two other satellites built by JPR Institute, Chennai & GH Rasoni College of Engineering, Maharashtra. A GHRCE ground station was inaugurated in the college as well.



Ankit Kumar
SSC CGL (AIR 32)



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Defence

1. Naval Science & Technological Laboratory (NSTL) Conducted Flight Trial of Sahayak-NG, Air Droppable Container with parachute.

Sahayak-NG has a Satellite-based Reporting Terminal which provides precise GPS location that enable carrying critical stores for ships in distress at sea. This is a first-of-its-kind trial involving mission critical systems.

NSTL located in Visakhapatnam

2. DRDO Celebrates 63rd Foundation Day of its establishment

Established in 1958 with just 10 labs to enhance research work in Defence & develop defence technologies for Armed Forces. DRDO Chairman declared Export as the theme for 2021 & Online Industry Partner Registration Module was launched.

DRDO Chairman - Dr G Satheesh Reddy

3. GRSE delivered IN LCU L-58, eighth and last in the series of Landing Craft Utility Ships to the Indian Navy.

It is the 106th Warship built & delivered by GRSE so far, highest no. of warships delivered by any Indian Shipyard. LCU ships, equipped with state-of-the-art technology, were developed in-house with 90% of its parts indigenously manufactured.

GRSE: Founded: 1960; HQ: Kolkata; CMD: Rear Admiral (retd) VK Saxena.

4. Indian Army to deploy fully-armed indigenous boats at Pangong lake in Ladakh for rapid troop deployment, patrolling

The Indian army has ordered new fast patrol boats for the surveillance of water bodies in the mountains, including Pangong Tso, in eastern Ladakh in where it has been locked in a border row with the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA).

Shri Radha Krishna Mathur Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh

5. Major reshuffle in Army, Lt Gen Shantanu Dayal to take charge as Deputy Chief of Army Staff

Lt Gen Dayal will take the place of Lt Gen SS Hasabnis. Among the changes were Lt Gen Taranjit Singh, the first Army officer to join as the Additional Secretary in the Department of Military Affairs retired. Lt Gen Anil Puri took charge in his place. Chief of the Army Staff: General Manoj Mukund Naravane

6. BEML bags ₹758-crore orders for high-mobility vehicles for Indian Army

Equipment will be manufactured at BEML's Palakkad Plant. High-mobility vehicles will play a key role in logistics management of Army, leveraging its exceptional cross-country capabilities. BEML is a defence public sector equipment manufacturer under MoD. BEML (1964): HQ: Bangalore; CMD: DK Hota

7. India, Israel successfully test cutting edge MRSAM air and missile defence system

Jointly developed by DRDO and Israel Aerospace Industries, Medium-Range Surface-to-Air Missile (MRSAM) can shoot down enemy aircraft at a range of 50-70 km. MRSAM is being used by all the three wings of the Indian army and also Israel Defence Forces (IDF). IAI's President and CEO: Boaz Levy

8. Combat Vehicles Research and Development Establishment (CVRDE) dedicates to nation Indigenous Retractable Landing Gear Systems

CVRDE, a lab of DRDO, handed over indigenous retractable landing gears to Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE is another lab of DRDO) for Tapas & Swift UAVs and 18 types of filters for P-75 submarines to Indian Navy. Location: CVRDE: Avadi, Chennai; ADE: Bengaluru.

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9. Indian Navy to coordinate 2nd edition of largest coastal defence exercise Sea Vigil-21 covering entire 7,516 kms of coastline

2-day biennial pan-India exercise will include Exclusive Economic Zone & involves all 13 coastal States, UTs along with other maritime stakeholders. Organised to check efficacy of measures initiated to plug gaps in coastal security following Mumbai attack. 2-day drill is a build-up towards TROPEX.

10. Defence Secretary Dr Ajay Kumar co-chairs 13th India-Vietnam Defence Security Dialogue with Vietnamese counterpart

Both the sides reviewed the progress on various bilateral defence cooperation initiatives and expressed commitment to further elevate engagements between the Armed Forces under the framework of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

Vietnam: Capital: Hanoi; Currency: Vietnamese dong

11. Govt clears Rs 47,000-cr deal for 83 Tejas Mk 1A; HAL is to deliver 73 fighters and 10 trainers by 2026.

New aircraft comes with 4 major capability enhancements: mid-air refuelling, Active Electronically Scanned Array Radar, Electronic Warfare suite & Beyond Visual Range missile. Indigenous content of LCA-Tejas is 50% in Mk1A variant & will be enhanced to 60%. 500 Indian companies will be working with HAL in this.

12. India's first indigenous 9 mm machine pistol 'Asmi' co-developed by DRDO and Indian Army

Army's infantry school in Mhow & DRDO's Armament Research and Development Establishment (ARDE) in Pune have designed & developed the weapon. It sports an upper receiver made from aircraft grade Aluminium and lower receiver from carbon fibre. Likely to have production cost under Rs 50,000 each

13. Thales and Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL), bringing STARStreak Air Defence system

The Teaming Agreement was signed by Thales and BDL in the presence of UK and Indian Government representatives in a virtual ceremony. STARStreak is unique due to its three laser-guided darts, which cannot be jammed by any known countermeasure. Missile system is in service in the British Army.

14. 5 day Indo-French Exercise Desert Knight-21 begins.

Indian Air Force and French Air and Space Force (Armée de l'Air et de l'Espace) will conduct this bilateral Air exercise at Air Force Station Jodhpur. Have held 6 editions of Air Exercises named 'Garuda', latest being in 2019 in Mont-de-Marsan in France. Fielding of Rafale aircraft by both sides is unique this time.

15. India, Singapore sign pact on submarine rescue support at the 5th Defence Ministers dialogue

Signing of the Implementing Agreement on Submarine Rescue Support and Cooperation signed between the Indian Navy and Republic of Singapore Navy was done. Both Ministers expressed satisfaction at the progress of ongoing defence cooperation engagements. Defence Minister is Rajnath Singh

16. Exercise Kavach: Training for Joint Operation in Andaman Sea to be conducted next week

It involves assets of Indian Army, Navy, Air Force & Coast Guard. It is conducted under aegis of Andaman & Nicobar Command. Aims to fine tune joint war-fighting capabilities. Joint Intelligence Surveillance & Reconnaissance exercise will be conducted as well. Andaman & Nicobar Command: only Joint Forces Command in India.

17. Hindustan Aeronautics Limited successfully test fired Smart Anti Airfield Weapon (SAAW) from its Hawk-i aircraft.

This indigenous stand-off weapon is the first smart weapon fired from an Indian Hawk-Mk132. It was test fired off of Odisha coast. Hawk-i platform is being extensively used for

certification of systems and weapons developed indigenously by DRDO and CSIR labs SAAW developed by DRDO's Research Centre Imarat(RCI)

18. HM Amit Shah launches Ayushman Bharat scheme for Central Armed Police Forces

Union Home Minister Amit Shah today launched the Ayushman CAPF health scheme in Guwahati for about 28 lakh personnel of Central Armed Police Forces and their families in all the states where Ayushman Bharat- Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana is operational Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, MoS Home Nityananda Rai

19. DRDO's successful flight test of Smart Anti Airfield Weapon

DRDO conducted a successful trial of the indigenously developed Smart Anti-Airfield Weapon (SAAW) off the Odisha coast from the Hawk-I jet of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL). This was 9th successful test of the system conducted over the span of 5 years it is a 125-kilogram class smart weapon with range upto 100 kms

20. Indian Navy conducts Joint Exercise AMPHEX – 21 with Army and Air Force

AMPHEX – 21, large-scale tri-service joint amphibious exercise was conducted in Andaman & Nicobar group of islands from 21 – 25 Jan 2021. Was aimed at validating India's capabilities to safeguard the territorial integrity of its island territories. Ex KAVACH formed a part of AMPHEX – 21.

21. DRDO Conducts Successful Maiden Launch Of Akash-NG Missile from Integrated Test Range off the coast of Odisha

It is a new generation Surface to Air Missile meant for use by Indian Air Force with the aim of intercepting high manoeuvring & low RCS (Radar Cross Section) aerial threats. Launch was carried out by combined team of DRDO, Bharat Dynamics & Bharat Electronics Secretary, Department of Defence R&D: Satheesh Reddy

22. Vice President inaugurates two new facilities at DRDO's Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Missile Complex in Hyderabad

The Integrated Weapon System Design Centre will enhance capability in design & development of command & control systems for Surface-to-Air Missile systems & Ballistic Missile Defence systems. A new missile technology exposition & seminar hall was opened too. DRDO chairman is G. Satheesh Reddy.

23. Operation Sard Hawa by Border Security Force concluded.

It aimed to increase security on the borders in Jaisalmer. The operation will continue till January 27 with an aim that there is no intrusion. The enhanced security came ahead of Republic Day. Special police checkpoints along the border will also be set up. BSF runs Operation "Garam Hawa" in summer season as routine.

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Books & Authors

1. Ravi Shastri unveils new Bradman Museum book "India's 71-Year Test: The Journey to Triumph in Australia"

The book reflects on India's first 12 tours to Australia from 1947/48, to face Don Bradman's side, tracing the evening out of a rivalry dominated by the host nation until the turn of the Millennium. Shastri has written the foreword.

The book has been authored by cricket journalist R Kaushik.

2. RBI officer R. Giridharan pens novel 'Right Under our Nose'

A general manager at RBI, Giridharan's job influenced his debut book 'Right Under our Nose'. It presents a murderer who eliminates scientists right under the nose of the police. The author's interactions with a lot of people inspired the writing. 25th Governor of RBI: Shaktikanta Das.

3. Modi India Calling-2021: New book chronicling PM's foreign tours, released

A coffee table book filled with over hundreds of photographs of Prime Minister Narendra Modi from his "107 overseas and bilateral visits" was released here on the eve of the 16th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD). The 450-page book has been published by Maneesh Media.

4. "Making of a General – A Himalayan Echo" book released by Governor, Dr. Najma Heptulla

It is the memoir of Lt Gen (Dr) Konsam Himalay Singh who has traced his journey from a small village in Manipur to becoming the first person from North East India to hold the rank of a Three Star General of the Indian Army.

It has also highlighted about Manipur, the "Land of Emeralds".

5. Ramchandra Guha's latest book 'The Commonwealth of Cricket'

His latest book juxtaposes his life with his abiding love for the game & this conversation could not come at a better time with India and Australia in the midst of an enthralling test series. He is a historian, academician, anthropologist, environmentalist Works: Gandhi Before India, India after Gandhi, Environmentalism

6. Historian-author Audrey Truschke's new book to analyse Sanskrit texts of Indo-Muslim history

The Language of History: Sanskrit Narratives of Muslim Past will analyse a hitherto overlooked group of histories on Indo-Muslim or Indo-Persian political events through a few dozen Sanskrit texts that date from the 1190s until 1721. She wrote Culture of Encounters: Sanskrit at the Mughal Court.

7. Penguin releases Unscripted: Conversations on Life and Cinema by filmmaker Vidhu Vinod Chopra and writer Abhijat Joshi

In Unscripted, Vidhu Vinod Chopra speaks to his long-time collaborator & scriptwriter Abhijat Joshi about his exceptional journey. Provides a glimpse into mind, method & madness of one of contemporary Hindi cinema's best filmmakers. An Encounter with Faces docu got him Academy Awards nomination.

8. The Dharma Forest: Novel reimagines the Kurukshetra war

Investment banker Keerthik Sasidharan narrates the final days of Kurukshetra war in his debut book. This first volume of "Dharma" trilogy tells about Bhishma's wondrous immortal life, Draupadi's loves amid erotic jealousies, and Arjuna's war-weary courage. Publishers: Penguin Random House India

9. Seagull Books publishes "Gazing Eastwards: Of Buddhist Monks and Revolutionaries in China" book.

It is a lively and arresting account written by Romila Thapar about her first visit to China in 1957. She went as a research assistant to the Sri Lankan art historian Anil de Silva, and worked on two major Buddhist sites in Maijishan and Dunhuang. Romila Thapar is an Indian historian & Professor Emerita at JNU

10. Goa CM releases book 'Manohar Parrikar - Off the Record'

The book written by senior journalist Waman Subha Prabhu is a collection of memories of Mr Prabhu who happened to be with late Parrikar during the journey of his life. Goa: CM:Pramod Sawant; Governor:Bhagat Singh Koshyari.

11. Former CEC Quraishi seeks to bust population myth in "The Population Myth: Islam, Family Planning and Politics in India" book.

Former chief election commissioner S Y Quraishi will come out with a book in February which evaluates India's demographics from a religious perspective and seeks to bust the myth that Islam is against family planning. Published by HarperCollins India. Quraishi was CEC from July 30, 2010 to June 10, 2012.

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Obituary

1. Colonel Narendra 'Bull' Kumar, who helped secure Siachen for India, passes away at 87

The ace mountaineer was instrumental in launching Operation Meghdoot & securing Siachen Glacier in 1984. He mapped the area in 1981-82. Awarded Padma Shri(1965), Param Vishisht Seva Medal, Kirti Chakra, Ati Vishisht Seva Medal & Mac Gregor Medal.

He was 1st Indian to climb Mt. Nanda Devi

2. Legendary Odia Music Director Shantanu Mohapatra Passes Away At The Age Of 84

He has over 1900 compositions, which include 53 films, 60 dramas by All India Radio(Cuttack), 10 Jatras & 10 dance dramas. Holds credit for many firsts in Odia music: modern lullaby in AIR, qawali, bhangra tune, fusion and jumping note. Won 80 awards and accolades, highest as an Odia Music Director.

3. Former Union minister and Congress leader Buta Singh passes away at 86.

The eight-time parliamentarian was first elected in 1962 from Moga Lok Sabha constituency, Punjab. He was Deputy minister of railways in 1974, Chairperson of the Organising Committee for Asian Games in 1981 & Union home minister under Rajiv Gandhi. He was chairman of NCSC from 2007-2010.

4. New Zealand Test Great John Fulton Reid Dies of Cancer at The Age of 64

Reid, who made his Test debut against Pakistan in 1979, represented Black Caps in 19 Tests & 25 ODIs. Playing between 1979 and 1986, finished his Test career with a noteworthy average of 46.28, which included six hundreds. His conversion rate of centuries from half-centuries was 75%.

5. Olympic bronze and World Cup winning hockey player Michael Kindo passes away

He played 3 Men's Hockey World Cup in 1971, 1973 & 1975 where India bagged bronze, silver & gold medals. He also represented in 1972 Olympic Games where India secured a bronze medal. Kindo received the Arjuna Award in 1972. India beat Pakistan in 1975 & won the lone World Cup.

6. Former Maharashtra minister Vilas Patil Undalkar passes away at 82

Veteran Congressman, Undalkar, 7 time MLA from Karad-South Assembly representing it for a record 35 consecutive years(1980-2014) passed away. Affectionately known as 'Vilaskaka', held Cooperation and Law and Justice portfolios in erstwhile State Cabinets. Prithviraj Chavan represents that constituency now.

7. Mali ex-PM Modibo Keita Dies Aged 78

Keita served as prime minister from 2015 to 2017. Modibo Keita was one of six prime ministers to serve under President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, who was ousted in a coup in August. Initially a teacher, Modibo Keita went on to hold numerous posts.

Mali: Capital: Bamako; Currency: West African CFA franc.

8. Poet and lyricist Anil Panachoran passes away at 55

A lawyer by profession, Anil came into limelight in 2007 with much appreciated songs in Arabikkadha. Famous poems include Anaadhan (about a mentally challenged woman who gives birth to a baby on the street), Valayil Veena Kilikal, Pranayakalam etc. Jimikki Kammal was one of his most viral film songs.

9. World's oldest living first-class cricketer Alan Burgess of New Zealand passes away at 100

Right-hand batsman & left-arm spinner, he played 11 first-class matches for Canterbury between 1940-41 & 1951-52 out of 14 first-class games overall, scoring 466 runs and picking up 16 wickets. Also a World War II veteran.

Now Raghunath Chandorkar is oldest living 1st class cricketer.

10. Indian fashion designer Satya Paul passes away

Satya Paul, the Indian fashion designer who invented modern sari, has died. He revolutionised the idea of sari for Indian women, moving it beyond a utilitarian ethos. He also pioneered the "trouser sari". The label diversified into other products as well. The first sari boutique in India - L'Affaire.

11. Former Gujarat CM Madhavsinh Solanki passes away

Senior Congress leader Madhavsinh Solanki who served as former Chief Minister of Gujarat & External Affairs Minister from June 1991 to March 1992 passed away. He had been the longest-serving chief minister of the state before Narendra Modi became the CM. Gujarat Incumbent CM: Vijay Rupani.

12. Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's niece Chitra Ghosh passes away

Chitra Ghosh, the youngest daughter of Sarat Chandra Bose and niece of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, passed away. Ghosh was a professor of Social and Political History, at the Netaji Institute for Asian Studies in Kolkata. She has also authored many books. Sarat Chandra Bose was a barrister & independence activist.

13. Congress leader K K Ramachandran Master passes away

Popularly known as Ramachandran Master, the Congress leader had represented the party as an MLA six times – three times from Kalpetta and thrice from Sultan Bathery Assembly constituency. He was secretary of Kozhikode District Congress Committee. He was Min for Food & Civil Supplies in the A K Antony Ministry.

14. Pulitzer Prize-winning author & journalist Neil Sheehan dies at 84

His account of the Vietnam War, *A Bright Shining Lie: John Paul Vann and America in Vietnam*, took him 15 years to write. The 1988 book won the Pulitzer Prize for non-fiction. He broke the story of the Pentagon Papers for *The New York Times* (NYT). The coverage won NYT the Pulitzer Prize for public service, 1972.

15. Padma Awardee journalist Turlapati Kutumba Rao passes away at 89.

Veteran journalist, writer & Padma Shri awardee (2002), worked as editor & editorial writer of Telugu newspaper *Andhra Jyothi* for close to three-and-a-half decades; addressed a record number of public meetings, which earned him a slot in the Guinness Book. He was personal secretary to Tanguturi Prakasam 1st CM of Andhra

16. Renowned writer Ved Mehta, who took India to Americans, dies at 86

The Indian-American novelist, overcame blindness & was widely known as the 20th-century writer most responsible for introducing American readers to India. "Daddyji" was first installment in a 12-volume series of autobiographical works, "Continents of Exile." Mehta's 24 books included volumes of reportage on India

17. Legendary Australian tennis coach Bob Brett passes away at 67.

He worked with Grand Slam champions like Johan Kriek, Boris Becker, Goran Ivanisevic & Marin Cilic. Brett received the ATP's Tim Gullickson Career Coach award in November 2020. He also coached for national tennis associations in Britain, Japan and Canada.

He adhered to Harry Hopman's coaching philosophy

18. Renowned astrophysicist Professor Shashikumar Madhusudan Chitre passes away at 84

A recipient of Padma Bhushan, he retired as a senior professor from TIFR in Mumbai in 2001. His scientific research is focused on solar physics, astrophysics & gravitational lensing. He was a stalwart of Indian astronomy community, particularly solar physics. He was former president of the Astronomical Society of India.

19. Sheldon Adelson, the billionaire mogul who built a casino empire, dies at 87.

He built a casino empire spanning from Las Vegas to China and became a singular force in domestic and international politics. Chairman & CEO Las Vegas Sands Corporation foresaw correctly that Asia would be an even bigger market. In 2018, *Forbes* ranked him No.15 in the U.S., worth \$35.5 billion

20. Sahitya Akademi winning Tamil writer A Madhavan passes away at 87.

He won Sahitya Akademi in 2015 for his collection of short stories, *Ilakkiya Chuvadukal* that captured stories & struggles of people in Thiruvananthapuram's Chalai market. Novel *Punalum Manalum* was translated into English as *On A River's Bank*. He won Vishnupuram award in 2010.

21. Agricultural Machinery Pioneer Helmut Claas of CLAAS group (a global agricultural machinery manufacturer) Passes Away at 94

In 2013 he was made a member of American Equipment Manufacturers 'Hall of Fame'. In 2009, made a knight of the French Legion of Honour, the highest honour given by French government. Under him, Renault Agriculture in France was acquired.

CLAAS: HQ: Harsewinkel, Germany; Chairwoman: Catherina Claas.

22. Sir Brian Urquhart, legendary UN troubleshooter, dies at 101

The Brit joined UN in 1945 & until his retirement in 1986, he worked as a principal adviser to five UN secretaries-general, directed 13 peacekeeping operations, recruited 10,000 troops from 23 countries & instituted peacekeeping as a core tenet of UN.

His autobiography: *A Life in Peace and War*

23. Noted social activist and Padma Shri awardee D. Prakash Rao passes away in Odisha at 63

He was known for his contribution towards imparting education to slum and orphan children in Cuttack. He worked as a tea seller ever since he was 6 years & shot to fame after he set up a school (*Asha Ashvaasan*) to help educate 70 slum-dwelling children.

He spent 50% of his income to educate the children at his school

24. Udayan Bose, pioneer of investment banking in India, dies at 71

Known for his networking skills and relationships with some of the biggest names of Corporate India, Bose led the Indian arm of Lazard. He brought modern investment banking and venture capital to India in 80s & set up second private Indian mutual fund.

Bose started his career with Grindlays Bank.

25. Former MP and vice-president of Tamil Maanila Congress BS Gnanadesikan (71) passes away

He was being treated for an age-related illness. Gnanadesikan was a staunch follower of Congress leader and former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister K Kamaraj. From 2011-2014, he served as the president of TNCC. Gnanadesikan was elected to the Rajya Sabha in twice. TN CM: Edappadi K. Palaniswami; Governor: Banwarilal Purohit

26. Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Khan, legendary Hindustani classical vocalist and Padma Vibhushan awardee, passes away aged 89

Awarded Padma Shri in 1991, Padma Bhushan in 2006 & Padma Vibhushan in 2018 & Sangeet Natak Akademi award in 2003. His grandfather Ustad Inayat Husain Khan is credited as founder of Rampur-Sahaswan gharana of music. Sangeet Natak: highest Indian recognition to practicing artistes.

27. Banking heir Benjamin de Rothschild dies at 57

Benjamin de Rothschild was chairman since 1997 of the banking empire Edmond de Rothschild Group started by his father in 1953. He is descendent of the Rothschild family, which has a nearly 300-year history running European banks. Edmond de Rothschild Group manages assets worth 160 bn euros.

28. Cancer Institute's veteran oncologist V Shanta passes away in Chennai at 93.

V. Shanta was doyen of cancer care in the country & chairperson of the Adyar Cancer Institute. Was awarded Padma Shri (1986) & Padma Bhushan (2006) for her efforts towards making quality & affordable cancer treatment accessible to all.

Was also awarded Padma Vibhushan & the Ramon Magsaysay awards.

29. Former union minister Kamal Morarka dies at 74

Was a successful businessman, served as vice-president of BCCI, a wildlife photographer and an organic farmer. His MR Morarka Foundation organised the annual Shekhawati Festival in Nawalgarh. He headed the Samajwadi Janata Party (Rashtriya) since 2012.

Was Union minister in the Chandrashekhar government in 1990-91

30. Malayalam cinema's veteran actor Unnikrishnan Namboothiri passes away at 98.

More popular for his humorous roles, he debuted with a sombre role in Jayaraj's Deshadanam in 1996. Was hugely popular for his role as Thekkedathu Gopalakrishnan in Kalyanaraman.

He debuted at the age of 73.

31. Former Arunachal Governor Mata Prasad passes away at 95

Prasad served as minister in the N D Tiwari- led Congress government in Uttar Pradesh in 1988-89 and was appointed as Governor of Arunachal Pradesh in 1993. He was MLA from Shahganj (reserved) seat for five terms (1957-1974). Arunachal Pradesh: CM: Pema Khandu; Governor: B. D. Mishra

32. Larry King, broadcasting giant for half-century, dies at 87

The iconic talk show host Larry King, the most recognizable figures on US television as he quizzed everyone who was anyone over a career spanning 60 years, died at the age of 87. Best known for a 25-year run as a talk show host on CNN Larry King Live The company he co-founded was named Ora Media

33. Singer Narendra Chanchal passes away at 80

Popular bhajan singer Narendra Chanchal passed away in New Delhi. He was 80. Chanchal was known for his religious songs and bhajans like "Chalo Bulava Aaya Hai" from Avtaar and "Beshak Mandir Masjid Todo" from Bobby. Union MoS for Culture and Tourism (I/C): Prahlad Singh Patel

34. Historian Narendra Luther, chronicler of Hyderabad history, dies at 89

A 1955 batch IAS officer who served in various positions, Luther later wrote several books about the history and culture of Hyderabad. Luther was closely associated with the Society to Save Rocks & instrumental in conserving a lot of geological formations. He wrote Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah, the Founder of Hyderabad.

35. Senior CPI leader and an active participant of Telangana Armed Struggle, Burgula Narsing Rao no more

The killing of Shoebullah Khan (editor of Urdu daily Imroze) influenced his thinking on secularism and religion, turning him towards Marxism and communism. He was first president of All Hyderabad Students Union, was active in anti-Razakar & Mulki movement. His uncle Burgula Ramakrishna was 1st CM of erstwhile Hyderabad.

36. Noted physician from Telangana Ramaka Lakshmana Murthy better known as people's doctor ,passes away

Lakshmana Murthy was a close associate of People's Poet Kaloji Narayana Rao from whom he imbibed the spirit of social service. After serving 2 decades at MGM Hospital, Warangal, he set up his own clinic at Ramnagar, Hanamkonda to give free treatment to poor. Praja Kavi Kaloji Narayana Rao was conferred Padma Bhushan, 1992.

37. Former India goalkeeper Prasanta Dora passes away at 45

Prasanta made his national debut in 1999 against Thailand in the Olympic qualifiers. He donned the national colours again in tournaments like SAFF Cup and SAF Games and earned a total of five international caps.

Represented Bengal in the Santosh Trophy. He played for East Bengal, Mohun Bagan and Mohammedan Sporting.

38. Ex-Pond's India chief Venkateswaraayyar Narayanan passes away

He served as the chairman & MD of Pond's India Ltd, which became part of Hindustan Lever Ltd (HLL), and served on the board of HLL. An alumnus of Lawrence School at Lovedale &

Loyola College, he began his career in 1959 as a management trainee in HLL (now HUL) He served with Pond's (India) till 1997.

39. Patna-based renowned social scientist, economist Shaibal Gupta passes away

He was known as an institution builder & he considered the establishment of Asia Development Research Institute as his most important achievement. His contribution to development economics and development challenges of Bihar had received wide attention. Made contributions as member of State Finance Commission as well

40. David Washbrook, a leading historian of colonial South India, passed away in London

Among his major works are South India: Political Institutions and Political Change, The Emergence of Provincial Politics: The Madras Presidency, and Colonial India: A Social History. He was an eminent historian and professor at Trinity College. He was director of Centre for Indian Studies, Oxford University.

41. Krishan Dev Sethi, last surviving member of J&K Constituent Assembly, dies at 93

Born in Mirpur, now in Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir, was an elected member of the first Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir formulated in 1951 and finalised the separate constitution of J&K. He represented the Nowshera Assembly segment.

He was a stalwart of the Quit Kashmir movement.

42. Oscar winning-actor Cloris Leachman dies at the age of 94

Won best supporting actress Oscar for The Last Picture Show in 1971. She played a lonely wife. She is also known for her comedic delight as the fearsome Frau Blücher in Young Frankenstein and self-absorbed neighbor Phyllis on The Mary Tyler Moore Show. Leachman won eight Emmy Awards in her storied television career

43. Nagaland Chief Secretary Temjen Toy passes away

Nagaland Chief Secretary Temjen Toy passed away. He was 57 years old. Toy, who took charge as Nagaland chief secretary in March 2018, is a 1989-batch IAS officer. Nagaland Capital: Kohima; Chief minister: Neiphiu Rio.

44. Actor Arvind Joshi passes away

Actor Arvind Joshi passed away. He was 84. Arvind Joshi, a known face in the Gujarati theatre and film circuit, also starred in Hindi movies like Apmaan Ki Aag, Sholay, Ittefaq, Love Marriage and Naam. Arvind Joshi is the father of actor Sharman Joshi.

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Person in news

1. China's Zhong Shanshan eclipses Mukesh Ambani as Asia's richest man

According to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, Zhong's net worth has soared \$70.9 billion this year to \$77.8 billion, making him the 11th richest person in the world. Zhong, vaccine magnate & founder of China's largest bottled water company Nongu spring. Zhong Shanshan popularly known as 'Lone Wolf'.

2. Elon Musk overtakes Amazon's Jeff Bezos to become world's richest person - Bloomberg Billionaires Index

Elon Musk had a net worth of more than \$188.5 billion, \$1.5 billion more than Bezos, who has held the top spot since October 2017. China's Zhong Shanshan has vaulted past Warren Buffett to claim 6th slot after shares of his bottled-water company surged. Musk is founder of SpaceX, Tesla, The Boring Company etc.

3. Oldest living Olympic champion Agnes Keleti turns 100.

Holocaust survivor & winner of 10 Olympic medals in gymnastics- including five golds celebrated her 100th birthday in her native Budapest. She made her Olympic debut at the 1952 Helsinki Games at the age of 31, winning a gold medal in the floor exercise. She won gold at age 35 at the 1956 olympics.

5. Indian-American Garima Verma named digital director in Office of the First Lady

Incoming First Lady Jill Biden has named Indian-American Garima Verma as her digital director. Verma, born in India, grew up in Ohio & Central Valley of California. She served as an audience development and content strategist on the Biden-Harris campaign. Earlier Raj Iyer became first CIO of US Army.

6. Flight lieutenant Bhawana Kanth to become first woman fighter pilot to take part in Republic Day parade.

She will be a part of IAF's tableau that will showcase mock-ups of the light combat aircraft, light combat helicopter & the Sukhoi-30 fighter plane. In 2016, with Avani Chaturvedi & Mohana Singh, Kanth was inducted into IAF as first fighter pilots in 2016. Rafale jets to take part for the first time in this R-day

7. Esteemed Philanthropist Ravi Gaikwad wins Nelson Mandela World Humanitarian Award

This coveted award was given to him for his dedication to the service of humanity. He had earlier won Legends Dadasaheb Phalke Award and Indian Achievers Forum's Man of Excellence Award in 2020. He is also a two Guinness Book of World Records holder. Currently he is serving as Chief of RTO Thane

8. US Senate confirms eminent economist Janet Yellen as the first woman Treasury Secretary of the United States.

A graduate of Brown and Yale, Yellen has taught economics at some of world's most prestigious universities. She is best known for her tenure as Chair of Federal Reserve, overseeing a period of falling unemployment & steady economic recovery from 2008 crisis.

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Insurance

1. ICICI Lombard General Insurance launches website to help SMEs safeguard business amid COVID-19

SME owners can buy & renew insurance products, endorse their policies, register claims through this business insurance portal. ICICI Lombard intends to reach over 63.3 million MSMEs across India.

ICICI Lombard: CEO: Bhargav Dasgupta; HQ: Mumbai

2. IDBI Bank sells 23% stake in life insurance arm to Ageas for Rs.507 crore.

IDBI Federal Life Insurance Company rebranded as Ageas Federal Life Insurance Company after IDBI sold 23 of its total 48% stake to Ageas Insurance International JV (now has 49%). IFLI is a 3-way joint venture of IDBI Bank, Belgium's Ageas & Federal Bank.

IDBI Bank: CEO - Rakesh Sharma; HQ - Mumbai.

3. PhonePe ties up with ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, launches term plans starting at Rs 149/annum.

Policy can be availed instantly on PhonePe app without any health check-ups & paperwork through an all-digital customer experience. Users aged 18 to 50 years & earning Rs 1 lakh or above per annum can avail this instantly. PhonePe: CEO: Sameer Nigam; HQ: Bengaluru.

4. IRDAI asks insurers to offer 3 standard products for fire, allied peril from April 1

The Standard Fire & Special Perils (SFSP) Policy will be replaced by 3 standard products- Bharat Griha Raksha (for home buildings), Bharat Sookshma Udyam Suraksha (for enterprises risk upto Rs.5 crore) & Bharat Laghu Udyam Suraksha (above Rs.5 cr to Rs.50 cr) IRDAI: Chairman: Subhash Chandra Khuntia; HQ: Hyderabad

5. Max Life Partners with AICAPD for 'Protect a Smile'

Max Life Insurance Company Ltd. enters 2nd year of its 'Protect a Smile' initiative. Under this, it has committed to fund 1 year of education of an underprivileged child for every death claim it settles for its 'Term Insurance Plans' during the current FY. The initiative is being driven in partnership with AICAPD.

6. IRDAI sets up committee to study health insurance products

The insurance industry is offering various products/services to cater to the needs of the society & also bringing in innovative products/services regularly. IRDA set-up a committee to study health insurance products with the help of scientists and doctors. HQ: Hyderabad
Formed: 1999

7. Canara HSBC Oriental Bank of Commerce Life Insurance launches 'Guaranteed Income4Life' plan

It is a Non-Linked, non-Par Individual Life Insurance Savings cum Protection Plan which not only offers an individual the opportunity to secure his/her life but also allows one to have regular income to take care of both long-term and short-term financial. Canara HSBC OBC Life: MD & CEO: Anuj Mathur; HQ: Gurugram.

8. IRDAI extends Central KYC Registry (CKYCR) to legal entities opened on or after April 1, 2021.

CKYCR is now fully operational for individual customers in terms of the provisions Prevention of Money Laundering (Maintenance of Records) Rules, 2005. It has been decided to extend the CKYCR to Legal Entities. RBI in Dec 2020, issued similar circular. CERSAI is authorised by govt to perform functions of CKYCR.

9. India's insurance penetration "extremely low" compared to Asian rivals: Economic Survey

India's insurance penetration at just 3.76% of the GDP is "extremely low" against comparable Asian countries such as China, Malaysia, and Thailand as well as the global average, according to the central government's Economic Survey of 2020-21. Insurance penetration = % of total insurance premium to GDP.

India & World

1. MM Naravane, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) holds talks with South Korean counterpart on boosting bilateral military ties.

He called on Gen. Nam Yeong, Chief of Staff of Korean Army to discuss issues of bilateral defence cooperation. Gen. Naravane who was on a 3 day visit to South Korea received a Guard of Honour at Republic of Korea Army Headquarters in Gyeryong. Guard of Honour: ceremonial welcome to an important visitor.

2. Cabinet approves Opening of 3 Indian Missions in Estonia, Paraguay and Dominican Republic in 2021

It will help expand India's diplomatic footprint, deepen political relations, enable growth of bilateral trade, investment & economic engagements, people-to-people contacts, bolster political outreach & support India's foreign policy objectives.

Capitals: Estonia: Talinn; Paraguay: Asuncion; DR: Santo Domingo

3. First meeting of High Level Project monitoring committee for India funded projects held in Dhaka

It has decided to take steps to ease the tendering process to speed up the implementation of the projects. Bangladesh is the largest development partner under the Line of Credit programme of India with total at \$7862 million.

Bangladesh: Currency: Taka; Capital: Dhaka

4. Deputy Chief of Indian Embassy hands over NR 306 million cheque to CEO NRA towards reconstruction of earthquake affected schools

National Reconstruction Authority handed over a cheque for reconstruction of educational institutions in earthquake-affected districts of Nepal. With this, India reimbursed NRs 819.8 mn to Govt of Nepal towards educational sector reconstruction projects. Shushil Gyawali - CEO of National Reconstruction Authority (NRA)

5. Japan commits ₹2,113 cr support for COVID relief efforts

Japan has committed Official Development Assistance (ODA) loan of an amount of JPY 30 billion (about ₹2,113 crore) to support India's efforts at providing social assistance to the poor and vulnerable households severely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Recently MoU was signed on Skilled Workers between the countries

6. India to chair 3 key UNSC committees

India will chair three important subsidiary bodies of the Security Council - the Taliban sanctions committee, the counter-terrorism committee and the Libya sanctions committee. The move follows India joining the UNSC as a non-permanent member for 2021-22. Ambassador of India to UN TS Tirumurti

7. India announces pledge of \$150,000 to UN peacebuilding fund.

The Fund is the U.N.'s financial instrument of first resort to sustain peace in countries or situations at risk or affected by violent conflict. The Fund requires \$1.5 billion for 2020-2024 and has invested over \$1.2 billion to date in over 60 countries. Permanent representative of India UN: T.S. Tirumurti.



Ankit Kumar
SSC CGL (AIR 32)



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Environment

1. India to be co-chair of Asia Protected Areas Partnership (APAP), a regional forum to conserve wildlife habitats, for 3 years.

APAP chaired by IUCN Asia & co-chaired by an APAP member country. It currently has 21 members from 17 countries. It helps govts & other stakeholders to collaborate for more effective management of Protected Areas. India is replacing South Korea as co-chair. APAP launched at IUCN World Parks Congress in Australia in 2014.

2. United Nations' FAO names 4 Asian tea cultivation sites as Globally Important Agriculture Heritage Systems

Chosen sites are: Pu'er Traditional Tea Agrosystem & Jasmine tea site (China), Traditional Tree Grass system (Japan) & Fuzhou and Traditional Hadong Tea Agrosystem (South Korea). India has 3 sites: Koraput traditional agri, Kuttanad farming, Saffron heritage. GIAHS was started in 2002 by FAO.

3. Centre's draft notification declares Eco Sensitive Zone (ESZ) around Mathikettan Shola National Park, Kerala.

One kilometre (17.5 square kilometre) area around the Park declared as ESZ. Restrictions on construction activities, area cannot be transferred for commercial or industrial use & eco tourism projects must be prepared according to the zonal master plan. Neutrino project site is falling outside this ESZ now.

4. Joint study group surveillance squad formed to check toxic pollutant level in Yamuna

Concerned over the issue of increasing ammoniacal nitrogen, in the Yamuna, CPCB formed a study group to monitor the ammonia levels. A joint surveillance squad comprising officials from relevant dept of Delhi & Haryana was also formed. CPCB (1974): Chairman: Shiv Das Meena; HQ: New Delhi.

5. Centre Approves Advisory For Management Of Human-Wildlife Conflict

Standing Committee of National Board of Wildlife (SC-NBWL) approved it. The advisory makes important prescriptions for the States/ UTs for dealing with Human-Wildlife conflict situations & seeks expedited inter-departmental coordinated & effective actions. NBWL constituted under Section 5A Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

6. Caracal put on critically endangered list

National Board for Wildlife approved a recovery program for Caracal, a medium sized wild cat, which is now critically endangered species found only in Gujarat & Rajasthan. There are now 22 species on critically endangered species recovery programme. NBWL, advisory body chaired by PM; Constituted in 2003.

7. Javadekar releases Management Effectiveness Evaluation (MEE) of 146 National Park and Wildlife Sanctuaries

India has a network of 903 Protected Areas in covering about 5% of the total geographic area. In order to assess the efficacy of Protected Areas, evaluation of management effectiveness is required. MEE score of 62.01% which is higher than global mean of 56% MEE of Indian Zoos framework was also released.

8. A new species of fruit fly named after Siruvani, an ecological hotspot in Western Ghats

The fruit fly 'Euphranta siruvani' belonging to family Tephritidae was identified by researchers from a non-forest area in Coimbatore, TN near Siruvani. 104 known species from genus Euphranta are distributed across the world, of which 14 are found in India. It has a distinct V-shaped black band on its forewing.

9. New ant species discovered from Kerala named after JNCASR researcher, evolutionary biologist Prof. Amitabh Joshi

Two new species of a rare ant genus have been discovered in India. One of them found in the Periyar Tiger Reserve of Kerala, has been named *Ooceraea joshii*, in honour of Prof. Amitabh Joshi, a distinguished evolutionary biologist. The discovery has been published in the journal *ZooKeys*.

10. Sunderbans home to 428 species of birds, records ZSI's "Birds of the Sundarban Biosphere Reserve"

Sunderbans, covers 4,200 sq km, is part of the largest mangrove forest in the world & also a world heritage site & a Ramsar Site. India has 1300 bird species. 428 birds include Masked Finfoot and Buffy fish owl which are recorded only from the Sunderbans. 9 out of 12 species of kingfishers in India are found here.

11. National Marine Turtle Action Plan launched.

Considering the need to have a conservation paradigm for marine megafauna and marine turtles, the Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) released 'Marine Mega Fauna Stranding Guidelines' and 'National Marine Turtle Action Plan'. Contains actions that are required to handle stranded animals.

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Apps & Portals

1. MEA launches 'Global Pravasi Rishta' portal and app to connect with 3.12 crore strong diaspora

Aims to create 3-way communication between ministry, Indian missions & the diaspora. Portal is created to enable registration of Indian diaspora (NRIs, PIOs & OCIs) & connect them to various government schemes. There are nearly 3.12 crore overseas Indians.

MEA: Union Minister - S. Jaishankar; MoS - V Muraleedharan.

2. Indian Railway launches upgraded e-Ticketing Website & Mobile App for booking of online Railway Tickets

Following the govt's vision of 'Digital India', Indian Railways upgraded its e-ticketing website www.irctc.co.in & Rail Connect Mobile App with features like predictive entry suggestions using AI, complete user personalization connected to user login etc.

Railway Minister Piyush Goyal .

3. MSME Ministry's Khadi arm, Khadi & Village Industries Commission (KVIC) launches E-commerce Portal: ekhadiindia.com

Website catalogues over 50,000 products under more than 500 varieties & various categories of locally made Khadi and village industry products. It is the first of its kind government online shopping platform to boost rural economy & become self-sustainable KVIC Chairman Vinai Kumar Saxena.

4. National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) Develops Software to Facilitate Web Enabled Grievance Redressal System

It will facilitate ease of filing a complaint in the Commission by any aggrieved person belonging to ST community or their representatives & will also facilitate them in getting updates on progress/status of the case. Portal is <https://ncstgrams.gov.in/> NCST: Chairman - Nand Kumar Sai; Formed - 2004.

5. Railway Minister Piyush Goyal launches Freight Business Development Portal

Designed to replace physical processes with online to minimise need of human-to-human interaction. Offers customer-centric incentive schemes to facilitate logistic requirements, scheduled movement of cargo, live tracking & monitoring of parcels etc. Railways targets at least 50% of freight traffic by 2030.

6. Home Minister Amit Shah to launch 'Single Window Clearance System' for coal mines

It will be an online platform to obtain clearances for smooth operationalization of coal mines. Companies require about 19 clearances from different departments before starting commercial mining. Union Minister of Coal Pralhad Joshi.

7. CBDT launches e-portal for filing complaints about tax evasion, 'benami' properties and undisclosed assets overseas.

After an OTP-based validation process, complaints can be made for violations of Income-Tax Act, Black Money (Undisclosed Foreign Assets and Income) Imposition of Tax Act and Prevention of Benami Transactions Act in three separate forms. CBDT chairman Pramod Chandra Mody

8. Dr. Harsh Vardhan dedicates Innovation Portal developed by National Innovation Foundation (NIF) to nation.

National Innovation Portal (NIP) is currently home to about 1.15 lakh innovations scouted from common people. NIP is a step towards Atmanirbhar Bharat & an excellent resource for students, entrepreneurs, MSME's, Technology Business Incubators (TBI's) etc. NIF(2000): HQ: Gandhinagar, Gujarat; Chairperson: Dr. P. S. Goel.

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9. DPIIT launches regulatory compliance portal

Portal will act as a bridge between citizens, industries and the government to minimize burdensome compliances. It will also act as a first-of-its-kind central online repository of all central and state-level compliances.

DPIIT Secretary Guruprasad Mohapatra

10. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launches revamped website about gallantry award recipients

Website provides information about gallantry awards in India and their recipients since Independence. Along with portal, he also launched a gallantry award quiz competition and an e-magazine 'Shauryawaan'.

Website: gallantryawards.gov.in

11. Bharti AXA General Insurance launches 'Krishi Sakha' App for farmers

It aims at helping Indian farmers make informed decisions through customized information related to their farming requirements. It shares relevant information about the scientific way of farming, crop cultivation, sowing, or harvesting of a major crops. Bharti AXA:

MD&CEO: Sanjeev Srinivasan; HQ: Mumbai



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Acquisitions & Mergers

1. Tata Sons to acquire additional 32.67% stake in AirAsia India for \$37.66 mn

Post stake sale, Malaysia's flagship budget carrier AirAsia Berhad's shareholding in AirAsia India will reduce to 16.33 per cent, while Tata Group's stake will rise to 83.67 per cent.

Tata Sons Chairman - Natarajan Chandrasekaran

2. CCI nods for Singapore-based TPG Growth V SF Markets to acquire 8% stake in API Holdings, India

Singapore based TPG Growth will be jointly funded by TPG (TPG Global, LLC & its affiliates) & Korean Investment Corporation. API Holdings is a company incorporated in India and is the ultimate parent entity of the API Holdings group

CCI: Established - 2003; HQ - New Delhi; Chairman - Ashok K Gupta

3. CCI approves acquisition by Jamnalal Sons Private Limited of 51% of equity share capital of Mukand Sumi Special Steel Limited

Entails acquiring share of MSSSL (Target) from Mukand Limited & its nominees by JSPL (Acquirer). Both JSPL & Mukand are part of the same group. JSPL is an unregistered core investment company & MSSSL is a steel manufacturing company

Approved under Section 31(1) of the Competition Act, 2002.

4. Migsun Acquires Stakes of HDFC and Ansal API in 37.5 Acre Ansal IT City Park, Greater Noida

Migsun will have 100% in Ansal IT City Park (SEZ) Tech Zone after acquiring HDFC's 37% stake and the rest of Ansal API. The real estate group plans to develop the 37.5 acre mixed-use project with 15% Commercial, 50% IT & 15% Industrial.

Migsun Group: Set up in 1992; CMD - Sunil Miglani.

5. Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (CPPIB) to acquire SoftBank's 80% in SB Energy for \$425 million

SB Energy, also known as SB Energy Global, is a multinational renewable energy corporation formed in 2015 as a subsidiary of Japanese multinational conglomerate SoftBank Group Corp. Bharti Enterprises has 20% stake SB energy as well.

CPPIB is Canada's largest pension fund.

6. Fiat Chrysler and Peugeot shareholders vote to merge, creating world's fourth-largest car maker.

It will be called Stellantis with capacity to produce 8.7 million cars a year, behind Volkswagen, Toyota & Renault-Nissan & create 5 billion euros in annual synergies. Maserati, Alfa Romeo, Jeep, carmakers Peugeot & Citroen etc will all be under one roof. Fiat Chrysler chairman John Elkann will be Stellantis chairman.

7. Twitter acquires social podcasting app Breaker, team to help build Twitter Spaces

Breaker has social element with features like the ability to like & comment on episodes, follow friends to discover new podcasts, share etc. Twitter Spaces is Twitter's own audio-based networking project, which lets users chat in real time using voice. Twitter: CEO: Jack Dorsey; Founded: 2006; HQ: San Francisco, USA

8. Competition Commission of India clears 100% acquisition of Columbia Asia Hospitals by Manipal Health

Bengaluru-based Manipal Health Enterprises Pvt Ltd (MEHPL) had entered into a share purchase agreement with the US-based hospital chain in October last year. The deal was valued at Rs 2,100 crore,

CCI: Chairman: Ashok Kumar Gupta; Formed: 2003; HQ: New Delhi

9. Reliance Infrastructure (RInfra) completes stake sale in PKTCL to India Grid for Rs 900 cr

RInfra has completed sale of its entire 74% stake in Parbati Koldam Transmission Company Limited to India Grid Trust. With this acquisition, IndiGrid owns 12 operating power transmission assets with a total AUM of over Rs.14500 crore.

IndiGrid: India's 1st listed power sector infra investment trust.

10. Volkswagen Finance India acquires majority stake in KUWY Tech, an automotive FinTech Company

Chennai-based KUWY is an instant lending digital platform and through this acquisition Mumbai-headquartered Volkswagen Finance Pvt Ltd will grow its new & used car business through KUWY's pan India network on car financing. Aashish Deshpande, MD and CEO of Volkswagen Finance Pvt Ltd

11. Apple contractor Pegatron takes up space in Casa Grande's Chennai industrial park

Taiwanese component maker, Pegatron, which is also Apple's second-largest contract manufacturer, is likely to set-up a manufacturing plant for iPhones in India in a bid to expand its production capacity outside mainland China. Apple's second-largest contract manufacturer Pegatron

12. TOTAL France to acquire 20% stake in Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL) for \$2.5 bn

Global energy major TOTAL had acquired 37.4 per cent stake in Adani Gas Limited and 50 per cent stake in Dhamra LNG project previously. AGEL, started in 2015 with world's largest single location solar power project located in Kamuthi, Tamil Nadu (648 MW)

Total CEO and Chairman Patrick Pouyanne

13. Axis Bank-Max Life Insurance deal gets CCI nod: shareholding of Axis Bank in Max Life will increase to approximately 9.9%

Additionally, Axis Capital Ltd and Axis Securities will acquire 2% and 1%, respectively. Further, Axis entities will have a right to acquire an additional stake of up to 7% in Max Life, in one or more tranches, taking their total stake to 19.99%. Now approval from IRDAI is needed.

14. SEBI approves Reliance-Future deal, BSE grants 'no-adverse-observation' status

As part of Rs 24,713 crore deal, retail and wholesale undertaking of Future Group will be transferred to Reliance Retail and Fashion Lifestyle Limited (RRFLL), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd. SEBI has approved with some riders. Future Group CEO Kishore Biyani

15. CCI approves e-commerce giant Flipkart's acquisition of 7.8 percent stake in Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail.

Flipkart Investments Private Limited (FIPL), to acquire a minority stake of 7.8 percent worth Rs.1500 crore in the Birla Group-linked entity. FIPL is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Flipkart Private Limited (FPL), and FPL belongs to Walmart Group. Flipkart CEO is Kalyan Krishnamurthy.

16. CCI approves acquisition of Indo Gulf Fertilisers by Indorama India Private Limited.

Competition Commission of India (CCI) approves acquisition of Indo Gulf Fertilisers by Indorama India Private Limited (IIPL). IIPL is engaged in manufacture, trading and sale of fertilisers, primarily, phosphatic fertilisers and speciality plant nutrients. Approval was made under Section 31(1) of Competition Act, 2002.

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Agri-Business

1. India starts export of Moringa powder keeping in mind its rising global demand

First consignment of 2 tonnes of organic-certified moringa powder was sent to the United States this week. APEDA (responsible for export promotion of agricultural products) has been helping create more moringa processing units to increase exports.

APEDA: Established - 1986; Chairman - M. Angamuthu

2. Virtual 2-month Agri-hackathon Atmanirbhar Krishi organised by Dept of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers Welfare with IARI, Pusa.

It is a first of its kind & largest virtual event in history of Indian agriculture to create dialogues & accelerate innovations. With 3 elimination rounds, final 24 winners will get RS 1,00,000 along with incubation support, tech & business mentoring.

Agriculture Minister - Narendra Singh Tomar

3. Vietnam buys Indian rice for first time in decades

Indian traders have been contracted to export 70,000 tonnes of 100% broken rice for Jan & Feb shipments at around \$310 per tonne on a free-on-board (FOB) basis. Local prices jumped to their highest in 9 years amid limited domestic supplies in Vietnam. India is world's biggest exporter of the grain and Vietnam 3rd.

4. International Cotton Advisory Committee (ICAC) elevates Keshav R Kranthi as Chief Scientist.

The former director of Central Institute for Cotton Research (CICR), Nagpur, Kranthi will now lead technical collaborative projects globally. Served as Head of Technical Services for the ICAC since 2017. ICAC is global cotton research and advisory body. ICAC formed in 1939; HQ: Washington DC.

5. Govt approves hike in MSP for Copra.

The government has approved an increase in the MSP of milling copra by ₹375 from 2020 to ₹10,335 per quintal & ball copra by Rs.300 to Rs.10600 per quintal, as part of its effort to boost farmers' income. This is as per Swaminathan recommendations. New MSP for copra will impact the farmers of 12 coastal states.

6. Agriculture Ministry proposes Rs 19,000-cr national mission for edible oil in Budget

The mission entails a 5-yr plan aimed at achieving self-sufficiency in production of cooking oil while cutting down its increasing import, which costs ₹75,000 crore to the exchequer annually. Local production may also ease the prices of cooking oil.

Mission maybe funded by import cess of ₹2,500-3,000 per tonne.

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External Affairs

1. UN member States, leaders welcome India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico and Norway to UNSC

Flags of 5 new non-permanent UNSC members were installed at the Security Council during a solemn ceremony organised by the Kazakhstan Mission to the UN. They will be in Council for the 2021-22 term. India's Permanent Representative to UN: T S Tirumurti

2. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar wraps up his three-day visit to Sri Lanka

Held meetings with President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, PM Mahinda Rajapaksa, Foreign Minister Dinesh Gunawardena etc; met the Tamil leadership in Sri Lanka to discuss issues pertaining to the development & devolution and the role of provincial councils etc. SL legislative capital is Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte

3. India's vaccine diplomacy - Vaccine Maitri.

India has proactively sent vaccine supplies, as grant, to its neighbours and friends. Bhutan, Maldives, Bangladesh, Nepal, Mauritius, Myanmar & Seychelles have already received vaccine doses, in varying quantities, while Sri Lanka and Afghanistan to get next Commercial supplies were made available to Brazil and Morocco.

4. India, UK emphasize need for strengthening international cooperation to combat terrorism

During the 14th meeting of the India-United Kingdom Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism held, both the countries have strongly condemned all forms of terrorism and its manifestations. Reviewed threats posed by the UN's proscribed terrorist's entities. Minister of External Affairs: Subrahmanyam Jaishankar

5. India, Japan hold fifth joint meeting of Act East Forum.

It reviewed progress of ongoing bilateral projects in the North Eastern Region of India. Act East Forum provides for collaboration in the North Eastern Region under India's "Act East Policy" and Japan's vision for a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific".

Indian Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla co-chaired it.

Legal

1. Government to introduce bills to set up DFI, Digital Currency

Govt will set up National Bank for Financing Infrastructure & Development (NaBFID) to meet infrastructure financing requirements of the country in the Budget session. Govt will also introduce the Cryptocurrency & Regulation of Official Digital currency. NaBFID Bill 2021 will be introduced in the Budget session.



Ankit Kumar
SSC CGL (AIR 32)



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PSUs

1. BHEL secures Rs 450 cr order for steam and power plant from NALCO

It is for NALCO's 5th Stream Alumina Refinery Expansion Project at Damanjodi, Odisha. With this order, BHEL has maintained its track record of supplying all of NALCO's power plants. BHEL is largest manufacturer of power generation equipment.

2. SAIL planning to set up India's first gas-to-ethanol plant for Rs.400 crore in Chandrapur, Maharashtra.

SAIL with Centre's help will set up the plant at its ferro alloy plant in Chandrapur, in line with govt's aim to reduce country's dependence on import for crude oil besides addressing carbon emissions issue. SRTMI is facilitating SAIL in setting up. Steel Research & Technology Mission of India (SRTMI)

3. Cabinet clears policy on PSU privatisation ahead of Union Budget

The policy was part of Aatmanirbhar Bharat package announced by Nirmala Sitharaman in May 2020. Govt had then announced intention to limit presence of PSUs to one to four in strategic sectors & privatise, merge or bring the remaining under a holding company. Companies in non-strategic sectors will see govt exiting totally

4. PowerGrid offers transmission assets worth Rs 7000 crore via Power Grid InvIT IPO

This is the first attempt at an IPO of an InvIT by a state owned firm. The private sector has seen two InvIT's so far, namely IndiGrid InvIT & IRB Infra InvIT. ICICI Securities, Axis Capital, Edelweiss and HSBC Securities are working on this IPO. InvIT is a collective investment scheme similar to mutual fund.

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Committees

1. India sets up South Asia Group for Energy(SAGE), a high level group, under Ram Vinay Shahi for South Asia energy security.

Objective is to achieve a balanced & optimal development of energy infrastructure through mutual understanding & cooperation. Cross-border energy trade is a key part of Prime Minister's neighbourhood-first policy, with plans to build energy links. Set up under MEA run think tank RIS.

2. Centre decides to form committee to protect language, culture & land of Ladakh

The Committee will be headed by the Minister of State for Home G Kishan Reddy and will include elected representatives from Ladakh, Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, central government, and the Ladakh administration. Ladakh Lt.Governor - Radha Krishna Mathur.

3. RS Sharma, former Trai chief, to head empowered panel for Covid-19 vaccine

A ten member team has been constituted to be headed by Sharma. Top health ministry and UIDAI officials are part of the empowered committee. He is also included as member of the National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration of Covid-19. National Expert Group formed in August 2020 & headed by VK Paul.

4. RBI forms working group on digital lending as frauds come into sharp focus

The group will suggest steps to regulate digital lending including online lending platform and mobile lending. The six-member panel comprised of four RBI internal and two external members is expected to submit its report within three months. Jayant Kumar Dash, Executive Director, RBI will be chairman.

5. IRDAI sets up Health Insurance Advisory Committee to examine availability of health insurance products

10-member committee will have IRDAI chairman & member (non-life) as its chairperson & vice-chairperson. Members include experts & doctors. Panel will suggest approach on the coverage of specific diseases, develop strategy on treatment protocol etc.

Subhash Chandra Khuntia is the chairman of IRDAI.

6. Finance Minister inaugurated the Chennai Bench of National Company Law Appellate Tribunal

Fresh appeals against the orders of the Benches of the tribunal having jurisdiction in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana and the Union Territories of Lakshadweep and Puducherry will have to be filed before the Chennai Bench. This will be the second NCLAT Bench in India.



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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
National Statistical Organisation	Predicts Contraction of India's 2020-21 GDP at 7.7%
ICRA	India's GDP to record 10.1% expansion year-on-year in FY22
CARE Ratings	Projects Centre's fiscal deficit to 7.8 % of GDP during FY21
IMF	Predicts India's Current Account Surplus at 2% of GDP in FY 2021
Economic Survey	Projects India's real GDP to record a 11% growth in FY 2021-22 and nominal GDP to grow by 15.4%
National Statistical Office	Nominal GDP- estimated at ₹203.51 lakh cr for 2019-20; ₹188.87 lakh cr for 2018-19. Real GDP - ₹145.69 lakh cr for 2019-20; ₹140.03 lakh for 2018-19.

APPOINTMENTS

APPOINTMENT	POST
Soma Mondal	Chairperson SAIL
Umesh Sinha	Deputy election commissioner
Suneet Sharma	Railway Board Chairman and CEO
Sanjay Kapoor	President All India Chess Federation
Gautam Chauhan	Additional Director General Human Rights, Indian Army
Alexander Ellis	New British High Commissioner to India
Ashish Pethe	Chairman, Gem & Jewellery Domestic Council
Saiyam Mehra	Vice-Chairman,, Gem & Jewellery Domestic Council
Karan Bajwa	Head Google Cloud in Asia Pacific
Abhishek Yadav	AIFF's first Deputy General Secretary
Amit Malik	Chief Executive Officer & Managing Director, Aviva India
Pat Gelsinger	CEO, Intel
Sandeep Aggarwal	Chairman, Telecom Equipment and Services Export Promotion Council
Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw	US-India Business Council's vice-chair
Nazhat Shameem Khan	President, UN Human Rights Council
Vishwavir Ahuja	MD and CEO, RBL Bank

Sanjeev Kumar	Chairman and Managing Director, TCIL
Siddhartha Mohanty	Managing Director, LIC
Rajiv Lochan	Managing Director, Sundaram Finance
Gita Mittal	Chairperson, Broadcasting Content Complaints Council
Suresh Khatanhar	Chairman of the IDBI Intech Board
D. Janakiram	Director, Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology
Shivan J K	MD and CEO Dhanlaxmi Bank
Aswini Kumar Tewari	SBI Managing Director
Swaminathan Janakiraman	SBI Managing Directors
Chandi Prasad Mohanty	Vice-chief of Army staff
Naveen Chawla	DG Medical Services Of Navy
Rama Mohan Rao Amara	MD & CEO of SBI Card

AWARDS

WINNER	AWARD
Indian Railways	National Energy Conservation awards 2020
Odisha	Best State & Best Civic Agency - Janaagraha City Governance Awards
Gujarat	Best State Election Commission- Janaagraha City Governance Awards
Kerala	Best State Finance Commission- Janaagraha City Governance Awards
Indore	Best Municipality- Janaagraha City Governance Awards
Vittorio Storaro	Lifetime Achievement award -International Film Festival of India
Ministry of Panchayati Raj	SKOCH Challenger Award
Biswajit Chatterjee	Indian Personality of the Year Award
Shyam Srinivasan	Business Standard Banker of the Year Award for 2019-20
Rajendra Kumar Bhandari	Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar
Nikhil Srivastava	Michael and Sheila Held Prize
Shinzo Abe	Padma Vibhushan
SP Balasubrahmanyam	Padma Vibhushan
Bhanu Kapil	TS Eliot poetry prize
Danish film 'Into the Darkness'	Golden Peacock Award
'Le mariage de plaisir'	Romain Rolland Book Prize

IMPORTANT DAYS

DATE	DAY	THEME
4 th January	World Braille Day	NA
6 th January	World Day Of War Orphans	NA
9 th January	Pravasi Bhartiya Diwas/ NRI Day	Contributing to Atma-Nirbhar Bharat
10 th January	World Hindi Day	NA
12 th January	National Youth Day	NA
14 th January	Armed Forces Veterans Day	NA
15 th January	Army Day	NA
19 th January	NDRF Raising Day	NA
23 rd January	Parakram Diwas	NA

24 th January	International Day of Education	Recover & Revitalize Education for COVID-19 Generation
25 th January	National Voters' Day	Making Our Voters Empowered, Vigilant, Safe and Informed
25 th January	National Tourism Day	'Dekho Apna Desh'
26 th January	International Customs Day	NA
27 th January	International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust	Facing the Aftermath: Recovery and Reconstitution after the Holocaust
30 th January	Martyrs' Day / Shaheed Diwas	
30 th January	World Leprosy Day in India	Beat Leprosy, End Stigma & Advocate for Mental Well-Being
Last Sunday of January	World Leprosy Day	Beat Leprosy, End Stigma & Advocate for Mental Well-Being

OBITUARY

OBITUARY	RELATED FIELD
Colonel Narendra Kumar Shantanu Mohapatra	Ace mountaineer; 1st Indian to climb Mt. Nanda Devi
Buta Singh	Odia Music Director
John Fulton Reid	Former union home minister
Michael Kindo	New Zealand Cricketer
Vilas Patil Undalkar	Hockey player
Modibo Keita	Former Maharashtra minister
Anil Panachooran	Mali ex- prime minister
Alan Burgess	Poet and lyricist
Satya Paul	New Zealand Cricketer; World's oldest living first-class cricketer
Madhavsinh Solanki	Indian fashion designer
Chitra Ghosh	Former Gujarat Chief Minister
K K Ramachandran Master	Professor; Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's niece
Neil Sheehan	Congress leader
Turlapati Kutumba Rao	Author & Journalist
Ved Mehta	Journalist
Bob Brett	Writer
Shashikumar Madhusudan Chitre	Australian tennis coach
Sheldon Adelson	Astrophysicist Professor
A Madhavan	Builder of Casino Empire
Helmut Claas	Tamil writer
Sir Brian Urquhart	Agricultural Machinery Pioneer
D. Prakash Rao	UN troubleshooter
Udayan Bose	Social Activist
BS Gnanadesikan	Pioneer of investment banking in India
Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Khan	Former MP and vice-president of Tamil Maanila Congress
Benjamin de Rothschild	Hindustani classical vocalist
V Shanta	European Banker
Kamal Morarka	Oncologist
Unnikrishnan Namboothiri	Former union minister
Mata Prasad	Malayalam actor
Larry King	Former Arunachal Governor
Narendra Chanchal	Broadcaster
Narendra Luther	Bhajan Singer
	Historian

Narsing Rao	Senior CPI leader
Ramaka Lakshmana Murthy	Physician
Prasanta Dora	Former India goalkeeper
Venkateswaraayyar Narayanan	Ex-Pond's India chief
Shaibal Gupta	Social Scientist, Economist
David Washbrook	Historian
Krishan Dev Sethi	Politician; last surviving member of first J&K Constituent Assembly
Cloris Leachman	Actor
Temjen Toy	Nagaland Chief Secretary
Arvind Joshi	Actor

Union Budget 2021-22 Highlights

FM Nirmala Sitharaman in her Union Budget 2021-22 speech in the parliament announced FDI limit in insurance to be increased to 74% from now existing 49%. Govt has allowed foreign ownership in insurance with safeguards.

The govt will also launch a Securities Market Code which will include SEBI Act, Govt Sec act, Depositories Act. SEBI will be notified as regulator for a gold exchange. FM said that the govt is proposing to strategically divest 2 PSU banks and 1 general insurance company.

FM Nirmala Sitharaman has also announced measures under Aatmanirbhar Package. She said the early PM garib Kalyan Yojana amounted to almost presenting 5 "mini budgets" in 2020. She proposed strengthening of 'Sankalp of Aatmanirbhar Bharat'. Focus on 6 pillars, which include – **Health & Well-being, Inclusive Development, Human Capital, Innovation and R&D**. FM added that the govt is fully prepared to support and facilitate economic growth and they are introducing Aatmanirbhar Swastha Bharat Yojana with an outlay of Rs 64,180 crore.

FM announced that Jal Jeevan Mission Urban will be launched with and outlay of **₹ 2.87 lakh crore** over 5 years which is aimed at universal water supply in all 4,378 urban local bodies, with 2.86 crore household tap connections and liquid waste management in 500 AMRUT cities. She also announced Urban Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0 with outlay of ₹ 1,41,678 crore over 5 years from 2021 focused on complete fecal sludge management, waste water treatment, source segregation, management of waste from urban construction, bioremediation of legacy dump sites.

Announcing major infrastructure boost, FM announced highway works in various states including 3,500 km corridor in Tamil Nadu, 1,100 km in Kerala at investment of Rs 65,000 crore, 675 km in West Bengal at a cost of Rs 95,000 crore and 1,300 km in Assam in the next 3 years. In May 2020, Govt announced the Atmanirbhar Bharat package, to sustain the recovery further we also rolled out two more Atmanirbhar packages. Total financial impact of all packages including measures taken by [RBI](#) was estimated to be about Rs 27.1 lakh crores, Sitharaman added.

For Railways Budget, the FM announced that [Indian Railways](#) will have a **National Rail Plan** for upto 2030. For aviation sector, FM said that the next lot of airports will be privatized in tier 2 and 3 towns and cities. FM said that in FY22 outlay (budget estimate) for health & well-being is up 138%, and is at Rs 2,23,846 crore. Govt has also allocated Rs 35,400 crore towards COVID vaccines for FY22 and is committed to more if required. She said Modi govt is committed to achieving targets laid out under the national infrastructure pipeline. Ujjwala scheme will be expanded to over 1 crore more beneficiaries. We will add 100 more districts in the next three years to the city gas distribution network. A gas pipeline project will be taken up in Jammu and Kashmir, FM said.

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 Bajjal (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)

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	Rajya Sabha (M.P)

	Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprise	
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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